

AIRCRAFT ENGINES AND SUSTAINABLE AVIATION IN AFRICA

Mr. Abderahmane Berthe
Secretary General, AFRAA

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African*

FEATURE

- How Infrastructure Development Shapes Africa's Business Aviation Future
- Africa And The National Carrier Question: The Search For Alternatives
- Challenges And Risks Of Aging Aircraft

INTERVIEW

- African Airlines Need To Work Together To Improve Connectivity

NIGERIA

- Nigeria Achieves Success In ICAO Audit
- Nigerian Government To Refurbish Airports

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In the quest for the attainment of net zero carbon emission by 2050, aircraft engines are playing a crucial role. In Africa, the airline industry has embraced fleet modernization which is contributing to emission reduction. However, Sustainable Aviation Fuels hold a critical place in sustainable aviation and the industry has to key in to ensure Africa is not left behind.

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How Infrastructure Development Shapes Africa's Business Aviation Future

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Amidst delays in deliveries of new aircraft across the world and a growing recovery in the airline industry, many carriers have put on hold the retirement plans for some of

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Air passenger market in detail - *Source: IATA*

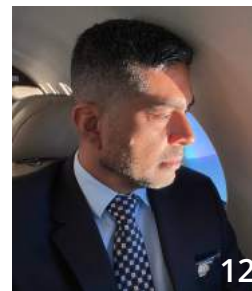
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COVER DESIGN

Features

Mr. Abderahmane Berthe
SG, AFRAA



The first quarter of 2024 has come with very exciting news for the aviation industry in Africa. Data from various industry bodies have shown that Africa has attained and indeed surpassed the pre COVID-19 traffic figures and has continued to grow emphasizing the resilience of the air transport sector in Africa. It is the expectation that the industry in Africa will take the necessary measures to continue on this growth path.

During the quarter, IATA also released its Safety Report noting 2023 as being the safest year for flying by many parameters. For Africa, the report notes: "The all accident rate improved from 10.88 per million sectors in 2022 to 6.38 in 2023, better than the 5-year average of 7.11. In 2023, there were no fatalities. This region has had no jet hull losses or fatal accidents since 2020. Additionally, 2023 marked the fifth occurrence of Africa reporting zero fatal turboprop accidents".

No doubt, this achievement is a testament to the interventions of states, international partners and industry to focus attention on safety improvement in Africa. We invite stakeholders and partners to continue to focus on this very important subject of safety. If anything, the accidents in early 2024 serve to remind us that there cannot be too much focus on safety.

We commend the decision of the leadership of the African Airlines Association, AFRAA to partner with the Flight Safety Foundation to host the Inaugural African Aviation Safety & Operations Summit in Ethiopia on May 15, 2024 consecutively with the AFRAA Stakeholder Convention scheduled for May 12 to 14, 2024. The goal for Africa must remain the full attainment of the Abuja safety targets and improvement of aviation safety across all the sectors of the industry. We also wish to reiterate that it is essential for African airlines and aviation businesses to see tangible benefits of the safety improvement in their finance and insurance charges.

The first quarter has witnessed several activities geared toward the achievement of the SAATM: beginning with the Joint Prioritized Action Plan (JPAP) meeting in Nairobi, Kenya which had the goal of articulating and coordinating the workplans of the various stakeholders and partners for 2024, to the SAATM Pilot Implementation Project (PIP) meeting in Banjul, The Gambia in March, two workshops in Nairobi by AFRAA and AFCAC, and the sensitization workshop by the Tanzanian Civil Aviation Authority.

We also note and applaud the ongoing efforts to fully constitute the administration of the Dispute Settlement Mechanism (DSM) of the YD as it will give succour and assurance of fairness and impartiality in the implementation of the YD. We encourage more states to sign up to the Solemn Commitment and ensure the full operationalization of the SAATM. SAATM implementation will benefit African countries and their peoples.

In line with the NetZero 2050 target, aircraft and engines will play crucial roles in reducing aviation's carbon footprint and in the adoption of Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF). In this edition of Aviation & Allied Business (Africa) Journal, we focus on Aircraft and Engines with an article on the role of aircraft engines in the adoption of SAF (SAF) in Africa, in addition to other insightful articles. This edition also features an exclusive interview with the Secretary General of AFRAA, Mr. Abderahmane Berthe. Mr. Berthe is very knowledgeable in the African Aviation industry being involved in many of the projects going on in the continent.

I thank you for your continued support and wish you a pleasant reading. 



CAPT. ED BOYO

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This is your industry journal and we encourage you to submit articles we can consider for publication. We give preference to unpublished materials on aviation and allied business, especially those relating to Africa. The majority of our readers are decision makers, senior industry executives in core aviation and allied business sectors as well as pilots, aircraft maintenance engineers, aviation consultants, air traffic controllers and engineers, aviation lawyers, bankers, aviation insurance experts and oil company executives. By contributing to the Journal, you and your firm will gain recognition and our readers will benefit from your expertise.

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New Route

Air Peace Launches Lagos-London Gatwick Flights

Nigerian carrier, Air Peace has commenced flights on the Lagos-London Gatwick routes from March 30, 2024. The inaugural flight marked a significant milestone not only for the airline but also for aviation industry in Nigeria. The airline says: "Today marks another significant milestone in our trajectory as a foremost airline as we launched direct flights to London, bringing to 7 our international destinations."

According to Air Peace, the new route will be operated with its "274-seat capacity, wide-body, luxury Boeing 777 and 787 Dreamliners" The inaugural ceremony was attended by the Nigerian Minister of Aviation & Aerospace Development, Barrister Festus Keyamo amongst other dignitaries. Minister Keyamo said the flight by Air Peace has "broken a long-standing monopoly on the route and as a result, Nigerians will benefit from more competitive prices" adding that the launch of the Lagos-London flight is in line with fulfilling one of the KPIs he announced upon assuming office to "support the growth and sustenance of local airline businesses while holding



The commencement of the Lagos-London flights is a significant milestone for Air Peace and the Nigeria aviation industry

them to the highest international standards in the aviation industry."

Also present at the inaugural ceremony was the Minister of Industry, Trade and Investment, Dr. Doris Uzoka-Anite; Acting Director-General of the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA), Captain Chris Najomo; and Managing Director of the Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN), Mrs. Olunmi Kuku, amongst others.

The Lagos-London route is a lucrative and high-profile route for many carriers both from Nigeria and the United Kingdom. Many Nigerian airlines including Bellview, Arik Air and Medview have previously operated on the route and discontinued services. But Chairman of Air Peace, Barrister Allen Onyema said the airline is investing significantly in equipment to ensure the sustainability of the route. The entry of Air Peace has already led to a steep reduction on ticket prices on the route. ◻

Security

Royal Jordanian Launches Cybersecurity Awareness Platform For Employees

Royal Jordanian Airlines has collaborated with MetaCompliance, an information security firm to launch an "interactive awareness platform for its employees in the field of cybersecurity."

Royal Jordanian says the aim of the platform is to "spread digital culture and provide advice and guidance that will protect employees in cyberspace."

Vice Chairman/CEO of Royal Jordanian Airlines Engineer Samer Majali said "the launch of the educational platform comes from the importance of creating a comprehensive cybersecurity system at all levels within the company, which contributes to providing a safe environment and protecting information security.

The platform will be considered the

main tool for providing employees with the knowledge and skills necessary to maintain a safe and sustainable digital environment."

Majali also pointed out that Royal Jordanian supports national efforts to develop infrastructure, raise awareness, and build capacity, as well as ensuring the protection of data according to the highest international standards and best practices in this field. ◻



Re-Introduction

SAA enhances flight schedule from Perth

South African Airways (SAA) says it is implementing a customer-driven changes to its flight and route schedule, aimed at improving convenience for its customers." SAA says it has undertaken a schedule review of its upcoming Perth, Australia route to identify areas for enhancement assuring that "Customers travelling from Perth can expect more convenient departure and arrival times, allowing for easier domestic and regional connections and reduced travel times.

This change also assists connecting customers from New Zealand and other cities in Australia. Customers out of Perth, will benefit from an overnight flight which allows better rest on your journey so that you are refreshed and ready to immerse yourself in true



SAA enhances flight schedule to provide seamless travel experience for its customers

African hospitality." The inaugural flight is billed for Sunday 28 April 2024 from Johannesburg to Perth. SAA's Chief Commercial Officer, Mr Tebogo Tsimane said: "We are thrilled to introduce this enhancement to our flight schedule, which directly

addresses feedback and preferences from our customers" explaining that with these adjustments on the Perth route, SAA passengers are assured that "their feedback will continue to shape and influence the airline's commitment to customer centricity." ▣

Flight resumption

Astral Aviation Resumes Cargo Flights To Eldoret



Astral Aviation has resumed regular cargo flights from Sharjah to Eldoret

Leading African cargo airline, Astral Aviation has resumed cargo flights from Sharjah, UAE to Eldoret. Mustwafa Murad, Commercial Manager of Astral Aviation said the airline will now "operate regular Cargo flights from Sharjah to Eldoret using Boeing 767 Freighter with a capacity of 40 tons of cargo."

According to Ms. Patricia Odida Chief Commercial Officer of Astral Aviation, "in partnership with African Salhiya, Astral Aviation will perform a dedicated flight from Sharjah to Eldoret on a weekly basis with plans to increase flights to twice weekly. The outbound flight from Nairobi to Sharjah carries perishables from

Kenya such as Flowers, Fresh Fruits, Vegetables and Meat bound for the UAE."

Sanjeev Gadhia, CEO Astral Aviation acknowledged the support from the Government of Kenya for the resumption of flights which were suspended for over 4 months.

"Being the only local cargo carrier to operate to Eldoret, Astral Aviation will work with perishables exporters in the Rift Valley region to promote exports to the Middle East via Eldoret Airport once the challenges are overcome notably the availability of Jet Fuel and cold storage facility at the Airport."

Astral says it has "plans to provide multi modal solutions from Eldoret to Uganda, Rwanda, D R Congo and South Sudan." ▣

Fleet Expansion

Royal Jordanian receives new A321 freighter

Royal Jordanian says "a new A321-200PF freighter" has joined its fleet, "bolstering its capacity to meet the cargo industry's increasing demand. This addition aligns with the airline's fleet strategy to reach 41 aircraft in the coming few years." According to the Middle East carrier, the twin-engine, medium-haul aircraft has "a large cargo capacity, containing 14 pallets and container positions on the main deck and an additional ten on the lower deck, with a total payload capacity of 28 tons with a range of 3,500 kilometers. The freighter is leased on a long-term basis from UMBF and is one of the most versatile aircraft in its class. With the ability to transport containers on the main deck, it offers fast loading and offloading, enabling highly efficient flight operations."

RJ Vice Chairman/CEO Samer Majali said the airline has "developed the air cargo industry through the implementation of several strategies,



The A321-200 PF freighter will help to meet the cargo industry's increasing demand

increasing sales and improving the quality of services provided to customers in terms of speed, quality, and accuracy" adding that RJ aims to "enhance Jordan's position as the logistics hub in the region and increase its share in the freight market on a regional and international level supported by the new cargo terminal that is fully automated, serving all kinds of cargo products." Royal Jordanian says it "looks

optimistically forward to completing the project to update and expand the fully automated new air cargo services building" At the beginning of this year, RJ introduced two new 195-E2 jets to serve short-haul destinations. The airline says additional Embraer 195 and 190-E2 jets, A320/A321 neo aircraft, and Boeing 787-9 are all primed to join the fleet as RJ expands its route network to 60 points around the world in the coming few years. ◻

Agreement

Air Seychelles and Tourism Seychelles Sign Agreement to Boost Destination Marketing

Air Seychelles and Tourism Seychelles have signed an (MoU) to solidify their "commitment to promoting Seychelles as a premier tourist destination." The MOU was signed by Captain Sandy Benoiton, the CEO of Air Seychelles and Mrs. Sherin Francis, the Principal Secretary for Tourism Seychelles. According to the airline, the partnership "aims to enhance visibility and attract more visitors to the archipelago by leveraging joint activities in targeted markets. Under the agreement, both parties will collaborate closely on various

marketing initiatives." Air Seychelles "pledged its active participation alongside Tourism Seychelles in key international events such as the World Travel Market - Africa (WTM-Africa), the Outbound Travel Mart (OTM) in India, the Salon du Prêt à Partir in Mauritius and other joint marketing activities throughout the year, specifically targeting markets crucial to the destination's growth."

In return, Tourism Seychelles has "committed to supporting Air Seychelles by actively participating in the airline's

milestone events throughout the year. This will further strengthen the bond between the two entities and reinforce their shared goal of driving tourism growth in Seychelles." Mrs. Sherin Francis, the Principal Secretary for Tourism says the partnership "signifies a significant step forward in our efforts to showcase the unparalleled beauty and offerings of Seychelles to the world." Captain Benoiton said the airline is "proud to join hands with Tourism Seychelles in this endeavor to promote our beloved archipelago to travelers worldwide." ◻



Recognition

African Airports Recognised By ACI World's ASQ Award

Airports Council International (ACI) World in partnership with Amadeus has "recognised the best airports for customer experience worldwide-as chosen by passengers-through the renowned Airport Service Quality (ASQ) Awards."

Several African airports were recognised under five (5) categories. For the first category Best Airports by Size and Region (Under 2 million passengers per year), Abeid Amani Karume International Airport (Zanzibar, Tanzania), Ivato International Airport (Antananarivo, Madagascar) and Moi International Airport (Mombasa, Kenya) were recognised while for 2 to 5 million passengers per year, Dakar Blaise Diagne International Airport (Diass, Senegal) and Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam International Airport (Mauritius, Mauritius) and for 5 to 15 million passengers per year, Casablanca Mohammed V International Airport (Casablanca, Morocco) and Marrakech Menara Airport (Marrakech, Morocco) were recognised.

For Airport with the Most Dedicated Staff, Aéroport de la Réunion Roland Garros (Sainte-Marie, Reunion) and Casablanca Mohammed V International Airport (Casablanca, Morocco) were awarded. Casablanca Mohammed V International Airport (Casablanca, Morocco) and Marrakech Menara Airport (Marrakech, Morocco) were awarded for Easiest Airport Journey.

For the most enjoyable Airports, Casablanca Mohammed V International Airport (Casablanca, Morocco) and Dakar Blaise Diagne International Airport (Diass, Senegal) were recognised. Lastly, Casablanca Mohammed V International Airport (Casablanca, Morocco) and Marrakech Menara Airport (Marrakech, Morocco) Cleanest Airport.



Casablanca Mohammed V international Airport.



Moi International Airport, Mombasa, Kenya

According to ACI, "The ASQ program stands out as the preeminent airport customer experience measurement and benchmarking program globally, distinguished by its unwavering commitment to a rigorous and scientific methodology."

ACI World Director General Luis Felipe de Oliveira said, "We are delighted that in 2023 the ASQ program surpassed 400 participating airports in a historical record-reflecting our members' commitment to placing the passenger first."

Amadeus EVP Airport & Airline Operations Rudy Daniello said, "It's

encouraging to see continued commitment to customer experience at airports across the world" noting that "Over the past few years many airports have applied technologies like self-service and biometrics to improve the experience for passengers across key airport touchpoints".

8 airports were inducted into the ACI World Director General's "Roll of Excellence-a recognition given to airports that have won multiple ASQ awards over a five-year period in the last 10 years." Among these 8 airports is Casablanca Mohammed V international Airport. ◻

Digitalisation

IATA Announces First Signatories to Air Cargo Digitalization Leadership Charter

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) has launched "the IATA Digitalization Leadership Charter at the IATA World Cargo Symposium in Hong Kong. Cathay Cargo, CHAMP Cargosystems, Global Logistics System (HK) Company Limited, IAG Cargo, IBS Software, LATAM Cargo, and Lufthansa Cargo are the inaugural signatories of the charter."

According to IATA, "the Digitalization Leadership Charter aims to accelerate the air cargo industry's digitalization journey by committing to five key guiding principles."

Developed in consultation with IATA's Cargo Advisory Council Members, airlines and the wider air cargo community, the charter seeks to drive innovation, enhance efficiency, and promote a sustainable and harmonized digital transformation. Central to the charter is the

importance of data sharing using IATA ONE Record for smooth and efficient data exchange.

Brendan Sullivan, IATA's Global Head of Cargo said: "Digitalization is imperative for the air cargo industry. It requires alignment to ensure a unified and effective approach. IATA has introduced the Digitalization Leadership Charter to spearhead this alignment. By adhering to the Charter's principles-adopting industry-wide standards, championing sustainability, ensuring ethical technology use, and upholding digital leadership-the charter sets a benchmark for excellence." The Digital Leadership Guiding Principles include commitments to:

- Developing a unified and collaborative digital strategy that champions interoperability and the use of global standards across the entire supply chain.



- Enhancing organizational resilience through building robust digital infrastructure and implementing strategies that safeguard against cybersecurity risks while ensuring the responsible use of generative AI.
- Pursuing sustainable digitalization with a focus on supporting eco-friendly technology initiatives.
- Pursuing digital excellence by staying ahead of digital trends, ensuring secure and sustainable practices, and establishing industry best practices.
- Using new technology ethically when embracing emerging technologies. □

Connectivity

Tanzania Gears Up for SAATM

The government of Tanzania is gearing up to implement the Single African Air Transport Market initiative. The Tanzania Civil Aviation Authority in addition to publishing a Public Notice of its intent to join the SAATM has held a sensitization workshop on SAATM.

The Director General Mr Hamza Johari of the TCAA is quoted to have said that the time is ripe for the country to consider joining SAATM as the country's carriers are stronger and also to benefit from fifth freedom rights under the SAATM. If the country joins any time soon it would be a



Tanzania joining SAATM will enable the country's airlines to operate in the continent without restrictions major turnaround as the country had indicated in 2023 it would defer joining SAATM. It will also be a huge boost to African Civil Aviation Commission as the East African region is one of the worst performing in terms of signing up for SAATM. Only 3 countries from East Africa have signed for SAATM namely: Ethiopia, Kenya and Rwanda. □



Partnership

Virgin Atlantic and Kenya Airways Unveil Strategic Codeshare Partnership

Kenya Airways and Virgin Atlantic, both members of the SkyTeam Airline Alliance have unveiled a strategic codeshare partnership.

Julius Thairu, Chief Commercial and Customer Officer of Kenya Airways said: "We are thrilled to kickstart this transformative partnership with Virgin Atlantic. Through the synergy of our respective strengths and networks, our goal is to enhance the travel experience for our esteemed customers, providing them with expanded choices, enhanced convenience, and seamless connectivity to vital destinations worldwide."

Juha Jarvinen, Chief Commercial Officer at Virgin Atlantic, expressed enthusiasm about the collaboration, stating "We're delighted to launch our partnership with Kenya Airways. As a fellow member of the SkyTeam alliance, we know our customers will enjoy a seamless travel



The Codeshare will allow customers of both airlines experience seamless travel experience

experience, with more opportunities to earn and spend their miles with increased benefits for our Sky Priority members."

In addition to enhanced connectivity, the codeshare agreement ensures that

members of KQ frequent flyer program Asante Rewards, Asante Rewards will have the opportunity to accrue miles on Virgin Atlantic flights, while Virgin Flying Club members will enjoy the same privilege when traveling on Kenya Airways flights. ▣

New Agreement

Euroairlines Joins IATA MITA



Spanish airline, Euroairlines says it has joined the Multilateral Interline Traffic Agreement (MITA) of the International Air Transport Association (IATA).

"This agreement", according to the airline allows it to "connect with more than 300 airlines thanks to that all MITA

members assume a common framework of action - with rights and responsibilities - in relation to the offering of passengers and baggage handling services, which establishes the conditions for collaboration in the development of routes between airlines associated." Furthermore, the airline says joining "MITA reinforces our commitment and

commitment to air distribution and connectivity between routes at a global level, thus achieving Euroairlines the highest standards in air distribution" noting that MITA "gives us new capabilities business together with the greatest guarantees in the industry". The CEO of Euroairlines, Antonio López Lázaro says the airlines wants its "clients to be able to access the greatest number of possible options without barriers and that, thanks to a wide variety of connections, reach their destinations more directly". Apart from being an international air distribution and one of the four most important in the sector worldwide, Euroairlines offers its own flights to destinations in Spain, Portugal, France and Italy, and is "present in more than 60 countries thanks to its distribution service connecting more than 350 routes through numerous alliances." ▣



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Aircraft Engine and Sustainable Aviation In Africa

By Monday Ukoha



Source: GE Aerospace

Aviation and Emission

The Aviation industry is generally agreed to produce about 2.5% of all CO₂ emissions by human activities. Realizing the need to continue the important contribution of aviation to economic development of nations without harming the environment further, the aviation industry has set itself a target of net zero carbon emission by year 2050. To achieve this, the industry has anchored this objective on four pillars namely, technology, operational improvements, Infrastructure and offset and market-based measures. Of these options available to reduce the impact of fossil fuel use in air transport, Sustainable Aviation Fuels (SAF) holds the highest potential, at least in the short to medium terms, based on available technologies. It is projected that SAF will contribute about 65% of the target with a short-term target of 10% SAF inclusion by 2030.

Aircraft Engines Leading The Way To Decarbonization

With the use of SAF, as other technologies, the role of engine manufacturers is amplified. Pratt & Whitney, a leading engine manufacturer says to "help reduce aviation's dependence on fossil-based fuels", it is "advancing the use of Sustainable Aviation Fuels (SAF), while also developing novel technologies to support alternative, zero carbon fuels, like hydrogen." All Pratt & Whitney engines are currently compatible with 50% SAF according to the engine manufacturer. Over the years, the efficiency of aircraft engines has improved by over 20% compared to the engines they are replacing. Rolls Royce says "By the end of 2023, all our Trent and Business Aviation commercial aero engine types will be proven compatible with 100% SAF. We have pledged to achieve net zero carbon in our operations by 2030 and play a crucial role in enabling the sectors in which we operate reach net zero by 2050. Our new products will be compatible with net zero operation by 2030 and all our products will be compatible with net zero by 2050, in line with our UN Race to Zero commitment. "

Other technologies that are being pushed by engine manufacturers include use of hydrogen fuels. This according to experts holds much prospects for emission reduction hence the attention it is receiving from engine manufacturers. The technologies are years in coming but will be a step game changer in aviation's emission reduction.

African Airlines in Drive For Fleet Renewal

Though Africa still has one of the oldest average aircraft fleets at 17 years, African airlines have embraced newer technology to cut maintenance cost and to improve customer perception, convenience and attractiveness. Many airlines on the continent have embraced newer technologies which promise lower emissions. Nigeria's Overland Airways recently acquired brand new Embraer 175 making it the only operator of the aircraft type in Nigeria. Air Peace, Ethiopian Airlines, Air Tanzania, Uganda Airlines, Angola Airlines, EgyptAir and Rwandair amongst others, have been involved in fleet renewal with more recent technologies. This is already leading to emission reduction by African airlines and this trend is bound to continue in the coming years.

African Aviation and Sustainable Aviation

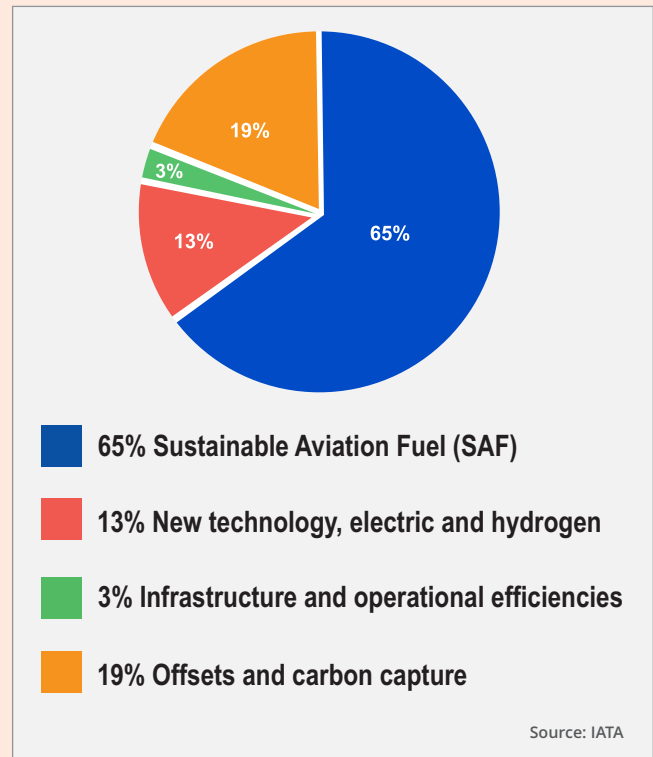
One major challenge for African aviation industry in keying into the emission reduction scheme is the belief that Africa is not a polluter, with some arguing that it is not time to talk about Sustainable Aviation Fuels in Africa. Speaking to Aviation & Allied Business in November 2023, Mr. Chamsou Andjorin, of the African Aviation Industry Group, says Africa "cannot stay away from that" and must be part of the solution. Mr. Abderahmane Berthe, Secretary General of African Airlines Association says he does not agree with this view as "Aviation is global" and Africa must play its role in reducing carbon emission.

African aviation is also growing with the industry projected to double by year 2040. According to Boeing, "Africa's commercial jet fleet will more than double over the next 20 years to 1,550 aircraft." Boeing says "African aviation traffic has recovered at a strong pace in 2023 led by pent-up demand and economic growth driven by higher global commodity prices. African airline flights are currently 8% above pre-pandemic levels. Africa's above global average, long-term annual economic growth of 3.4%, combined with increasing rates of urbanization and a growing middle-class population, will continue to drive Africa's long-term traffic demand. "Economic and growth Initiatives such as the African Continental Free Trade Area and Single African Air Transport Market are expected to further stimulate trade and intra-regional connectivity."

In addition, Africa's major international destinations are in Europe, meaning that many airlines in Africa would be caught up by regulations from other jurisdictions if the continent's airlines do not respond. At the launch of Kenya Airways SAF flight in 2023, the CEO OF Kenya Airways Allan Kilavuka said "From 2025, all aircraft departing from European airports will be required to incorporate a proportion of SAF. As a result, KQ is positioning itself to take advantage of sustainable aviation fuel momentum in accordance with the direction indicated by the European Union with the ReFuelEU Aviation regulation that sets the targets for mixing traditional fuels with increased amounts of more sustainable fuels." However, for many African airlines, who have their plates full already with economic sustainability issues, environmental sustainability has just come to add another layer of challenge.

Challenges of SAF Adoption in Africa

While it is imperative for Africa to join the SAF initiative, many challenges remain. Cost is an issue. Chief Executive Officer of Asky, one the leading airlines in West and Central Africa, Mr. Esayas W. Hailu calls for support for Africa in SAF adoption and ensuring the reduction of price of SAF as SAF is costlier than fossil fuel and this may pose a disincentive for many African carriers. SAF availability is also a major limitation. A Forbes report in 2023 says "The International Aviation Transport Association estimates that airlines will need 120 billion gallons of SAF annually to meet their



environmental targets. The estimated production of SAF in 2022 was 75 million gallons." A rough estimation will put Africa's annual SAF requirement at over 2.5 billion gallons annually based on the current market size of aviation in the continent which is put at 2%.

Though SAF is a drop-in replacement for fossil fuel, the huge capital infusion required for production and infrastructure to support SAF production means Africa requires collaboration, assistance in terms of attracting investment in the sector. Calls for sustainable aviation fuel policy across the continent is germane. It is only a matter of time before SAF inclusion and other measures to reduce emission kick in globally. Africa should be ready.

Conclusion

Aircraft engines will continue to play leading roles in the efforts to reduce aviation's emission globally and in Africa. But in Africa, there is need to continue the investment in new aircraft technology as well as improving the air traffic and navigation on the continent. SAF adoption is an area African leaders need to pay attention to by putting in place the enabling environment to attract the needed investment in SAF production. In terms of prospects, it is generally recognized that Africa holds immense potential for SAF production. Therefore, Africa has to be intentional in the investment and siting of SAF production across the continent to ensure that it is not lopsided. There can be no doubt that the continent can play a major role in the SAF value chain. ◻

HOW INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT SHAPES AFRICA'S BUSINESS AVIATION FUTURE



Kevin Singh, CEO Icarus Jet

Icarus Jet founder, CEO, and pilot, Kevin Singh, examines how infrastructure investments in Africa could help the continent reach its full potential in terms of sustained growth for present and future business aviation users.

Recognized as an indispensable component within the broader investment ecosystem, infrastructure emerges as the foundation that not only mitigates the costs associated with business operations but also unlocks unprecedented access to diverse markets. A unique contrast arises when scrutinizing the state of African aviation, where infrastructure deficiencies, notably lagging other developing regions such as Latin America, stand as a formidable impediment to realizing the continent's economic potential.



Projects in countries like Ghana, Benin, Mali, Uganda, South Africa, Sudan, and Tanzania are poised to lead in a new era of modernization in airport facilities, reflecting a collective commitment to clear the hurdles that have hindered progress.

Confronting these challenges requires a multifaceted approach, with an urgent statement to expedite privatization and create an environment conducive to both local and foreign investments. In this landscape, a public-private collaboration emerges as the most logical pathway toward aviation infrastructure development in Africa.

Central to this discourse is the blunt reality that a chronic lack of investment has not only stifled the promise of exponential growth but has precipitated the decay of Africa's air transport sector. Over decades, strategic vision shortcomings and tactical mismanagement have led to obsolete infrastructure, outdated equipment, and compromised safety systems both on the ground and in the air.

We have witnessed the previous for years at Icarus Jet when we provide trip support services in the region, as sometimes finding reliable providers in some countries is a daunting task, especially when our customer's expectations are aligned with the European and U.S. reality.

Simultaneously, the global recognition of the economic gains linked to private sector engagement in airport development has not been fully mirrored in Africa. While governments across the continent have embraced "airport privatization" and facility development as means to finance and develop their airports, the inflow of foreign investment for project financing faces challenges due to governmental control over ownership structures.

How Can Africa Finance Infrastructure Development?

Investors navigating this complex terrain contend with a trifecta of obstacles: slower economic growth, declining business confidence, and foreign currency shortages. Despite the availability of insurance as a risk mitigation tool for currency liquidity, the associated costs often pose a considerable barrier.

Africa, relative to wealthy nations, stands as both labor and resource-abundant, theoretically making it an attractive destination for international capital flows. However, high public debt levels and an uncertain international aid outlook curtail the potential for growth through large public investment programs. Consequently, the responsibility shifts to the private sector to play a more prominent role in fostering economic development, thereby steering clear of economic stagnation.

The realm of infrastructure, encompassing both physical (roads, electricity) and social (health, education) domains, calls for the private sector to take a more active role. Africa's infrastructure development needs loom large, constituting an estimated 20 percent of GDP on average by the end of the decade. While increased tax revenue collections are a primary source of financing, the sheer magnitude of the requirements requires new financing sources from the international community and the private sector.

Private or Public Push?

In recent years, there has been a notable uptick in infrastructure projects, as elucidated by local infrastructure researcher Professor Eyden Samunderu in his study titled 'Africa's Air Transport Infrastructure: Challenges, Complexities, and Opportunities'.

Specified in the study are various projects, each representing a concerted effort to bridge the infrastructure gap in African aviation. Projects in countries like Ghana, Benin, Mali, Uganda, South Africa, Sudan, and Tanzania are poised to lead in a new era of modernization in airport facilities, reflecting a collective commitment to clear the hurdles that have hindered progress.

As the push for modernization gains momentum, the imperative of both investment and expertise surfaces, ideally sourced through public-private partnerships (PPPs). Africa must throw open its doors to private capital investment, emulating the strategic endeavors of countries like Côte d'Ivoire and Rwanda.

These nations serve as models, blending strategic bets in the sector with best practices to propel vibrant aviation growth. Injecting capital into Africa's aviation ecosystem promises improved operational efficiency, incorporating modern technologies to enhance traffic flows and passenger numbers - the latter being a key variable for securing investment.



Lagos, Nigeria is one of the cities with new airport terminals

The core of progress therefore lies in leveraging private sector engagement to foster airport infrastructure improvement, an indispensable driver for Africa's economic advancement. Acknowledging the absence of a one-size-fits-all financing option, designing bespoke models tailored to the African market emerges as an effective strategy. In essence, the prerequisites for any African country aspiring to carve a niche in the global supply and value chains within the aerospace industry extend beyond mere aspirations. A trio of factors - adequate infrastructure, robust human capital, and seamless access to financing - forms the bedrock for developing a solid aviation ecosystem in any region of the world, and Africa is no exception.

The need for stable and efficient infrastructure encompasses power supply, access roads, free zones, ports, and various facilities, and the common denominator for nurturing this ecosystem lies in identifying and harnessing the appropriate investment streams - a journey that holds the promise of transforming Africa's business aviation future. ◻

African Airlines Need To Work Together To Improve Connectivity



The Secretary General of African Airlines Association (AFRAA), Mr. Abderahmane Berthe in this exclusive interview with Aviation & Allied Business Journal discusses the adoption of Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF), MRO, manpower shortage, safety and SAATM implementation amongst other topics relevant to the African Airline industry.

Q : Priorities for AFRAA **A:** At AFRAA, we have a 5-year strategic objective and every year we define our priorities. For 2024, we have agreed on four priorities. The first one is safety; because safety is very critical for our business. In this regard, AFRAA is staging the Inaugural Safety and Operations Summit this year on 15 May in Addis Ababa, back-to-back with the Stakeholders Convention.

The second priority is improving connectivity and market access because we all know that in Africa connectivity is a challenge. Improving connectivity is not only about SAATM. Of course, SAATM is very important, but we really want to see African airlines working together to improve connectivity, and this should be done with airports also because the aspect of infrastructure is also important.

New routes development across the continent is part of our priorities for 2024 and we are working together with the

African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC) and ACI Africa on strategies to develop the market access aspect. The third priority for us is sustainability.

It is very important for us to have sustainable air transport across the continent and that is the reason that the African air transport sustainability Laboratory was organized in June 2022 in Nairobi. It was hosted by AFRAA under the African Aviation Industry Group (AAIG). For us, sustainability includes economic sustainability, and social and environmental sustainability as well. And when we talk about environmental sustainability, we talk about various initiatives such as CORSIA implementation and Sustainable Aviation Fuels (SAF). At AFRAA, we have established a task force on SAF as well.

Lastly, the fourth priority is to continue implementing our strategic plan in 2024. It is also our priority to ensure that we are following our strategic plan implementation.

Q: AFRAA, African Airlines and SAF Adoption

A: Attaining Net-zero emissions by 2050 is a target we endorse at AFRAA and in this regard, we think that African airlines should also be on board. I say this because some people are of the opinion that Africa should not be concerned with environmental issues because we are not polluting much in comparison to the world, but air transport is a global industry and we have to be concerned because in other regions it is a concern. It is a global concern. In fact, at AFRAA, in 2022 during the Assembly, we made a resolution about the environment. The key points of this resolution were to encourage airlines to continue to improve the efficiency of their operations and to reduce Co2 emissions in this regard, I talked about the Laboratory we organized, one of the projects of the Laboratory was the Free Routing Area. The objective of the Free Routing Area is to reduce flight times for operations and consequently to also reduce the carbon footprint.

We kicked off this project in Addis Ababa early in November 2023 and the trials are going on and so far, it is very successful. Trial flights have been operated under the Free Routing Airspace concept from East Africa and West Africa and from East Africa to South Africa and the fuel burn reduction is substantial and it brings a lot of cost savings for airlines. The second point is really to urge all stakeholders to put in their policies the target of reduction of Co2 emissions and also to facilitate its implementation: fuel producing companies need to provide in volume the quantity of SAFs needed for operations of airlines.

It is also important at government levels to have a policy regarding the implementation of SAF. Also, you know currently, there is a lot of research by aircraft and engine manufacturers to improve the efficiency of airframe and propulsion technology for aeroplanes and of course, on the Air Navigation Service Providers (ANSPPs), I talked about the Free Routing Airspace earlier. Most importantly, we need also to make sure that at airports we have the infrastructure needed to support the transition to SAF. So, it should be a joint effort of all stakeholders to implement SAF.

For that reason, we have a task force to align airlines and stakeholders for the implementation of this project. We think that collaboration with necessary stakeholders, government bodies, research institutions and other relevant organizations to promote, facilitate and accelerate the adoption of SAF across the continent is critical. However, I want to add here that we talk a lot about environmental sustainability. As I said for 2024 priorities, for us sustainability is not only about



The second priority is improving connectivity and market access because we all know that in Africa connectivity is a challenge. Improving connectivity is not only about SAATM.

environmental sustainability; the economic and social aspects are also very important. As you know, there is a lot to be done regarding the economic sustainability of African airlines.

Q: MRO Capacity and Economic Sustainability of African Airlines

A: This is a very good question because you know for airlines, fuel and maintenance are the biggest part of the operational costs. We always talk about the fuel price; it is something that also needs to be put into consideration. Across the African continent, we have some African operators which have very good MRO facilities. However, we have many cases where operators on many occasions send their aircraft, and spare parts for overhaul outside of the continent and this is very costly and also brings some disruptions in terms of their operations. It is very important and we encourage our members to cooperate in terms of maintenance.

One of the projects is in line maintenance, preventing every airline from carrying spare parts, for example. This project is going on and also pooling spare parts because having a stock of spare parts is very expensive and in Africa, we have many airlines operating the same type of aircraft, so we can consider pooling these spare parts. We do believe in the next two to three years, these projects will relieve the operations of our member airlines in terms of maintenance support.

Q: Skills Shortage Amongst African Airlines?

A: Airline business involves a lot of skills. It varies from commercial to maintenance, pilots, it is very diverse. We have a lack of human resources across the continent. In many cases training this human resource is also very expensive mainly in regard to pilots or maintenance engineers, for example.





And if you consider that by 2040 the traffic will double according to statistics, it means that we have more aircraft operating and consequently a need for more human resources. It is very important to have a vision and policy to develop more capacity across the continent. For that reason, at AFRAA, we have proposed to our Executive Committee, and it has been approved, to put in place what we call the African Airline Training Fund. This Training Fund will be used to develop capacity across the continent for the operations of our member airlines. We observe that we will be able to get financial institutions to support this training fund. The Fund will be administered by a board not only AFRAA. The funding institutions will also be part of the management of the fund and will be involved in the definition of how the funds will be used, and what kind of training will be funded for the interest of the African airlines operation.

In line with AFRAA's vision and mission, the Technical Operations and Training Committee also is providing a forum where our members will discuss the needs of our member airlines regarding cost reduction initiatives and how to enhance safety. This is because we need human resources regarding safety standards and the meeting of human resource needs of the air transport industry to ensure airline personnel are equipped to respond to global standards and needs for airline operation is critical.

At AFRAA, we have a training unit for many years now which has been working very successfully. Every year we train many of our member airlines. Apart from training, getting human resources, how to get a job for them and to retain them is also important because we have seen in the past many African skills were lost. At the continent level, every airline needs to have a policy to retain human resources.

Q: Safety Improvement and attractive financing and insurance rates?

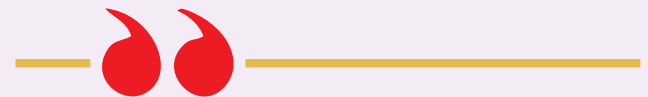
A: I don't have the exact data regarding the insurance aspect of it and I am sure that it has an impact because many years back Africa was considered unsafe in terms of airlines but things have changed. We have the Abuja safety targets and the involvement of all stakeholders to improve the safety level across the continent and that is why I say safety is one of the objectives of the priorities of AFRAA for 2024. We are launching the inaugural Safety and Operations Summit in Addis Ababa this year. It will be a forum for operators to discuss best practices in the industry.

We have been working under SAATM with IATA and AFCAC on a project to enhance safety for airlines on the continent and this project is funded by the African Development Bank. At AFRAA, through our Consulting Unit, we are assisting our members to get to the safety standard of IOSA, and those are the actions we are putting forward to improve safety. For the safety summit I talked about, we are partnering with the Flight Safety Foundation to stage this very important event. It is a first in Africa and it will be very important for our members to attend and make recommendations on how to maintain the current safety level because without safety, it will be impossible to develop airline business across the continent.

Q: Update on Blocked Airlines Funds in Africa

A: Blocked fund is really a big challenge for airlines' operations. It is something which is evolving from month to month; it can impact the cash of airlines and also their operation. At AFRAA, we are working with IATA on it and our approach is advocacy. When we see that we have an issue, we join our efforts to see how to release the funds.

The problem we have is that in some countries when you have blocked funds for more than one year, and then you have at the same time the devaluation of the currency, then the released funds will reduce at the end of the day. So, we will continue our efforts to tackle the issue of blocked funds but it is a really big concern today for operations and for that reason, we have created a Blocked Fund Taskforce at AFRAA and we have many



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airlines as part of this taskforce. We are working with airlines on measures to address the issue of blocked funds and the next meeting of the task force will be in April. We will continue our efforts in the advocacy to reduce the impact of blocked funds on the airline's operation.

Q: Implementation Level of SAATM/YD

A: I can't say I am satisfied because the level of implementation is still low. I am in Lome currently regarding some activity of SAATM and I'm informed that the total number of SAATM States is 38. However, we have many states who signed but they don't implement SAATM. There is no supranational power to force them to implement it. AFCAC came up with the concept of the Pilot Implementation Programme (PIP) in December 2022 and 21 states have signed. The objective is to start with the States which are willing and ready and to be honest, in many cases, the reason it is not implemented is that some States want to protect their national carriers. But in my view, this is not right because in terms of market access, it is a matter of reciprocity. If you block airlines from another country to operate traffic rights, the country will also block your airline. I think it is important that airlines discuss and agree and then have civil aviation follow and grant traffic rights. We have an annual meeting of all SAATM stakeholders. We have six pillars of action, and these pillars include advocacy, communication, and resource mobilization as well, there are some technical assistance aspects of it and also enhancement of African airlines collaboration.

As part of AFRAA's efforts, it is also important to build capacity and awareness regarding SAATM. For that reason, we organized in Nairobi from 18th-20th March 2024 a workshop in collaboration with the African Union Commission and AFCAC for African airlines to build capacity regarding the regulatory instruments of SAATM. These include the powers, functions and operations of the Executing Agency, consumer protection, competition regulation, the Dispute Settlement Mechanism and the revised African Civil Aviation Policy. Also, I am currently in Lome because we are putting in place the Administrative Council of the Monitoring Body. For the implementation of YD, we have a Monitoring Body which AFRAA is part of. The Dispute Settlement was the last element of the legal framework to be put in place. We already have a Secretariat based in Dakar and we need to have an administrative Council. The role of the Administrative Council in place, which will report to the Monitoring Body, in cases of disputes between states, airlines or service providers is to settle the disputes and make a decision which should be binding on the parties. We are in the process of recruiting the members. We have five members, one per region and one alternate. This Dispute Settlement Mechanism will be very important to bring confidence at the level of our member airlines regarding SAATM implementation.

Q: Challenges and Prospects for the African Airline Industry Going Forward

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A: We are in the process of recovery from COVID-19, and since 2022, we have seen a trend of recovery. However, we need to tackle the challenges of the high-cost environment, blocked funds, and market access issues. We have talked a lot. We need to take effective actions and decision-makers need to make the right decisions to support the industry and to transform the air transport environment in Africa. For the future, we think that the growth potential is very high in Africa. Traffic will continue to grow and will double by 2040 and also you know cargo activities will grow on the continent. If you look at the GDP growth of the continent, it is one of the highest in the world. GDP per capita in Africa which is today very low is on an average of 15% of the average GDP per capita globally. And we know that GDP per capita is critical for the affordability of air transport. The problem in Africa is that the GDP per capita is low and at the same time because the cost environment is high, we have also high fares. It is very difficult in this type of situation to develop air transport. We will continue working towards creating a conducive environment in terms of the affordability of air transport. There are other complimentary projects such as the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). Because the level of trade between African states is very low, less than 20%, while in other regions it is 50 or 60%, this AfCFTA project will increase the level of trade and consequently will impact the air transport industry. Also, we think that tourism development is important because in Africa, today, when we talk about tourism, we talk about tourists coming from outside of the continent; we need also to create a flow of intra-Africa tourism as well.

Visa openness is something which needs to be improved because currently, many African citizens need a visa to travel from one country to another; so there is also a project of the African Union Commission to facilitate visas for African travelers. I consider that the future is very bright for Africa in terms of air transport development and we need to create the conditions to support it because air transport is critical for the economic integration of the continent. We see that other modes of transportation are very weak across the continent. How can you travel from Dakar to Johannesburg or Cape Town without air transport? It is not possible. Unfortunately, today, we have connectivity and affordability issues which need to be resolved as soon as possible. □



Challenges And Risks Of Aging Aircraft

By Toma Matutyte



more frequent and thorough inspections, along with potential replacements of parts reaching their fatigue limits. This translates to higher costs, longer ground times, and potential disruptions to flight schedules. Airlines must carefully balance these expenses with the benefits of delaying expensive new aircraft purchases. And the current aviation landscape, characterized by an unprecedented surge in air travel demand, poses significant challenges.

Aircraft manufacturers are struggling to keep up with this demand, resulting in a backlog of orders for new aircraft. In such a scenario, operators are compelled to reconsider the retirement of older

aircraft. With the increased demand for air travel, these aging planes have become more commercially viable than before.

The aviation industry faces a conundrum: a growing number of aging aircraft taking to the skies. Maintaining older jets offers economic advantages, yet it also presents its own problems and risks. While most of these are apparent even to newcomers in the industry, the current situation, with the order backlog for new aircraft hitting all-time records, brings its own unique set of challenges.

Increased Maintenance Needs and Safety Concerns

Over the past 35 years, data from IATA shows that more than 16,000 commercial aircraft have been retired globally, with an average of 700 reaching the end of their service life each year. This trend is projected to accelerate, with an estimated 11,000 retirements expected in the next decade. However, this outlook is complicated by a significant backlog of new aircraft deliveries, particularly narrow-body models. The surge in demand, exceeding even recent projections, has outpaced manufacturers' production capacity. Consequently, many planned aircraft retirements in the coming years might be postponed.

Extending an aircraft's lifespan undoubtedly increases maintenance demands. Age brings wear and tear, requiring

Delayed Deliveries

Operators are forced to weigh the economic advantages of extending the lifespan of older aircraft against the potential drawbacks, such as increased maintenance costs and potential disruptions. This complex decision-making process underscores the delicate balance airlines must maintain in navigating the evolving dynamics of the aviation industry. The global commercial aviation industry currently operates a fleet of over 30,000 aircraft, with more than 10,000 exceeding 20 years of age. As aircraft age, maintenance costs inevitably rise, averaging around \$1 million annually. This increasing burden on airlines became particularly pronounced in the past year, as they navigated the early stages of post-pandemic recovery. In 2021 alone, airlines collectively shouldered over \$10 billion in maintenance and repair expenses, highlighting one of the industry's most significant challenges. This financial pressure is expected to intensify in the coming years.

While age doesn't automatically equate to compromised safety, the potential for issues rises. Extensive maintenance programs, robust regulatory oversight, and proactive risk management are crucial to mitigating these concerns.

Airlines must invest in advanced inspection techniques, skilled technicians, and rigorous training to ensure older aircraft remain airworthy. However, a heightened level of vigilance and a zero-tolerance policy for deferred maintenance are essential.

Production delays plaguing new aircraft deliveries have pushed airlines towards extending the life of older jets. While financially appealing in the short term, this strategy can backfire. Operating older aircraft often translates to higher fuel costs, lower fuel efficiency, and reduced passenger comfort compared to modern counterparts. These factors can negatively impact competitiveness and profitability in the long run. Airlines must carefully analyze the trade-offs and weigh future costs against short-term relief.

Spare Parts: An Unpromising Challenge

As the number of older aircraft grows, so does the demand for spare parts. This can lead to shortages, driving up costs and causing delays. Manufacturers prioritize production of parts for newer models, leaving airlines scrambling for components for their aging fleets.

Therefore, right now we have a situation where spare parts for older aircraft become in a very limited supply. Some projections aren't very positive, to say the least. For example, Airbus report predicts a looming 40% gap between demand and supply for spare parts in the A320 family by 2035.

And it seems very real for virtually everyone within the industry. Here's an example of how rapidly prices are increasing for older powertrains: the CFM56 engine, which powers fleets of Boeing 737s and Airbus A320s. Prices for its parts have jumped 30% in the past five years.

And, let's say, it's not just about pocket change, as, for example, the critical hot section blades in the CFM56 engine. Replacing a complete set now sets an operator back a \$1.7 million - and even finding a whole set of such blades is becoming very hard.

Now, I'm not fear-mongering, but ignoring this reality wouldn't be good for any business. We're facing a complex challenge here: soaring costs and limited access to parts, both pushing the operational boundaries of older aircraft. And there are obviously even some safety-related implications, as aircraft require more vigilant maintenance, but limited parts availability threatens our ability to uphold the highest safety standards. Imagine a critical repair delayed due to lack of parts - not a comforting thought. There is also an economic strain. Airlines are already dealing with fuel price fluctuations and a complex post-pandemic recovery. Add skyrocketing maintenance costs to the mix, and economic viability for older aircraft becomes a serious question.

Additionally, environmental impact is a very important topic today. Keeping older, less fuel-efficient jets in the air longer



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contradicts our sustainability goals. We need a strategic approach that balances safety, economics, and environmental responsibility. Airlines must explore alternative sources, engage in effective inventory management, even strategic stockpiling, if it seems viable and business can afford it.

The Human Factor

Maintaining the expertise required to service aging aircraft presents another challenge. Technicians trained on newer models may lack the skills needed for older systems. Airlines must invest in upskilling initiatives and knowledge transfer programs to bridge the gap. Additionally, attracting and retaining talent capable of handling complex maintenance tasks becomes crucial in an industry facing a skilled labor shortage.

It is frequently mentioned that such challenges are demanding answers, which industry already familiar with. And technological advancements often are the most straightforward answer. Moreover, their implementation usually aligns with sustainability goals, for example, modernizing older aircraft with fuel-efficient technologies can mitigate environmental impact and potentially offer economic benefits.

Another answer is, of course, collaboration. Airlines can share resources, expertise, and spare parts through strategic partnerships to alleviate individual challenges and optimize costs. They have been doing so in the face of one crisis or another for decades already, so it is definitely a proven way to overcome the financial burdens of these days.

Additionally, I would also mention an importance of the long-term planning here. Airlines must meticulously plan their fleet strategies, considering future replacement needs, technological advancements, and economic factors. All in all, the decision to extend an aircraft's lifespan is not one to be taken lightly. A thorough understanding of the associated challenges and risks is crucial for airlines to make informed decisions. ■



Africa And The National Carrier Question

THE SEARCH FOR ALTERNATIVES

By Monday Ukoha



The Government of South Africa recently canceled the agreement with Takatso Consortium on 51% stake in SAA

The recent announcement by the Government of South Africa cancelling its agreement with Takatso Consortium on 51% stake in South African Airways has once again brought to the fore the unending failures of governments in Africa to establish national carriers. Coming after the recent fiasco about the Nigeria Air project, it is not hard to see the challenge that has befallen many governments in Africa. When the two largest powerhouses are struggling to set up or sustain national carrier, it mirrors the unpalatable situation across Africa.

National Carrier Vs Flag Carrier

The argument has continued in Africa on whether there is indeed need for national carriers in Africa or countries should just designate flag carriers which could either be divested national airlines, existing private carriers or Special Purpose Vehicles set up for that purpose. No matter the side of the divide one chose to argue from, the basics are that governments in Africa, in respect of their national carriers, are having a tough time.

Firstly, many governments have not been able cut their losses and move on. In many parts of Africa, there are many voices calling on governments to hands off those airlines.

Secondly, these national carriers employ many citizens of these countries and many governments are not ready for the political fallout of job losses from closing down airlines. In fact, the Department of Public Enterprises of South Africa, has assured workers of SAA that their employment would not be impacted by the cancellation of the Takatso deal. Furthermore, many governments have been unsuccessful in privatizing their national carrier or forming quasi flag carriers.

In the presence of weak transport infrastructure, many African governments have found usefulness in the national carrier providing connections that promote economic activities which private carriers may not be amenable to provide due to profit considerations.

A Litany of Woes

Whether the huge investments and drain of the public purse that these national carrier projects have come to represent can justify these investments remain to be seen and is the discussion for another day. For instance, Kenya Airways has been supported severally by the government of Kenya thankfully, it was profitable in 2023. South African Airways, once the largest airline on the continent, is not only a shadow of its former self but has received over \$2.2 billion in support in ten years according to the Minister of Public Enterprise as quoted in a BBC report. Across Africa, many national carriers depend on governments to pay their debt and carry on as going concerns. In Nigeria, the government had equally spent huge sums midwifing a national carrier which is in comatose currently.

Many of national carriers in Africa are small of size and therefore do not benefit from economies of scale and most often do not have the supporting infrastructure to run sustainably thereby leaving questions as to the benefit of their continued existence. There is also perennial government interference in management, mismanagement and in some cases outright corruption. Only a few are profitable.

Any Way Out for Governments?

In this regard, it is quite easy to see some commentators' love for Ethiopian Airlines. Bucking the trend, ET has continued to grow exponentially and more often has become the example for those supporting the establishment of national carriers in Africa. It is well run, does not have government interference in its management (or not enough to affect its proper running), has a tested and proper succession plan and has put in place strategic framework for future growth. Royal Air Maroc and EgyptAir are also examples of airline doing well, and these successful examples have provided backing for those in support of continued existence of national carriers in Africa. Other African governments may wish to study the examples of these national carriers. It is therefore convenient to postulate that African countries that have the capability to run their national carriers efficiently may go ahead. Its doubtful, though if many will be seen.



KQ and SAA are partnering to create a bigger airline



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In the search for solutions, it is equally important to underscore, and many governments need to hear this, that not all African countries can have economically sustainable national carriers or flag carriers domiciled in those countries. For some, the market is just too small to sustain full scale network carriers. The push to establish national airline at all cost will lead to many more airlines failing in Africa. The difficulties in setting up of successor national or flag carriers in Ghana, Nigeria and elsewhere are significant pointers. This is even one of the benefits of the Single African Air Transport Market, SAATM as it seeks to increase flights into African countries through its renewed focus on 5th Freedom routes activation.

Importantly, stakeholders have called for airline consolidation. Speaking at the African Airlines Association Annual General Assembly (AGA) in Kampala in 2023, the Managing Directors of Kenya Airways and Safarilink, Mr Allan Kilavuka and Mr. Alex Avedi, respectively made the call for consolidation to create bigger airlines, and enjoy benefits including economies of scale. KQ and SAA are already collaborating in this line. And one hopes that the partnership will grow to include other airlines across Africa.



ET has continued to grow exponentially and is a great example of a thriving national carrier



Mismanagement has been a major blame on why National carriers fail

Privatisation is another option and attraction of strategic investors have been proposed by others. But the experiences including the Nigeria Airways have shown too that this has its limitations in Africa.

Another option often floated by others (not directly in relation to national carriers) including the past Director General of Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority, Capt. Musa Nuhu, is to turn the entire West African region air transport industry into a domestic market for airlines of the sub-region. Ditto for other regions. This will not only help to harmonize and reduce charges, remove limitations on frequency, but also increase the market size, and offer the assurance of connectivity to governments and deemphasize national airline ownership. It will also ensure that successor airlines in the region will find sufficient market to thrive. However, it does appear that for the African situation, the best option may be to designate thriving private carriers to provide air services across the regions, these flag carriers will be availed favourable operating environment.

This option will lead not only to thriving air transport market but also free governments' resources to be invested in direly needed social and physical infrastructure. This if paired with the concept of a single domestic African market will create large markets and stronger carriers.

Final Words

South African Airways issue has once again amplified the position of naysayers to national carriers. The case of SAA



In the search for solutions, it is equally important to underscore, and many governments need to hear this, that not all African countries can have economically sustainable national carriers or flag carriers domiciled in those countries. For some, the market is just too small to sustain full scale network carriers.

as indeed many other national carriers is to say the least a sad commentary on government ownership and management of airlines, especially in Africa. And as always mismanagement has been blamed. It begs the question; will any new national carrier not face the same malaise that killed their predecessors? As the South African government seeks ways forward from this latest setback, the task remains that SAA has to attract fresh injection of financing to continue its comeback.

The road looks long, or even bumpy but for South Africa and other African governments and national carriers, there are plenteous examples to learn from, to succeed or fail. And decision time is now. □

Digitilisation

Etihad Cargo Partners With Rotate To Launch Digital Sales Optimisation Tool

Etihad Cargo, the cargo and logistics arm of Etihad Airways, says it is "launching Sales Cockpit, a digital sales optimisation tool that will enable the carrier to enhance customer relationships and add value to its partnerships"

Etihad Cargo says it "partnered with Netherlands-based Rotate in May 2023 to co-develop Sales Cockpit with the aim of utilising data and machine learning to improve customer service and gain a more in-depth understanding of the carrier's partners and customers. Using custom-built algorithms to analyse data, Sales Cockpit generates tailored and customisable recommendations on how users can strengthen customer relationships by identifying current and future opportunities."

Etihad Cargo and Rotate have completed the co-development and delivery of the first-of-its-kind tool. The carrier will now roll out Sales Cockpit globally, providing its commercial teams with access to updated data analysis and a real-time snapshot of Etihad Cargo's business on particular routes, with individual customers and by product. Stanislas Brun, Vice President Cargo at Etihad Cargo, said: "The successful co-development and



Etihad Cargo and Rotate Launches Sales Cockpit across Etihad Cargo's global stations following the co-development of the innovative digital sales optimisation tool

completion of Sales Cockpit in partnership with Rotate will benefit Etihad Cargo's partners, as sales representatives and account managers are empowered by data to have more meaningful interactions with customers."

Ryan Keyrouse, Chief Executive Officer at Rotate, said: "Co-developing Sales Cockpit with an innovative partner like Etihad Cargo gave us unique access to an expert team to rapidly build and validate the solution. The collaboration helped maximise adoption, as both Head Office and local teams were involved

throughout its development. We are immensely grateful to the whole Etihad Cargo team for the enthusiasm and energy they put into this project."

Brun concluded: "Etihad Cargo and Rotate's partnership has enabled the carrier to provide its expertise to help unlock the full potential of digitalisation. Sales Cockpit will benefit not only Etihad Cargo and its customers but also has the potential to transform how other carriers in the wider air cargo community access the vast amounts of data available and use it to start having more meaningful and engaging conversations with their customers." ▣

56th AFRAA AGA

AFRAA Announces November 17 - 19 for Annual General Assembly

African Airlines Association, AFRAA has announced the date for its 56TH Annual General Assembly scheduled for Cairo, Egypt. The AGA will hold from November 17 to 19, 2024.

The AGA is the premier meeting of African Airlines and this edition will be

hosted by EgyptAir, a founding member of the Association. AFRAA had announced the choice of Cairo at its 55th AGA in Kampala, Uganda. Many of the challenges facing African carriers remain including poor connectivity, weak and small airlines, and the need to speed up

the adoption of digitalization across the sector.

These and other issues are expected to be addressed during the AGA. The 56TH AGA will also offer AFRAA members the opportunity to review their successes from the last AGA. ▣

The African MRO Market Is Growing

AMETEK MRO, a global provider of MRO services to the commercial, regional and general aviation markets in this interview with Aviation & Allied Business Journal discussed the operations of MROs in the African aviation industry and other related topics. AMETEK MRO designs programs such as aircraft component management services.



Mr. Sandy Basu, Technical Sales Manager, AMETEK MRO

Q: Thank you for the opportunity to have this interview with you, can you give us your outlook of the African MRO market? **A:** AMETEK MRO perceive that the African MRO market is growing, and this provides a positive outlook for the coming years as more modern fleets are operated. This is not just because more Airbus and Boeing aircraft are being deployed, we also see an increase in regional jets and turboprops. The African market is experiencing the advantage of procuring newer aircraft which remain well supported in Europe and North America, so operators are able to manage maintenance costs more efficiently rather than managing the obsolescence issues associated with an end-of-life airframe. Subject to no world damaging disasters, I would be confident to say we will see strong year-on-year growth across Africa. To boost AMETEK MRO's profile and raise awareness of our capabilities, we will be attending MRO Africa in Addis Ababa between 23rd - 25th April and look forward to meeting our customers there.

Q: What are your capabilities and what level of maintenance do you carry out?

A: Throughout AMETEK MRO (AEM, Antavia, Muirhead Avionics) we offer a broad range of capability and provide overhaul and repair services for over 40,000 components

fitted to a various range of fixed wing and rotary aircraft types. The MRO services we provide include landing gear, safety equipment, heat exchangers, flight data recorders, weather radar, wheels, brakes, cabin interiors and many more. Full information can be accessed on the AMETEK MRO website.

Q: What volume of business do you do with carriers/operators based in Africa?

A: In the past year we have restructured the AMETEK MRO sales teams by region and this has allowed us to have more focus on the business opportunities in the African continent. In the first year, we have seen the levels of business grow and just as importantly, we have become more visible and better known to carriers and operators who previously did not recognise our brand for MRO services.

We are early in the process, but we are successfully knocking on doors, winning new customers and developing lasting relationships, something that AMETEK MRO brands have always had a strong reputation for.

Our first year has been successful and we look to build the trust we have developed with dedicated face-to-face contact which builds mutual trust and respect.



In the past year we have restructured the AMETEK MRO sales teams by region and this has allowed us to have more focus on the business opportunities in the African continent.

Q: In some regions, operators struggle with high costs and lack of skilled labour, how has AMETEK MRO been able to help out with airlines facing this kind of issue?

A: This is not a problem unique to Africa, it is currently being experienced throughout the world of aviation. At AMETEK MRO we understand that customers need to keep costs to a minimum and we try to ensure they are involved throughout the entire repair and overhaul process. If we discover that the cost to carry out a repair is close to BER (Beyond Economical Repair), we liaise with the customer and discuss the options at the soonest opportunity. It may not be what the customer wants to hear, but we can both work towards a solution that ensures there are no maintenance delays for their aircraft. Regarding skills, we often welcome our customers' own engineers into our facilities where they can be trained on specific products. This provides a major benefit for customers and further develops our relationship.

Q: It is quite commendable that AMETEK MRO has been expanding. Are there plans to establish a physical presence in Africa?

A: Currently, there are no plans to establish capability in Africa and this is mainly due to the strong roots we have in Europe. The transport links between Africa and Europe are so very reliable and our facilities are all close to main cargo hubs such as Heathrow and Paris CDG, so at this time there is no need to set up a facility in Africa. But we would never say that this is not a future possibility.

Q: How does your cooperation with OEMs impact the services that are rendered to respective customers/airlines?

A: AMETEK MRO considers strong relationships with the OEMs to be a very important part of the business. Throughout the group we do already have many ARC (Approved Service Centre) agreements and we are continually looking to expand our ever-growing list of approvals. This gives our customers full confidence that these OEMs support us technically and supply us with fully approved materials - ensuring maintenance of the highest quality. AMETEK MRO always work to the highest standards of industry excellence which is recognised by both our customers and the OEMs together.

Q: Recently, AMETEK MRO announced its expansion in the Middle East with the 5 year agreement with Honeywell, how significant is this to the organisation as a whole?

A: Above all, this agreement is an extension of our global cooperation with a major OEM and not limited to an expansion in the Middle East alone.

As explained in answer to question 6, this ARC agreement is the recognition of our continuous best-in-class support to an industry which will need to build more of these relationship in the future to meet demand and ensure the best skilled technicians.

Q: What level of patronage do you enjoy from operators in Africa and what are you doing as an organization to grow your business in Africa?

A: We have only recently refocused on the African market by having the dedicated resource available. Early indications show a fantastic appetite for the AMETEK MRO capabilities and the strong levels of support we can provide. Customers have become very interactive quickly and we are receiving regular enquiries from operators across the region. Customers are supporting us by suggesting additional capabilities which will suit the region's fleets and growth strategies. AMETEK MRO is optimistic that we can develop the relationships we need to firmly establish ourselves in Africa.

Q: What major challenges if any, do you encounter in the African market?

A: The main challenge is the one nobody likes to talk about - money. We have a few African customers that are on credit terms. However, most customers know that until we establish a stable profile, payment for all services needs to be made in advance. The consequence for the customer is that this process may delay shipments, so this has to be factored in on both sides to ensure that operations and aircraft availability are not affected.

Q: How is the supply chain affecting your services?

A: Since the impact of Covid-19 it would be fair to say that there has been much improvement in the global supply chain, but there are areas that continue to cause delays. Most OEMs have managed to correct the availability of spare parts which is great for MROs, like AMETEK, and the customer, as component repairs can be completed with agreed turnaround times.

Q: How do you ensure quick response to your customers especially in cases of AOG?

A: If a customer has an AOG we will react immediately to see if we can meet their requirements. A full assessment of the situation and options available is made, with continued customer communication until we have provided a solution. We do have an out-of-hours phone number which customers can utilise for those AOGs that occur when the facility is closed. Subject to the requirements of the service we can offer skilled technicians who come into the facility out-of-hours and complete a customer's unit as quickly and safely as possible. This may not be possible on all occasions, as there may be a reason as to why a unit cannot be completed but we will continue to work with the customer to provide a satisfactory solution. ▣

Progress

IATA Reports Progress On Sustainability, Digitalization And Safety In Air Cargo

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) has "reviewed progress in digitalization, safety and sustainability at the opening of the IATA World Cargo Symposium (WCS) with the aim of accelerating progress on these critical priorities."

Brendan Sullivan, IATA's Global Head of Cargo at the WCS said "Air cargo volumes are now firmly back to pre-pandemic levels. The challenge now is to ensure that air cargo growth is efficient, safe and aligned with achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050. Through the hard work of the air cargo industry, the building blocks are in place to significantly accelerate progress in all these areas."

Sullivan said: "The biggest opportunity

for the air cargo industry is digitalization. This has not happened as fast as any of us would have liked. But progress is real. Inefficient paper-based, manual processes are being replaced with digital solutions in all aspects of cargo operations from tracking to customs clearance. That's a fact. And it's making international trade more efficient."

"Last year the industry's safety record reached new heights. Among the 38 million flights in 2023 there were 30 accidents, just one of which was fatal. A good safety record is earned every day. For air cargo that means continuing to put special emphasis on the handling of dangerous goods, and in particular lithium batteries.", said Sullivan.

On Sustainability, according to IATA, "Airlines and shippers have given strong demand signals for Sustainable Aviation Fuels (SAF) which are expected to account for some 65% of the needed mitigation to achieve net zero carbon emissions in 2050."

Sullivan said: "There is no shortage of demand signals from airlines and shippers to use SAF. The problem remains a shortage of supply. As we saw with the introduction of solar and wind generation for electricity, production incentives are the way forward. Japan is a good example. The government has put a 10% production mandate on fuel suppliers. Singapore has also recently taken steps to create a Sustainable Air Hub with a view to foster SAF production and use." ■

Re-appointment

ICAO Council Reappoints Secretary General Salazar

The 36 States on the governing Council of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) has appointed Juan Carlos Salazar, of Colombia, for a second three-year term as Secretary General.

According to ICAO, since Mr. Salazar's appointment on 1 August 2021, "the ICAO Secretariat has embarked on a broad transformation of its activities and operations, ushering a new era for this specialized agency of the United Nations."

Mr. Salazar said: "Marking the first phase of ICAO's ambitious three-year transformation journey, so much has been achieved in support of our people and culture, as well as digital and operational transformation. I wish to acknowledge the valuable guidance and support received throughout my first term from the ICAO Assembly, Council and its President. I would like to also

express my profound appreciation to all our Member States and aviation stakeholders, and, most of all, to my Secretariat colleagues. It is through our collective efforts that we have established a strong foundation for the future."

ICAO Council President Salvatore Sciacchitano noted that the ICAO Council is very pleased to support Mr. Salazar as he continues his crucial work and said: "Transforming ICAO to allow the Organization to enhance its standardization, strategic policy, and capacity building activities is critical to assuring a sustainable, resilient, safe and secure future for the global aviation sector."

Mr Salazar is an expert in aviation law and policy, with almost 30 years of



The re-appointed ICAO SG, Juan Carlos Salazar and ICAO Council President Salvatore Sciacchitano

experience in international negotiations in the fields of air transport, management, and regulatory affairs. Prior to his appointment as Secretary General, Mr. Salazar had served as the Director General of Civil Aviation of Colombia at Aerocivil, a complex civil aviation organization with more than 3,100 employees. He had also served in various other executive and leadership positions in several world regions. ■

Appointment

Boeing Appoints Stephanie Pope As President/CEO Of Commercial Airplanes

Following the decision of the former President and CEO of Boeing Dave Calhoun to "step down as CEO at the end of 2024" although he will "continue to lead Boeing through the year to complete the critical work underway to stabilize and position the company for the future", Boeing has announced a change in its board and management. Boeing says "Stan Deal, Boeing Commercial Airplanes President and CEO, will retire from the company and Stephanie Pope has been appointed to lead Boeing Commercial Airplanes" with effect from March 25, 2024.

According to Boeing, "Pope has been serving as chief operating officer of Boeing since January of this year. Previously, she was president and chief executive officer of Boeing Global Services, where she was responsible for leading the company's aerospace services for commercial, government and aviation industry customers worldwide. Prior, she was chief financial officer of Boeing Commercial Airplanes, and has held positions in every Boeing

business unit. She begins her role as President and CEO of Commercial Airplanes immediately." Prior to this role, Boeing says "Pope served as president and CEO of Boeing Global Services, with responsibility for leading Boeing's aerospace services business supporting commercial, government and aviation industry customers worldwide."

Previously, Pope was vice president and chief financial officer of Boeing Commercial Airplanes, from December 2020 to March 2022, with responsibility for the financial management and strategic, long-range business planning for the business unit.

Earlier, Pope was vice president and chief financial officer of Boeing Global Services, where she oversaw all financial activities for the business unit and was instrumental in its establishment in 2017.

Pope has been at Boeing for nearly three decades and in that time has held several other senior leadership



Stephanie Pope, CEO/President, Boeing Commercial Airplanes

positions at the corporate level as well as the program level. As a member of Boeing's Executive Council, Pope serves as the executive sponsor of Boeing Women Inspiring Leadership, a business resource group dedicated to increasing gender diversity awareness and promoting diverse representation among women. ▣

Flying Cars

Aviterra Partners with PAL-V To Bring Flying Cars To Africa

Aviterra, a Dubai-based company that deals with advanced air mobility has "concluded a historic deal with PAL-V to bring the Liberty flying car to the Middle East and Africa." In regards to this, Aviterra says it is "acquiring over 100 PAL-V Liberty flying cars, making an investment, and formalizing a partnership for the Middle East and Africa."

Mouhanad Wadaa, Managing Director of Aviterra, says: "The PAL-V is the perfect tool for our customers' regional travel requirements, offering a combination of flying and driving. It's

truly an innovation that will change mobility as we know it." Wadaa emphasized the enhanced travel options the Liberty provides, with customers having the flexibility to FlyDrive themselves or utilize Aviterra's services.

According to Aviterra, "The PAL-V Liberty, known as the world's first real flying car due to the combination of a gyroplane and a car, addresses the need to travel independent from (congested) roads and enhance travel flexibility. With a flight range of 500 km and a maximum airspeed of 180 km/h,

the Liberty shortens commute and travel times." "While running a business aviation company, we've always kept a close eye on the emerging Advanced Air Mobility industry," notes Wadaa, highlighting the unique opportunity PAL-V presents. "PAL-V's long-standing presence and adherence to existing regulations allow our customers to safely FlyDrive using existing air and road infrastructure." Loggia Investment, the investment arm of Aviterra, has made a strategic investment in PAL-V and established partnership for the Middle East and Africa region. ▣

New Beginnings

Air Cairo Appoints Captain Ahmed Shannan as Chairman and Managing Director

Egypt's low-cost carrier, Air Cairo has appointed Captain Ahmed Shannan as its new Chairman and Managing Director with effect from March 5, 2024.

According to the airline, "Captain Shannan succeeds Mr. Hussein Sherif, who stepped down after a successful four-year tenure during which Air Cairo achieved numerous accomplishments across all levels of the company." Air Cairo says "Captain Shannan previously served as the Chief Operating Officer of Air Cairo and is an ICAO-approved trainer. He also held the position of General Manager of Safety and Quality at the company. Notably, Captain Shannan was one of the key leaders who contributed to Air Cairo's achievements over the past four years." Captain Shannan expressed his



Dignitaries at the appointment of Captain Ahmed Shannan

gratitude and appreciation to Mr. Sherif for leading the company during the most challenging four years in its history. This period laid the solid foundation and structure for future

success and development. He affirmed the "continuation of Air Cairo's successful journey and strategy of expansion, development of safety, quality, and profitability standards." ▣

Certification

Gulfstream G700 Certified for Deliveries

Gulfstream Aerospace has announced that the "all-new Gulfstream G700 has received Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) type certification, paving the way for customer deliveries of the most spacious aircraft in business aviation." The business aircraft manufacturer also explained that the "G700's FAA certification also confirmed two new performance improvements, giving customers increased flexibility and airport availability: a balanced field length takeoff distance of 5,995 feet/1,827 meters and a landing distance of 3,150 ft/960 m (standard ISA day, sea level), both shorter than originally anticipated."

Mark Burns, President of Gulfstream said the aircraft had "successfully completed the most rigorous certification program in company history" noting that the "G700 brings a

new level of performance and cabin comfort to business aviation and is doing so while meeting the highest certification standards our industry has ever seen."

Along with the range and speed increases, Gulfstream announced that the G700 cabin altitude was further reduced to 2,840 ft/866 m while flying at 41,000 ft/12,497 m, providing even more comfort for passengers. The G700 cabin also features whisper-quiet noise levels, 20 Gulfstream Panoramic Oval Windows and 100% fresh, never recirculated air.

In September 2023, Gulfstream announced G700 performance enhancements for range, speed and



The Gulfstream G700 Aircraft

cabin altitude. The aircraft's range increased to 7,750 nautical miles/14,353 kilometers at Mach 0.85 or 6,650 nm/12,316 km at Mach 0.90, gaining 250 nm/463 km at both speeds over original projections. The G700's maximum operating speed increased from Mach 0.925 to Mach 0.935, making it the fastest in the Gulfstream fleet. ▣

Innovation

Qatar Airways Showcases World's First AI Virtual Digital Human Cabin Crew



Qatar Airways presented its second-generation virtual cabin crew, Sama 2.0, powered by innovative conversational AI at ITB Berlin

Qatar Airways at ITB Berlin 2024 successfully launched its "holographic virtual cabin crew, Sama 2.0." Qatar Airways is the world's first airline to develop the Artificial Intelligence powered digital human cabin crew to assist its passengers in designing curated travel experiences.

Sama, meaning 'sky' in Arabic which is developed by Qatar Airways in partnership with UneeQ, took centre stage at the new Qatar Airways stand during ITB Berlin. Qatar Airways says: "Sama 2.0 is ready to answer questions in real time such as Qatar Airways FAQs, destinations, support tips and more, and will be accessible through QVerse,

Qatar Airways' immersive digital platform, as well as through the Qatar Airways app." The one-of-a-kind cabin crew is poised to create benchmarks for personalised and functional service interactions in air travel.

Qatar Airways Vice President Marketing, Babar Rahman, said: "Sama 2.0 represents our relentless pursuit of innovation, and embodies Qatar Airways' values of exceptional service and hospitality. This is a monumental point in spearheading the successful synergy between technology and human connection - not only for Qatar Airways, but also for the industry at large."

UneeQ Chief Executive Officer, Danny Tomsett, said: "Sama embodies UneeQ's commitment to blending technology with empathy and personalisation, providing an innovative solution that aligns with Qatar Airways' reputation for world-class service. She's a testament to the endless possibilities of AI, capable of delivering personalised and engaging interactions that mirror human conversation." ■

Efficient Operations

Outsight Partners with GATE Alliance to Improve Airport Technology

Leading innovator in 3D LiDAR-Based Spatial AI Software Solutions, Outsight says "it is joining GATE - The Airport Technology Network, an alliance dedicated to fostering innovation and advancement in airport infrastructure."

This membership marks a significant step for Outsight, as it will collaborate with other GATE members to analyze and improve airport operations through Spatial Intelligence. The partnership aims to integrate Outsight's cutting-edge Spatial AI technology within airport ecosystems, enhancing operational efficiency,

elevate passenger experience, and increase safety.

Raul Bravo, Founder-President of Outsight said: "We are grateful for this opportunity to join the GATE Alliance, another step demonstrating the growing recognition of LiDAR's importance in airport management. Collaborating with experts throughout this value chain will allow us to deploy this technology to new and more rewarding uses, all towards the purpose of streamlining, simplifying and securing the end consumer's experience." Outsight says its "unique Spatial AI technology, based on LiDAR, offers unparalleled insights into people flows and asset utilization within all airport

environments, both in the terminal and the curb" and assures that this collaboration with GATE will "enable the global deployment of Outsight's technology across airports around the world, contributing to smarter, safer, and more efficient airport operations." Airports are constantly on the lookout for new solutions to improve performance and stay competitive.

Outsight's demonstrated expertise in designing custom LiDAR solutions to meet client needs across countries and operating environments provides airports with the appropriate expertise to appropriately discover the full potential of this new technology. ■

NIGERIA ACHIEVES SUCCESS IN ICAO SECURITY AUDIT PROGRAMME



Mrs. Olubunmi Kuku, Managing Director, FAAN; Dr. Emmanuel Meribole, Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Aviation representing Honourable Minister of Aviation; and Capt. Chris Najomo, Acting Director General, NCAA

The Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN) has said that Nigeria was successful in "the just concluded International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Security Audit Programme the continuous Monitoring Approach (USAP-CMA) of Nigeria as announced at the "Audit Debrief by the Team Lead, Callum Vine" According to Authority, the objective of the USAP-CMA is "to promote global

aviation security through continuous auditing and monitoring of Member States' aviation security performance, to enhance their aviation security compliance and oversight capabilities, by regularly and continuously obtaining and analyzing data on Member States' aviation security performance, including the level of implementation of the critical elements of an aviation security oversight system and the degree of

compliance with the Standards of Annex 17 - Security and the relevant security-related Standards of Annex 9 - Facilitation, as well as associated procedures, guidance material, and security-related practices."

Mr. Vine says "Nigeria scored very well in most of the key indicators" and praised the country for "having very robust policies and agencies with clear mandates on airport security."

The Managing Director/Chief Executive of FAAN, Mrs. Olubunmi Kuku, said "the Authority would use the results of the audit as a roadmap for continuous improvement in the services it renders to airport users and stakeholders" and urged all stakeholders to "collaborate closely, share best practices, and remain vigilant in upholding the highest standards of security in the Nigerian aviation industry." The debriefing event was attended by the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Aviation and Aerospace; Dr. Emmanuel Meribole, who represented the Honourable Minister and the Acting Director General, Nigeria Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA), Captain Chris Najomo. □

Improvement

Nigerian Government To Refurbish Airports

The aviation sector will be one of the major beneficiaries of the President Bola Tinubu Renewed Hope Infrastructure Development Fund (RHIDF) which was approved "to facilitate effective infrastructure development across the pivotal areas of agriculture, transportation, ports, aviation, energy, healthcare, and education in Nigeria."

According to the Nigerian Presidency, the fund will "invest in critical national projects that will, among other things, promote growth; enhance local value-addition, create employment opportunities, and stimulate

technological innovation and exports."

A major objective of the fund is to "Execute strategic and meticulously chosen national infrastructure projects across several key sectors, including road, rail, agriculture among others."

On aviation enhancement, the focus is on "the revitalization and modernization of major airports nationwide. Through targeted investments and infrastructure upgrades, major airports will undergo comprehensive refurbishment, including improvement in terminal facilities, runway expansions, and the

implementation of cutting-edge technologies to enhance safety and operational efficiency."

As the major infrastructural enabler of his global push for foreign direct investment across sectors, the President has further directed that the projects funded under the Renewed Hope Infrastructure Development Fund (RHIDF) reflect an equitable national spread, such that every Nigerian is impacted by the initiatives of his administration in the most qualitative fashion possible, according to the Presidency. □

Nigeria's Aviation Minister Holds Meeting With Airbus Team



Hon. Minister of Aviation and Aerospace Development, Barr. Festus Keyamo with Nigeria and Airbus teams during his visit to the headquarters of Airbus in Toulouse Blagnac.

Nigeria's Honourable Minister of Aviation and Aerospace Development, Festus Keyamo SAN was at the headquarters of Airbus in Toulouse Blagnac, France in "a pivotal moment" aimed at "strengthening ties between Nigeria and the global aviation giant." The ministerial delegation which included CEOs of airlines and heads of government agencies was received by the CEO of Airbus, Mr. Guillaume Faury. Recognizing Nigeria's strategic position as a regional aviation hub, both Minister Keyamo and the Airbus team affirmed "their commitment to forging a mutually beneficial partnership."

The Nigerian delegation was given a guided tour of Airbus where they inspected mock models of various Airbus aircraft, including the A320, A350, and the iconic A380 jumbo jet, by Mr. Faury, providing the delegation with

invaluable insights into Airbus' cutting-edge technology and innovative aircraft manufacturing.

The meeting also featured presentations by top Airbus executives on the future of aviation in Africa, particularly Nigeria, highlighting "the immense potential for growth and development in the region".

The Nigerian and Airbus teams also held series of closed-door meetings exploring opportunities for leasing and procurement for the country's airlines. The Minister's visit to Airbus exemplifies "Nigeria's commitment to fostering innovation, growth, and collaboration in the aviation industry. As the country continues to expand its aviation footprint, partnerships with global leaders like Airbus will be instrumental in driving progress and prosperity across the continent." ▣

FEBRUARY 2024 - MARCH 2024

February 26 - March 01 2024	March 5 - 7, 2024	March 12 - 14, 2024
<p>The 71st ACI Africa Regional Conference and Exhibition took place in the vibrant city of Cairo, Egypt from February 24 to March 01, 2024. The event had a diverse array of industry experts and professionals in attendance and explored the theme: "Airports: Levers of Socioeconomic and Sustainable Growth."</p>	<p>With the slogan #ITBTOGETHER, the World's Leading Travel Trade Show with over 5,500 exhibitors from 170 countries opened its doors to trade visitors and buyers from the international travel industry at Oman, the official host country. Africa also shined at the ITB Berlin 2024 showcasing all major destinations.</p>	<p>IATA Cargo World Symposium The Symposium brought together stakeholders in the air cargo value chain and reinforced the place of digitalisation to driving cargo growth.</p>

COMING EVENTS

18 - 19 April, 2024

ICAO Green Airport Seminar
Athens, Greece
www.icao.int

30 April - 2 May, 2024

ICAO Global Implementation Support Symposium
Punta Cana, Dominican Republic
www.icaogiss2024.com

7 - 9 May, 2024

IATA Ground Handling Conference (IGHC)
Reykjavia, Iceland
www.iata.org

21 - 23 May, 2024

ACI Asia-Pacific & Middle East / ACI WAGA, Conference and Exhibition
Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
www.aci.aero

17 - 21 June, 2024

2024 ACI World Committee Forum
Montreal, Canada
www.aci.aero

28 - 29 June, 2024

WASET International Conference
Instabul, Turkey
www.waset.org

30 July - 1 August, 2024

ICAO Symposium on Aviation Non-CO₂ Effects
Montréal, Canada (TBC)
www.icao.int

26 August - 6 September, 2024

ICAO Air Navigation Conference
Montréal, Canada
www.icao.int

9 - 12 September, 2024

ICAO First Advanced Air Mobility Symposium
Montréal, Canada
www.icao.int

16 - 22 September, 2024

33rd ACI Africa AGA, Regional Conference and Exhibition
Johannesburg, South Africa
www.aciafrica.aero

24 - 25 September, 2024

IATA World Sustainability Symposium
Miami, USA
www.iata.org

17 - 19 November, 2024

AFRAA Annual General Assembly
Cairo, Egypt
www.afraa.org

Air Passenger Market in Detail - January 2024

JANUARY 2024 (% YEAR-ON-YEAR)	WORLD SHARE ¹	RPK	ASK	PLF(%-PT) ²	PLF(LEVEL) ³
Total Market	100%	16.6%	14.1%	1.7%	79.9%
Africa	2.1%	18.1%	19.9%	-1.1%	73.1%
Asia Pacific	31.7%	31.8%	26.6%	3.2%	80.8%
Europe	27.1%	10.0%	9.6%	0.3%	78.2%
Latin America	5.5%	9.9%	5.5%	3.4%	85.0%
Middle East	9.4%	16.2%	15.3%	0.6%	79.9%
North America	24.2%	6.0%	4.1%	1.5%	79.9%

1) % of industry RPKs in 2023 2) Year-on-year change in load factor 3) Load Factor Level

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