ISSUE 3, VOLUME 1: JULY – SEPTEMBER 2013

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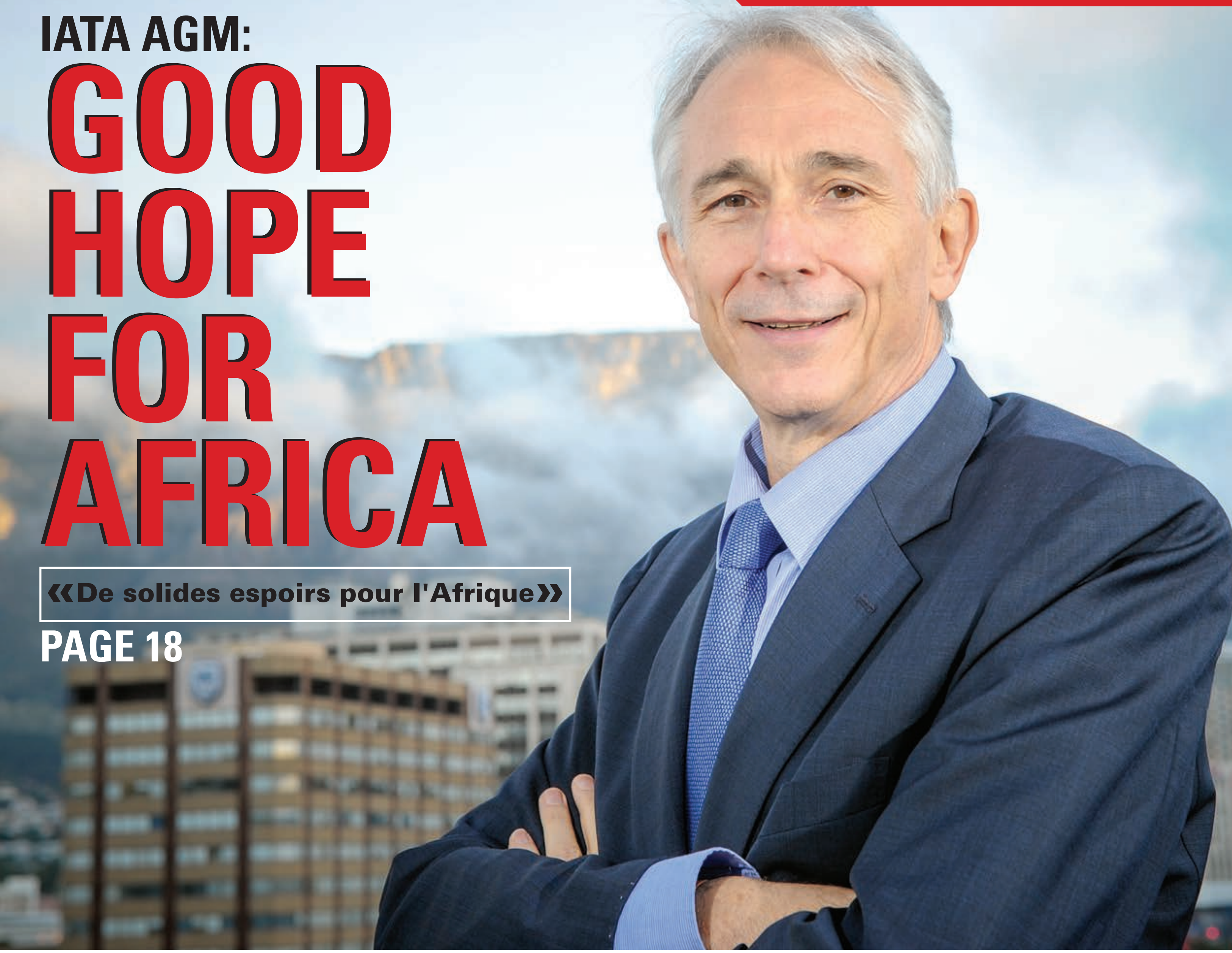

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TIMES Aerospace Limited
3-4 Rumsey House
Locks Hill, Rochford
Essex, SS4 1BB
UK
Tel: +44 (0)1702 53 0000
Fax: +44 (0)1702 53 3088

Website: www.africanaerospace.aero

Directors:
Mark Brown & Kevin Sammon

Publisher:
Mark Brown
mark.brown@africanaerospace.aero

Display Advertising:
Brian Whelan
brian.whelan@africanaerospace.aero

Production Coordinator:
Claire Silva
claire.silva@africanaerospace.aero

Circulation Dept:
Ryan Everitt
ryan.everitt@africanaerospace.aero

EDITORIAL
Editor-in-Chief: Alan Peaford
Deputy Editor: Ian Sheppard
Air Transport Editor: Victoria Moores
Air Transport: Alan Dron, Martin Rivers, Keith Mwanalushi
Cargo Editor: Tom Pleasant
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Contributors: Terry Spruce, Jamie Hunter, Kelly Clark, Alex Fox
Picture Editor: Ian Billinghurst
Photographers: Mark Wagner, Tom Gordon, John Miller
Design: Chris Murray
Sub Editors: Steve Knight, Kelly Green
Production: Rick Haden

Editorial head office:
Aerocomm Ltd, The Gatehouse, 104 Lodge Lane
Grays, Essex, RM16 2UL, UK.
Tel: +44 (0)1375 427014 Fax + 44 (0)1375 404478

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Time to turn the screw on Africa's potential

Bringing the IATA annual general meeting to Cape Town could not have been more timely. African aviation is on everybody's lips at the moment. More than 700 aviation industry big-hitters flew in, from the CEOs and presidents of the world's biggest airlines to the key sales people and leadership teams of the aircraft manufacturers, financiers and, of course, the industry commentators and analysts.

And awareness of the potential of Africa went right across the board.

Government ministers talked about how they recognised what aviation can do to encourage wealth and support investment. International airline chiefs promoted increased aviation links that could boost tourism and international trade – and African airline bosses once again were looking over their shoulders.

The African carriers get a raw deal.

Some 82% of flights from Africa are carried out by non-African countries.

African governments are imposing unfair taxes on their airlines and protecting their own 'national flag-carriers' by stopping other African carriers from opening new direct routes.

In many cases it is still only possible to make what should be a three-hour direct routing by going via Europe and doubling the time and the cost.

And so, while government people talked the talk, there was still a clear message from the industry that they need to stop talking and start taking action.

The African Union is going some way to encourage this but, with 54 countries and a resultant on-going change of governments, consensus is difficult to achieve.

But it is not impossible.

Akbar Al Baker, the controversial CEO of Qatar Airways, suggested international aid providers could help by linking their assistance to comprehensive reviews of a country's aviation policies and plans.

There is a need for more secondary airports. There is a need for more investment in safety systems and modern technology, both for the aircraft and the air traffic management systems.

The commitment to IOSA for safety management is a sound one and will aid the reputation of African carriers. IATA says it is willing to help carriers achieve certification. But the European Union could also help by addressing the anti-competitive lunacy of its blacklist.

A level playing field will help Africa emerge from being just 'a potential'. Willy Walsh, the head of IAG, got a great laugh at the IATA AGM when he said he felt we had a level playing field. "We all get screwed," he said.

But for some it is time for the screwing to stop and the building to begin.

Alan Peaford
Editor in Chief

COVER: Tony Tyler, IATA's director general and CEO. Picture: Billypix

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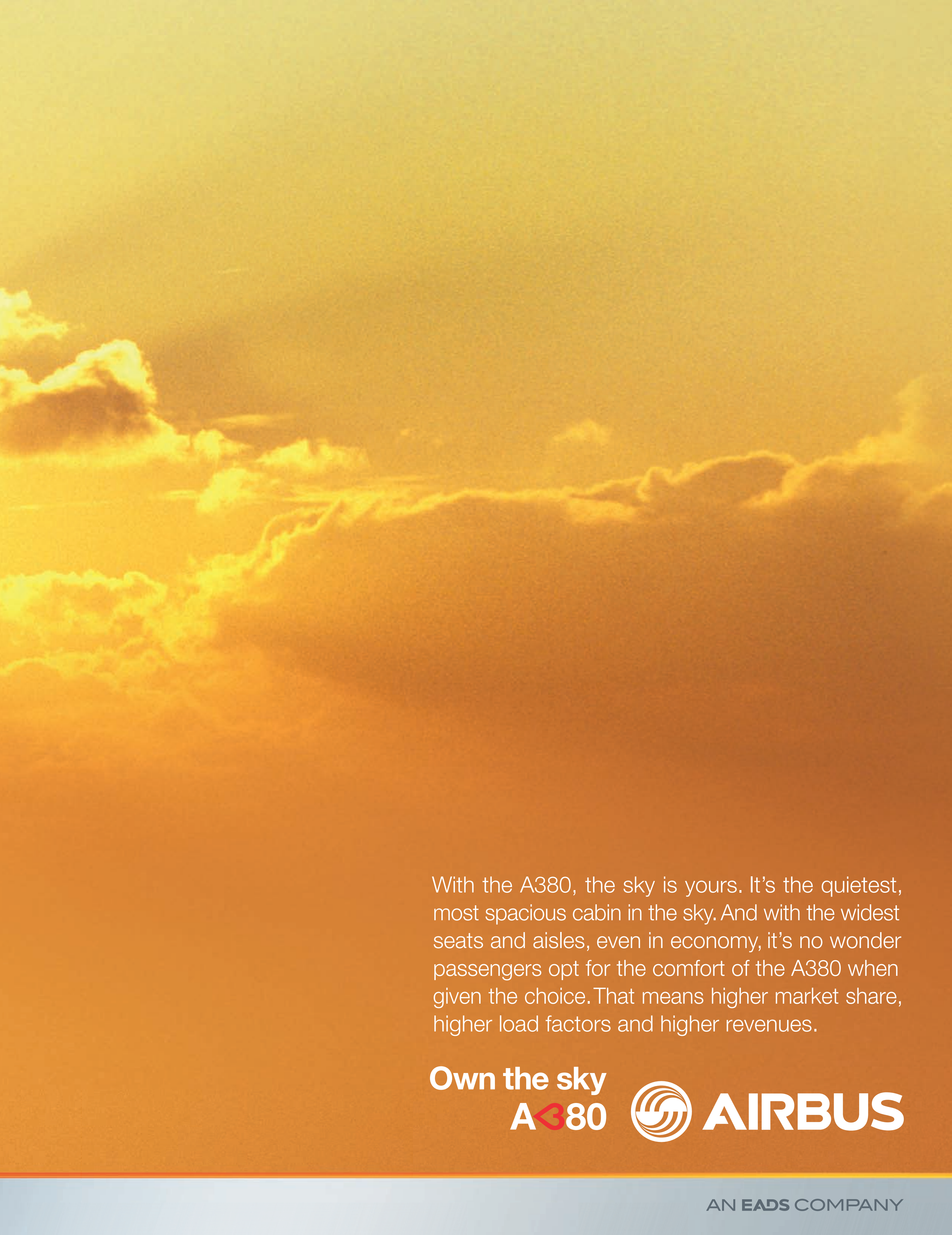
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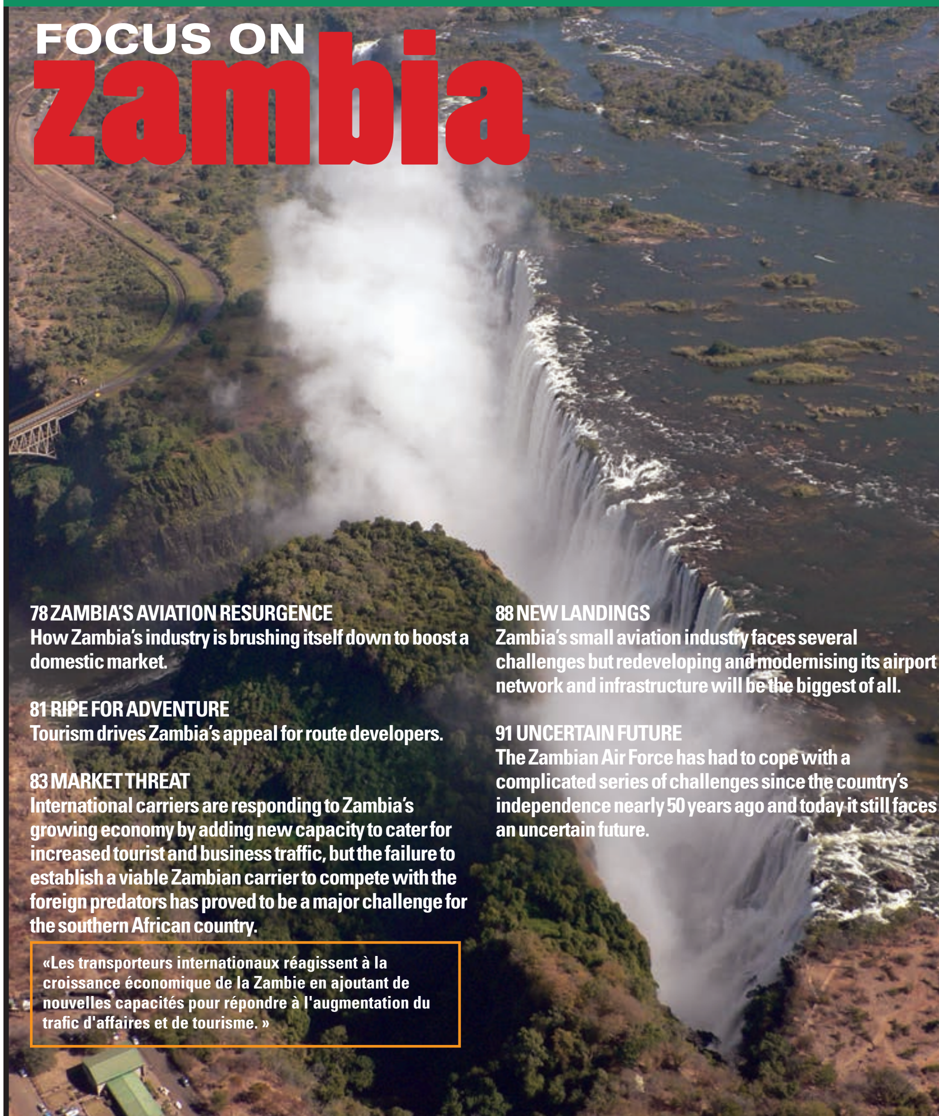

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TRAINAIR PLUS

Turkish Aviation Academy became a full member of ICAO Trainair Plus The prize giving ceremony held at Grand Cevahir Hotel .

We are proud to announce that this month, the Turkish Aviation Academy has been endorsed as a full ICAO Trainair Plus member, following the development and validation process of a Standardized Training Package. The ICAO Course Development Team, Ms. Hülya Arınk and Ms. Alexandra Munteanu, have been closely working with Ms. Simten Doğan, a Subject Matter Expert in the field of Travel documents. The course development process took place between February and May, while under the supervision of ICAO Trainiar Plus Validator Mr. Fernando Marrero de Armas. Upon completion, the course was conducted between May 22nd – 24th, with the participation of Passenger Service Agents from various International stations. The Trainair Plus methodology is competency-based training, emphasizing practical skill, knowledge, and attitude. With Turkish Airlines increasing its global presence, the topic of travel documents was a natural choice to be included under ICAO standardization, due to its paramount importance to safety and security on an International level.Following the initial run of the course, taught by Ms. Başak Başbuğ, the Standardized Training Package was given final approval by Mr. Marrero de Armas, and will now be a part of the ICAO Trainair Plus library accessible to all its members.

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NAC is still fighting a downturn in GA activities as it retrenches 60 maintenance staff. The company has a number of agencies, including Diamond Aircraft.

Placo snapped up by Africa general aviation giant

Lanseria-based National Airways Corporation (NAC), Africa's largest general aviation company, has acquired Placo, Piper's oldest international distributor.

Placo relinquished its Piper dealership to NAC during 2012 and the company has now sold its maintenance, aircraft sales, parts and propeller shop. NAC has yet to decide if it will move Placo's traditional Rand base across to Lanseria.

South Africa's general aviation industry remains distressed in the face of continued negative economic pressure and access restrictions at traditional GA airfields. In May, NAC retrenched 60 staff as it moved towards a third-party maintenance exit. The company said owners of piston and turbine aircraft would be handled by Placo's maintenance shop for the time being.

Chris Boshoff has been appointed as Placo general manager – he was previously transaction manager in ABSA's corporate and structured trade finance division.

NAC holds agencies for Bell Helicopter, Robinson Helicopter, Piper, Diamond Aircraft, Nextant, Eclipse, Dassault, Quest Aircraft and Blackhawk.

Gombe raises airport standard

The Gombe State Government in Nigeria is to upgrade facilities at the Gombe airport to international standard, according to Alhaji Shehu Ahmed, commissioner of works and infrastructure.

He was quoted by the News Agency of Nigeria as saying that funds would be utilised to remodel the airport's terminal building and provide an operational cargo terminal and cold stores for preservation of perishable goods for export.

Avjet selects EAN for ground handling

Evergreen Apple Nigeria (EAN) has been selected by Avjet Routing, the Sharjah, UAE-based aviation business services company, to serve as its preferred ground handler in Nigeria with principal services being provided at Murtala Muhammed International Airport in Lagos.

The agreement, which was ratified in February 2013, means that all private and business aviation traffic from Avjet Routing passing through Lagos will be handled exclusively by EAN.

Satellites help fight locust plagues

DMC International Imaging is helping the Algerian Space Agency to predict the spread of locust plagues across north Africa as part of a pro-active approach to tackle the destructive phenomenon using satellite imagery.

Every year, north Africa is subjected to locust plagues that threaten to decimate crops and endanger countries' food security. The satellite imagery is used to assess vegetation conditions, which helps to predict locust breeding ground locations. The imagery, from the UK-DMC2 satellite, is used in conjunction with weather data to help create locust forecasts and focus the application of pesticides to prevent the spread of swarms.

WFP goes north with safety message

The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) aviation arm will be sharing its knowledge and experience and promoting flight safety later this year when it hosts the Fifth Global Humanitarian Aviation Conference & Exhibition in Africa. At the event, which takes place at the Four Seasons Hotel in Marrakesh, Morocco, from October 9-11, aviation innovators, decision makers and managers will meet to discuss a broad spectrum of aviation concerns.

Tunisia fuel deal is signed

Air BP has marked its entry into the Tunisian aviation fuel sector by signing a commercial and technical service agreement with Tunisia's AGIL, the national company of oil distribution.

The agreement, effective immediately, includes service coverage at seven airports including: Tunis Carthage (TUN); Djerba (DJE); Enfidha (NBE); Tozor (TOE); Tabarka (TBJ); Monastir (MIR) and Sfax (SFA).

Cape Town best Africa airport again

Cape Town International Airport has retained its title as the Best Airport in Africa at the Skytrax 2013 World Airport Awards.

Airport customers from around the world vote and this year the survey garnered 12.1 million responses.

Durban King Shaka International Airport had double reason to celebrate, finishing second in the African section and also being named as the world's third best domestic airport.

Johannesburg (OR Tambo International, South Africa) was third best airport in Africa followed by Cairo International (Egypt), Mauritius International, East London (South Africa), Addis Ababa Bole International (Ethiopia), Port Elizabeth (South Africa), and Marrakech Menara International (Morocco). Seychelles International Airport rounded out the top ten.

Seychelles checks in

Air Seychelles has announced that the newly opened Etihad Travel Mall is now its premier airport check-in terminal in Dubai.

SAA reduces fuel burn and travel time

South African Airways (SAA) has received authorisation to fly new safety enhancing and fuel saving instrument departure and approach procedures.

The approval, which is the first in Africa, paves the way for further developments that could enhance safety and increase operational efficiency throughout SAA's route network.

Following an approval by the South African Civil Aviation Authority, SAA is now using the new flight procedures in all weather conditions on flights into and out of Cape Town International Airport.

The new procedures, known as required navigational performance - authorisation required (RNP-AR), utilise advanced on-board navigation technology and space-based GPS signals to achieve the enhancements in safety and efficiency.

Global award for Kenya Cargo

Kenya Airways' cargo division has won the *Air Cargo News* global service award.

Worldwide readers of Air Cargo News voted Kenya Airways top in service excellence in moving cargo to and from the busy and increasingly competitive Africa region.

Africa air freight markets expand

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) released figures showing that the air freight markets in Africa expanded in March as others weakened, with the overall improvement in air cargo growth rates that began towards the end of 2012 now stalling. Global Freight Tonne Kilometres (FTKs) were down 2.3% in March compared to March 2012, with only Africa and the Middle East showing an expansion.

Astral ups freight frequency to Juba

Kenyan cargo operator Astral Aviation is increasing frequency on its routes across east Africa to meet a growing demand.

Operating a dedicated fleet of DC9s (in a new livery) and a B727 Freighter, Astral's enhanced schedule marks an increase in frequency on its prime Juba route from three to four weekly flights, thus increasing the capacity to 60 tonnes per week, which makes it the leading operator into the South Sudan capital based on the highest number of flights.

According to Astral CEO Sanjeev Gadhia, the resumption of oil-exports by South Sudan has resulted in an increase in traffic into Juba.

The airline has also announced a further three new routes from its Nairobi hub into Pemba (Mozambique) and Moroni (Comoros), along with Entebbe to Juba. The Pemba route has an immense opportunity in gas-field equipment while the Moroni route will comprise of personal effects, perishables and general cargo.

Its existing routes include Mwanza, Dar-es-salaam, Entebbe, Kigali and Mogadishu, which remain unchanged.

Astral will convert its first MD83 at the AEI facility in Miami in September. It is planned to be operational in January 2014. A further two MD83s will be lined up for conversion in 2014.

Gadhia said he remains optimistic on the growth of air cargo traffic on the intra-African sector and added that Astral would continue its strategy to expand into new regions, which are under-served and have high potential.

Mauritius selects Direct Maintenance

Air Mauritius has selected Dutch-based Direct Maintenance for its Nairobi line maintenance agent. The dedicated team of Direct Maintenance engineers at Nairobi (NBO), Kenya, will be attending the Air Mauritius A319 aircraft landing into NBO on a frequent basis, making sure the flights are operated in a safe and timely manner.

Afriqiyah engines support deal signed

AFI KLM E&M and Afriqiyah Airways have signed an agreement covering support for the CF6-80E1 engines equipping the Libyan flag carrier's two A330-200s.

This exclusive, long-term contract is for 'time & materials' engine repairs.

Afriqiyah Airways will shortly be taking delivery of three new A330-200s, the first by the end of this year, and the other two in 2014, and these will be automatically included in the scope of the contract.

This latest contract does not mark the start of AFI KLM E&M and Afriqiyah Airways cooperation. The two groups have had ties since 2008 following the signing of a component support contract for Afriqiyah's A320 and A330 fleets. Afriqiyah Airways also based its decision on the fact that AFI KLM E&M is an MRO connected to an airline operating the CF6-80E1 powerplant itself.

EgyptAir centre joins AATO

EgyptAir Training Centre has joined the newly established African Aviation Training Organisation (AATO), which was launched in Nairobi in April in the presence of ICAO secretary general Raymond Benjamin.

SAA predicts huge 20-year jobs boost

South African Airways predicts that it will create 88,000 South African jobs over the next 20 years as both a direct and indirect benefit of its activities. The roles are forecast in, among other things, tourism, foreign direct investments, goods and services.

Uganda to roll out modern customs

Uganda is to roll out a modern customs system, which has been piloted in Jinja, to the rest of the country.

The Uganda Revenue Authority (URA) automated system for customs data (ASYCUDA) allows traders to submit their declarations from anywhere via the internet.

SkyBird receives final 328 aircraft

The final aircraft in a series of three Dornier 328 jet conversions (MSN 3141) was delivered to Nigerian charter company SkyBird Air in early April.

The Lagos-based company, which was a new African customer for 328, accepted the refurbished 32-seat jet at 328's facilities in Oberpfaffenhofen, Germany.

The latest delivery completes a contract worth more than $18.6 million, which saw recently rebranded 328 refurbish three Dornier 328 aircraft into two 32-seat passenger airliner conversions and a VIP-configured 328DBJ TM last year.

Dates set for AASA assembly

The Airlines Association of Southern Africa (AASA) will hold its 43rd Annual General Assembly from October 17-20 2013 in Somerset West near Cape Town.

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Mobile apps boost for SAA customers

South African Airways (SAA) has launched two new mobile applications that give customers access to comprehensive travel and airline information on the go.

Using the convenience of their iOS or Android mobile phones and tablets, SAA passengers can now view their booking information, check-in for a flight, find the status of their checked-in luggage, and view information on lounges, flights and destinations.

Eurochannel sub Saharan coverage

The range of channels broadcasting across sub-Saharan Africa via the Eutelsat 16A satellite has further increased with the launch of Eurochannel, the international TV channel dedicated to European films and series.

Eurochannel's selection of Eutelsat 16A marks the latest step in its international expansion and comes three months after its launch into all Europe via Eutelsat.

The channel has signed a new five-year contract for capacity and services with Eutelsat Communications.

Air Namibia appoints new agent

Air Namibia has appointed APG as its general sales agent in the USA, UK and France.

APG will be providing full sales and marketing services, as well as call centre and ticketing facilities.

Air Namibia has also signed up to use APG's IATA BSP Consolidator System (IBCS) programme, which offers airlines pay-as-you-go access and is now used by more than 160 airlines.

EAN's Segun Demuren with Gulfstream's Trevor Esling.

Luxury deal for EAN

Lagos-based Evergreen Apple Nigeria (EAN) has signed a representation agreement with Gulfstream Aerospace to promote and sell the luxury jets in the West African country.

EAN is to advise Gulfstream about prospects' individual requirements and will provide feedback about Nigerian business aviation activity.

Gulfstream currently has a fleet of 64 aircraft in Africa, with 13 regularly operating in Nigeria. "Evergreen Apple Nigeria has consistently been at the forefront of Nigerian Business Aviation development and has an impressive network that will add value to Gulfstream's activity in the region," said Trevor Esling, Gulfstream's regional senior VP, for international sales in Europe, Middle East and Africa, pictured with EAN's Segun Demuren.

SAA receives two major honours

South African Airways (SAA) has received two major endorsements from respected industry experts.

In the first, SAA topped the list of the most on-time airlines in the world in a report produced by an independent entity, FlightStats. According to FlightStats, South African Airways was one of the only two major carriers that delivered more than 90% of flights on time. SAA took top spot with 92.26%, with Gulf Air second at 92.11%.

Through its 'mystery shopper' project, *FVW*, Germany's travel trade magazine, also voted SAA's business class as the Best Business Class product among Star Alliance carriers.

ExecuJet sees high demand at Lagos

ExecuJet Africa's MRO facility at Mohammed Murtala Airport in Lagos, Nigeria, has completed the first base maintenance check on a Hawker 800XP aircraft amid high demand for the service.

The Lagos MRO, an authorised service facility for Bombardier and Hawker Beechcraft, has additional aircraft due in for scheduled base maintenance checks, including another Hawker 800XP and a Bombardier Global Express.

FastJet Tanzania reports 68% loading

FastJet Tanzania reported a 68% load factor for March, despite the start of the rainy season and added capacity on additional routes from the middle of the month.

FastJet and Don Smith sign MoU

FastJet has entered into an MoU with Don Smith, CEO of Five Forty Aviation Limited, which trades in Kenya as Fly 540, with a view to resolving recent disputes and establishing a way by which the two parties can work together to maximise the value and business prospects of both Fly 540 and FastJet.

The MoU includes an agreement by both parties to stop legal proceedings in order that mutually beneficial and constructive resolutions are discussed and implemented.

Dana Air resumes Port Harcourt flights

Dana Air has resumed flights to Port Harcourt from Nigerian capital Lagos and Abuja.

Flights to the 'garden city' – capital of Nigeria's Rivers State – had been curtailed since June last year when a Dana aircraft crashed in Lagos killing all 153 passengers and crew.

The Federal Government, through the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA), immediately revoked the company's operation licence pending investigations into the cause of the crash.

SA air traffic networks modernised

Thales and Air Traffic Navigation Services (ATNS) Company of South Africa – long-standing partners in air traffic management (ATM) systems – have announced the signing of several major contracts.

Thales has undertaken to replace the legacy ATNS ATM system with the Thales TopSky-ATC and to install the newest Thales 970s radars at the Wakkerstroom, Potgieterus and Rhodes sites.

The contract also provides for a support and maintenance agreement for all existing ATNS radar sensors and TopSky-ATC systems.

Adone launches African Air Expo

A completely new African aviation exhibition, African Air Expo 2014, was launched at this year's Cannes Airshow when Didier Mary, managing director of air show organisers Adone Events signed a protocol agreement to organise the show.

Adone Events will coordinate the exhibition to be held in Ghana on October 9-11 2014.

The event will take place at Kotaka International Airport in Accra, capital of Ghana, and will welcome exhibitors and delegates from across the sub-Saharan region.

Proflight Zambia welcomes Boeing 737

Proflight Zambia welcomed the latest addition to its fleet when its 105-seater Boeing 737-200 aircraft touched down at Kenneth Kaunda International Airport in Lusaka.

The twin-engine jet plane marked a milestone for Zambia's only scheduled airline, and will almost double the carrier's seating capacity. Proflight staff members were at the airport to welcome the aircraft from South Africa.

■ See story Page 78

Travelport direct operation in Kenya

Travelport, a provider of critical transaction processing solutions and data to the global travel industry, has announced the launch of a new direct commercial presence in Kenya.

Since 1997 Galileo, a Travelport global distribution system, has grown as the leading GDS in east Africa and was previously distributed in Kenya by the country's national carrier, Kenya Airways.

With the new Travelport operation for travel agents now in place and an expanded Travelport team on the ground, the company plans to introduce new customer support services and deploy a wide range of innovative products over the coming months, all aimed at helping Kenyan travel agents take advantage of the region's growth and earn new revenues.

Second A400M makes maiden flight

The second production Airbus Military A400M new generation airlifter has made its maiden flight. Known as MSN8, the aircraft made its first flight from Seville, Spain, the location of the A400M final assembly line.

It is scheduled for delivery to the French Air Force in the third quarter of the year.

South Africa is a full industrial partner on the A400M programme, with Denel Aerostructures and Aerosud responsible for design engineering, manufacture and supply of key components, including the wing-fuselage fairing, top shells, wing tips, cabin lining and cockpit linings.

Cobham South Africa in Westlake, Cape Town, manufactures satellite communications antennae systems for the A400M and other Airbus programme.

ExecuJet extends Cape Town facility

ExecuJet Africa is expanding the support capabilities at its Cape Town International Airport facility to cover the Bombardier Dash 8/Q300 aircraft, due to growing demand in the region.

ExecuJet had previously carried out C-check base maintenance on Dash 8 aircraft at ExecuJet's Lanseria International Airport facility.

ATNS and SWACAA sign landmark deal

The Air Traffic and Navigation Services (ATNS) Company of South Africa and the Swaziland Civil Aviation Authority (SWACAA) have signed a landmark Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), to improve the operation and cost-efficiency of the air traffic service chain.

Under the MoU SWACAA will continue to provide the maintenance service of the ground equipment within the boundaries of Swaziland, which will support area control activities within the area of responsibility delegated to ATNS.

Nigeria's new national carrier

Nigeria's aviation minister, Princess Stella Oduah, has said on national television that the go-ahead has been given for a national flag carrier, which will be called either National-One or Nigeria-One.

The move comes 10 years after the former national carrier, Nigeria Airways, ceased operation.

Arik Air rolls out online check-in

Arik Air has introduced a new online service designed to provide customers with the ability to check-in from 24 hours to three hours before their flights, select their seats and print a boarding pass.


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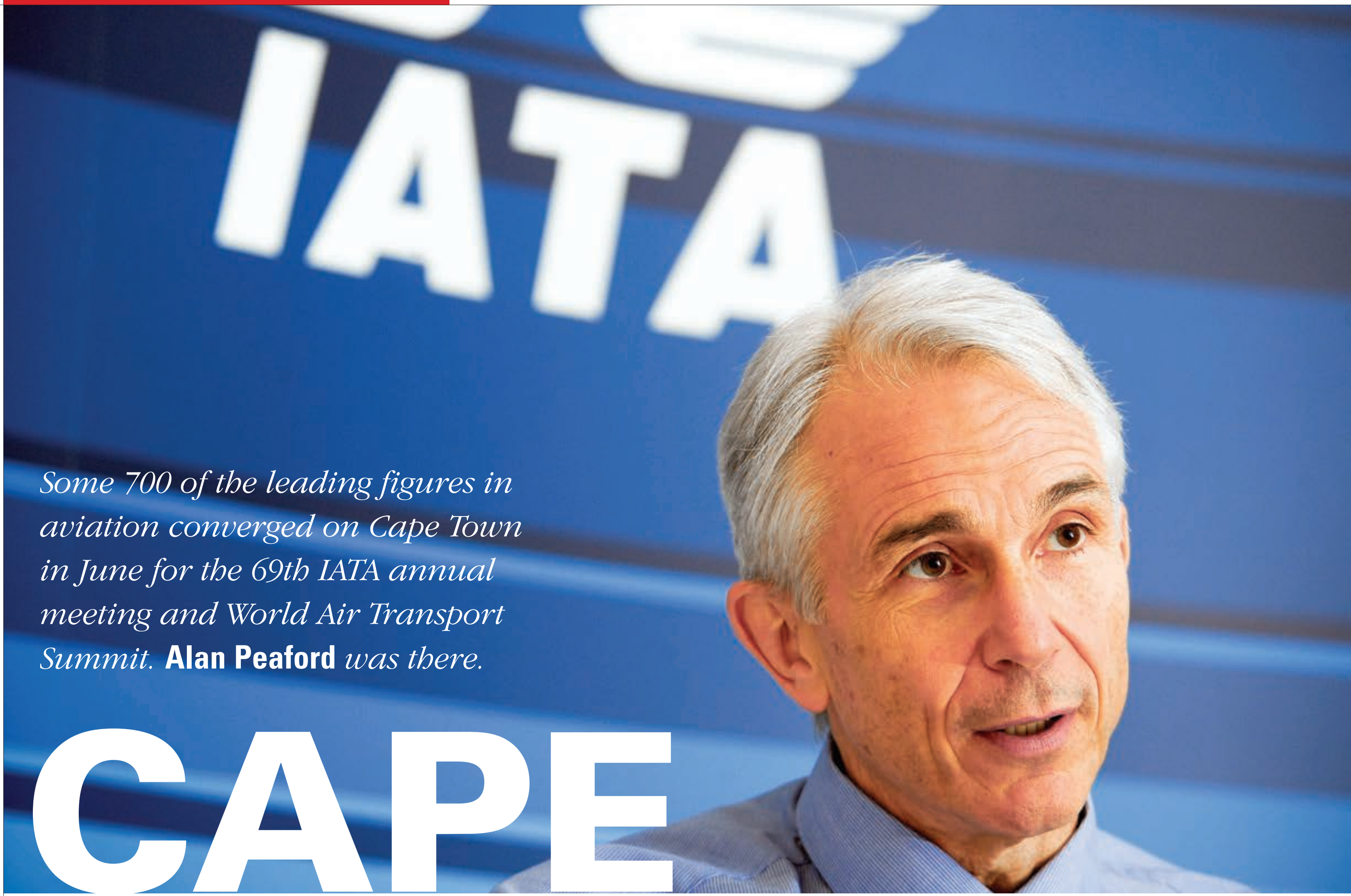


Some 700 of the leading figures in aviation converged on Cape Town in June for the 69th IATA annual meeting and World Air Transport Summit. **Alan Peaford** *was there.*

CAPE CRUSADERS

IATA's World Air Transport Summit in Cape Town, South Africa, kicked-off with strong calls for African governments to take full advantage of aviation as a catalyst for growth and development.

"Nowhere is the potential for aviation greater than on the African continent," said Tony Tyler, IATA's director general and CEO.

"This is the home to a billion people spread across 20% of the world's land mass. Economic reforms and political stability have spurred growth and development. South Africa is the newest member of the BRICS grouping of states. And the 50th anniversary of the African Union reminds us of its vision for an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the global arena.

"Aviation is well placed to contribute to these and the other long-term goals so vital to the development of Africa," he said.

Treble tribute as taxes tackled

Three African countries won praise from IATA for the way they are addressing key challenges of fuel and taxation.

There has been a major reduction in fuel prices in Angola, which were among the highest in the world. Ghana has removed charges for a stabilization fund that was essentially a subsidy for non-aviation fuel users. Meanwhile, an improvement in fuel storage facilities in Uganda is helping to avoid previously frequent fuel shortages.

Some 240 IATA member airlines were represented at the three-day event, as well as manufacturers, suppliers and government. Formal addresses from the VIP guests, including South Africa's deputy president Kgalema Motlanthe and the minister for public enterprise Malusi Gigaba, echoed calls for African governments to shake off the shackles of colonialism and invest in transport infrastructure to enable intra-African trade and movement.

Tyler reinforced this message.

"Global connectivity enabled by aviation has a very powerful role to play, both in integrating the 54 national economies of Africa and in connecting them to the world," he said. "With a few kilometres of tarmac, even the most remote destination becomes a part of the global community. But this will require the commitment of governments to solve some major issues."

Safety is the biggest challenge facing African aviation.

"IATA's 20 sub-Saharan members are performing in line with the global average on safety, as are the 24 sub-Saharan airlines that have met the 900-plus standards of the IATA

Keynotes: Far left: Tony Tyler, IATA's CEO. Top:AFRAA's Elijah Chingosho and George Uriesi, CEO of Nigerian airports. Bottom: Delegates at the AGM and South African deputy president Kgalema Molanthe.

Operational Safety Audit (IOSA)," he said. "But if we look at the entire African industry, safety remains a challenge with an overall accident rate many times the global average. This AGM is an opportunity to send a clear signal to the region's governments that world class safety is possible in Africa and that we support their commitment to achieving it by 2015."

Other key issues in Africa include the high-cost operating environment, which places the continent's airlines at a competitive disadvantage. Fuel costs, for example, are 21% more expensive in Africa than the global average, Tyler said.

"Government policies towards aviation in Africa tend to see it as an 'elite' product, rather than as a critical component of the continent's economic infrastructure. As a result, it is heavily taxed – often in violation of ICAO principles that prohibit the taxation of jet fuel for international

Continued on Page 20

'Link economic aid to open skies'

Qatar Airways chief Akbar Al Baker made an appeal to the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank to link aid in Africa to the freedom for aviation.

Al Baker, CEO of the Gulf airline, was speaking at the closing of the IATA summit and was asked about the African aviation market.

"It is the most underserved market in the world," he said. "This is due to the interference of politics and by governments. Unfortunately they are given incorrect information by national airlines, which are protecting their own interests. I would like to see the World Bank and the IMF help change this.

"We are all interested in the economic development and, when aid is being given, these organisations should suggest governments review again the position of aviation. The aviation industry is proven to support economic development. It can reduce poverty by creating jobs and wealth. It brings in tourism and people to create business opportunities. Africa needs to open these closed doors."

As the 69th IATA AGM came to a close, it was announced that Qatar would be the host of the next AGM, which will take place in Doha from June 1-3 next year. "We are very proud to be hosting this important aviation event," Al Baker said.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 19

operations. Moreover, despite high infrastructure charges, the failure to invest in fuel supply infrastructure has resulted in frequent supply disruptions that cripple the operations," Tyler said.

He was also critical of African governments' approach of taxation, saying the continent's travellers faced the impact of onerous direct taxes on tickets. "Solidarity taxes, tourism taxes, VAT, sales taxes and infrastructure levies and taxes all make connectivity more expensive. This limits the power of aviation to drive economic growth, which would be a much greater source of revenue for governments," he pointed out.

Aviation already has a significant footprint in Africa supporting $67 billion in economic activity annually and 6.7 million jobs, Tyler said.

One sector not represented at the IATA annual meeting was the low-cost carriers (LCCs) but African Airlines Association secretary general Elijah Chingosho spoke on their behalf when he warned that the sector faces fundamental issues that threaten to block access to cheap flights for much of the continent's population.

«The cost of doing business in Africa is a major problem.»
ELIJAH CHINGOSHO

Chingosho warned that the taxation and fuel cost issues that concerned IATA members would also damage the entire viability of the LCC model.

"Africa is a huge continent but also the poorest and the surface infrastructure is poor, so there is a need for low-cost carriers," Chingosho said. "The cost of doing business in Africa is a major problem because governments levy very high taxes on airlines and on fuel and there is still a limited penetration of credit cards and internet use in Africa."

There is also a lack of secondary airports, which means the model that has worked in Europe cannot be replicated in Africa. "Very few major cities have secondary airports and where they do have they are very inconvenient and the charges are very similar to main airports," Chingosho added.

Exorbitant fuel charges are still at the heart of the problem, Chingosho said. "For airlines in most regions of the world, the cost of fuel is typically around 30-35% of operating costs, but in Africa it is 45-55%. We are working to persuade governments and oil companies to reduce costs with some success, but more needs to be done," he concluded.

Carbon strategy lays foundation

IATA members overwhelmingly endorsed a resolution on implementation of the Aviation Carbon-Neutral Growth (CNG2020) Strategy, which provides governments with a set of principles on how they could establish procedures for a single market-based measure (MBM).

"Airlines are committed to working with governments to build a solid platform for the future sustainable development of aviation. Today, they have come together to recommend to governments the adoption of a single MBM for aviation and provide suggestions on how it might be applied to individual carriers. Now the ball is in the court of governments. We will be strongly supporting their leadership as they seek a global agreement through ICAO at its assembly later this year," said Tony Tyler, IATA's director general and CEO.

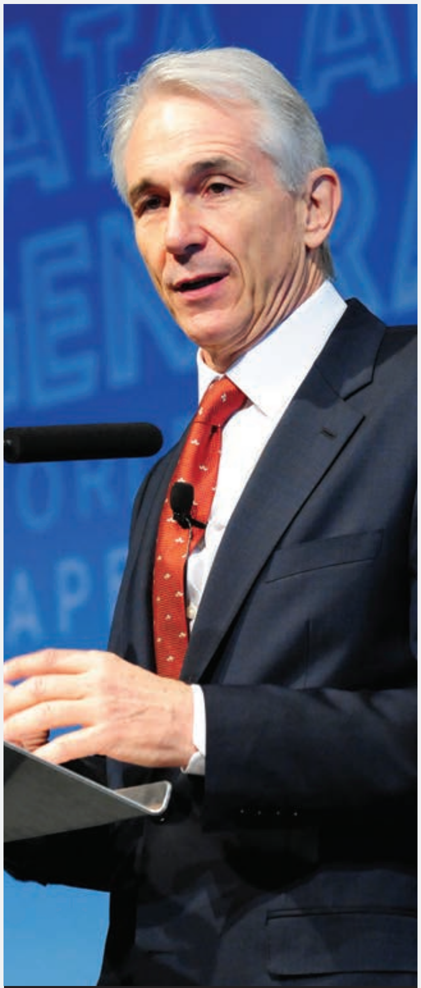
Environment will be at the top of the agenda for the 38th ICAO Assembly in September.

"The aviation industry urgently needs governments to agree, through ICAO, a global approach to managing aviation's carbon emissions, including a single global MBM," said Tyler. "IATA member airlines agreed that a single mandatory carbon offsetting scheme would be the simplest and most effective option for an MBM.

"For governments, finding agreement on MBMs will not be easy. It was difficult enough for the airlines, given the potential financial implications. Bridging the very different circumstances of fast-growing airlines in emerging markets and those in more mature markets required a flexible approach and mutual understanding. But sustainability is aviation's license to grow.

"With that understanding and a firm focus on the future, airlines found an historic agreement. This industry agreement should help to relieve the political gridlock on this important issue and give governments momentum and a set of tools as they continue their difficult deliberations."

Aviation is the first industry to suggest a global approach to the application of a single MBM to manage its climate change impact. This keeps aviation in the forefront of industries on managing carbon emissions. It was also the first to agree global targets. These are: improving fuel efficiency by 1.5% annually to 2020, capping net emissions with CNG2020, and cutting emissions in half by 2050 compared to 2005. And it was also the first to agree on a global strategy to achieve them.



«This industry agreement should help to relieve the political gridlock on this important issue.»
TONY TYLER

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When Nico Bezuidenhout stepped down as interim CEO at South African Airways (SAA) on June 1, he handed successor Monwabisi Kalawe the daunting task of executing a 20-year turnaround strategy at the troubled flag-carrier. **Martin Rivers** *investigates whether SAA is, at long last, embarking on the path to profitability.*

Is the flag carrier still flagging?

Public enterprises minister Malusi Gigaba, SAA's shareholder, has voiced strong optimism that Kalawe will "hit the ground running" in his new role, despite lacking any experience in the airline industry.

The new man takes over from Bezuidenhout, an experienced industry executive who co-hosted the IATA AGM in Cape Town this June and now returns to his role as CEO of Mango, SAA's low-cost subsidiary.

Kalawe's immediate priority will be implementing the turnaround plan – drafted collaboratively by Bezuidenhout and Gigaba – which aims to lessen the carrier's reliance on state support.

"I've been sensitive to the fact that I'm caretaking this and somebody else has to come and live with the decisions I take," Bezuidenhout said. "We spent the last four months drafting this strategy to return SAA to financial sustainability and it's a strategy that he needs to make his own, and then drive forward."

It is hoped that Kalawe's ascension will bring some much-needed continuity to the flag-carrier, which has seen four chief executives in less than a year.

The shock resignation of Siza Mzimela in October 2012 precipitated months of boardroom turmoil, with Bezuidenhout ultimately steadying the ship after his interim predecessor, Vuyisile Kona, was suspended over alleged malpractice.

Though the appointment has political undertones – Kalawe has held senior positions at Airports Company South Africa and state-owned utilities firm Eskom – Bezuidenhout will be on-hand to support his successor during the transition process.

"We intentionally wrote the strategy in a manner that provides the management of the day with some flexibility, while still giving a firm direction," he explained, adding that he expects the Government to have formally approved the plan by July.

"While there are immediate benefits to be gained and there is immediate focus on implementation and improving, it does specify a longer-term direction with some flexibility for the management of the day."

Media outlets claimed in June that SAA will order a mixture of Boeing 787s and Airbus A350s to replace its fuel-inefficient A340s, but Bezuidenhout said those reports were premature.

Insisting that the priority has been "first and foremost to pin down what our network strategy is", he said the airline was careful not to pre-determine its fleet requirements in the newly re-started tender processes with Boeing and Airbus. "All too often airlines retrofit a network plan on to what aircraft they've got. We went about it the other way and, in my opinion, the correct way, by first stating where it is that we need to fly to as an airline," Bezuidenhout explained.

There is little doubt that SAA needs medication. The airline posted a 1.3 billion rand loss last year.

When SAA went to market last year it approached Boeing and Airbus with a request for 35 wide-body aircraft, he recalled, before the Government hastily suspended the process. This time round, although Bezuidenhout still ultimately sees a need for "probably between 25 and 35 units", he said the burden lies with the manufacturers to assess SAA's business model and draft bespoke solutions.

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"When you go to the doctor, you don't say I need five of this tablet and seven of that tablet," he noted. "You go to the doctor and say, 'Listen I feel ill. Please can you prescribe to me what I need'."

And there is little doubt that SAA needs medication. The airline posted a 1.3 billion rand ($131 million) loss last year. Its ill-fated decision to order four-engine A340s at the turn of the century – when Brent Crude oil was $20 per barrel, compared with $100 today – has rendered its long-haul operations totally unprofitable. "No-one could have foreseen that, but it happened," Bezuidenhout said. "That was unfortunate. We will now obtain the right wide-bodied fleet mix."

With both manufacturers drafting proposals, Bezuidenhout is hopeful that orders could materialise as soon as August. "I may be optimistic but time is of the essence here," he emphasised. "It is imperative for us to get the A340-600s phased out as soon as possible."

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Although SAA's broader financing strategy is now geared towards taking more aircraft on to the balance sheet, Bezuidenhout said the urgent need to re-fleet the wide-bodies would be likely to necessitate interim operating leases. "Some of the lessors' first available slots are only in 2017. To take your first delivery slot off the production line you're looking at 2020. So we're looking at a holistic solution. If a particular OEM has got a particular relationship with an aircraft lessor that can give us an earlier slot, or can swap slots around which would be preferable."

Indeed, nothing is being ruled out at this stage, and it remains possible that SAA could amend its narrow-body commitments. The airline is currently scheduled to take delivery of 20 A320s over the next three years, with financing already secured for 10 units. Although Bezuidenhout insisted that those aircraft are "still coming", he admitted: "Nothing precludes either one of the two OEMs from providing a holistic solution, as opposed to a wide-body solution only."

Ultimately, with all options on the table, SAA's only fixed priority is securing a "very, very tight offer" in terms of pricing – something that analysts say the airline has failed to achieve in the past.

In anticipation of the new fleet, Kalawe will inevitably be tasked with refining the route network. To this end, recent partnerships with Etihad Airways, Jet Airways and Air Seychelles point to one possible strategy.

SAA has consolidated its wide-body operations in recent times – abandoning routes such as Cape Town-London Heathrow – and Bezuidenhout stressed that long-haul expansion "cannot take effect as long as this fleet discussion remains open". That, in turn, places a necessity on SAA to "more aggressively leverage its existing Star Alliance partnership, but also [to look] beyond Star where needed".

While there is no question of SAA ending its alliance membership, its growing willingness to "complement" Star's network seems reminiscent of Etihad's own preference for individual partnerships. Bezuidenhout cited SAA's codeshare with JetBlue as one example – adding connectivity from New York JFK Airport, where SkyTeam and Oneworld dominate – but he said the precise nature of strategic cooperation with Etihad would ultimately be determined by Kalawe.

"I've tried to set the next management up to be able to make decisions," he said. "So here's an opportunity, here's a relationship that's evolving, and where you want to take this relationship is up to you."

Describing Etihad as a "very willing and very like-minded partner to SAA", Bezuidenhout said the 22-destination codeshare deal reached with the Gulf carrier "has got every potential to develop further".

Coming alongside recent codeshares with Jet Airways and Air Seychelles – two carriers in which Etihad holds minority stakes – the deal has raised speculation of a more pronounced strategic tie-up.

"We're very consciously taking a phased approach to it," he explained.

"The first phase is a very strong codeshare. The second may very well transition into matters of semi-collective procurement, skills transfer, knowledge-sharing, attacking your cost-base collectively. And from there, it can evolve to a substantially deeper relationship.

"It's all about how you extract greater levels of efficiency and how you cross-leverage that," he continued, adding that shared loyalty programmes could also be up for review.

But one thing definitely not on the cards is direct equity investment. Asked if he saw potential benefits in having Etihad as a shareholder – an approach which enabled the Gulf carrier to turn around loss-making Air Seychelles – Bezuidenhout simply quoted Gigaba as saying the flag carrier will remain wholly owned by the Government.

State involvement in SAA has been the source of much controversy in recent times, primarily due to complaints by rivals that Government coffers enable the flag-carrier to keep its fares artificially low.

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But Bezuidenhout rejected these allegations, noting that: "Since 2008/09, SAA has not received capital injections in the form of cash." Instead, the airline receives state guarantees with which it can underwrite debt in the open market.

Asked whether these guarantees enable more favourable financing terms, he said that carriers funded by private equity enjoy a lower cost of capital than debt-funded entities like SAA.

"Let's take a step back. Regardless of the nature of who and what you are, as an owner of an entity, you are allowed to capitalise your entity," he argued. "I do not believe that right should be taken away from you just because you are state-owned versus private."

According to Oxford Economics, SAA brings direct and indirect economic benefits totalling 50 billion rand ($5 billion) per year to South Africa. The 79-year-old flag-carrier supports 77,000 jobs across the supply chain and tourism sector, bolstering the continent's largest economy.

"SAA plays an important role in this country," Bezuidenhout concluded. "There is a cost attached to that, yes. But, regardless of that cost, there's an onus and obligation on SAA to be an effective and an efficient airline."

Time will tell if the flag-carrier can maintain its vital contributions, while also curtailing its painful losses.

«Regardless of that cost, there's an onus and obligation on SAA to be an effective and an efficient airline.»

NICO BEZUIDENHOUT

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«For now we are fairly comfortable with what we have.»
THEO NAMASES

In late 2012, Air Namibia's very existence was brought into question by a wave of industrial action, leasing disputes and an increasingly impatient shareholder. Having successfully weathered the storm, chief executive Theo Namases is now plotting a course for calmer waters. **Martin Rivers** *reports.*

Namibia in the comfort zone

News that Air Namibia was trying to back out of a 12-year leasing agreement for two Airbus A330s sent shockwaves through the southern African nation last year, coming alongside repeated warnings from the government that its losses had become unsustainable.

The wide-body jets had been billed as a key step towards turning around the airline's loss-making Frankfurt route, which is currently served by two fuel-inefficient A340s.

Though Namases would not comment on the circumstances of the dispute, she confirmed that the A330 leases with Intrepid Aviation are back on track.

The two aircraft will arrive in September and November of this year, allowing the A340s to be withdrawn. Alongside the recent introduction of four A319s and four Embraer ERJ-135s, they will bring Air Namibia's re-fleeting process to completion.

"For now we are fairly comfortable with what we have," Namases said. "Fleet renewal was one of the recommendations in the recently crafted business plan by IATA; it has identified certain objectives and recommendations. As a team, we believe that if we can introduce those recommendations as quickly as possible, then we will meet the requirement of reducing our dependency on government."

Although more fuel-efficient aircraft will enhance Air Namibia's wide-body operations, under-utilisation looks set to be an on-going problem. Frankfurt is the carrier's only long-haul route, meaning that its A340s are routinely parked on tarmac for 10 hours. "An aircraft on the ground is not making money," Namases noted. "But we will not just run hastily into opening up markets if we have not done a thorough assessment and are not convinced that it will yield positive results."

Her reluctance to enter new European markets reflects the burdensome 'balancing act' of flying direct to Frankfurt – a politically vital, but economically testing, link for the former German colony.

Noting that the flag-carrier lost N$200 million ($20 million) on the Frankfurt route last year, Namases said that she is carefully considering "various options". These include the possible operation of open-jaw services with other European destinations. But she reiterated: "We do not want to rush into anything. You have to keep the cost in mind. For now our biggest objective is to stabilise the airline with the routes that we are currently operating."

She added that Frankfurt frequencies would continue to fluctuate in line with seasonal demand. "We will just consolidate what we have and then see how best we can increase utilisation, especially of the A330s."

One long-haul option tentatively being considered is the introduction of flights to London Gatwick Airport. This would most likely come in the form of a fifth-freedom connecting service via Accra in Ghana – Air Namibia's only mid-haul route. "We have a very close eye on Accra," Namases said, noting its weak load factors. "We are struggling to get the revenue ahead of cost on the Accra route."

An alternative approach would involve flying to Accra via the Nigerian metropolis of Lagos. Strong demand for the fast-expanding

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city would strengthen load factors on the initial leg, but Nigeria's government has, at times, been reluctant to grant bilateral access to foreign flag-carriers. With both fifth-freedom solutions presenting challenges, therefore, Namases admitted that Accra might have to be dropped from the network.

Alongside incremental changes to the route network, Air Namibia is equally determined to implement a wholesale strategic review of its revenue generation models.

The airline has appointed a revenue management expert on a consultancy basis until the end of 2013, and Namases voiced optimism that his contract would be renewed. "One of the sad things that we realised was that we did not have a proper revenue management specialist in the building and, as a result, we could not keep up with what our competitors were doing. That is in the past now," she said.

IATA called for a host of other operational improvements in its business turnaround plan for Air Namibia. Though Namases kept the details under wraps, she insisted that "more than a third" of the group's recommendations have already been enacted. "It's yielding positive results," she added. "You can already see the improvement."

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Echoing sentiment from across the continent, she said strategic partnerships with other African carriers would deliver the largest gains. Air Namibia is working to expand its "very good relationship" with Kenya Airways, as well as opening new discussions with Ethiopian Airlines.

Closer to home, Air Zimbabwe's upcoming service from Harare to Lusaka presents an opportunity for possible codesharing, Namases said, noting that Air Namibia has also just launched the route.

The chief executive emphasised that all strategic opportunities will be evaluated hand-in-hand with the government. Following the period of uncertainty in 2012 the shareholder is now "committed to sustaining the national carrier", and she described its insistence on financial improvements as a "fair request, which I fully agree with and support".

One near-term indication of the success of the turnaround plan will be the 2013/14 financial result for the Frankfurt route, which Namases is aiming to improve by 25%.

"It's a very cautious target because we are also keeping in mind the costs associated with the new fleet," she warned, voicing her reluctance to pin down projections at this stage. "It's better to make the improvement, let the shareholder see it, and let the nation see it; we want the results to speak for themselves. That's the philosophy that we are trying to enforce in Air Namibia. Let's do the best we can under the circumstances.

"But what is comforting is the fact that we have the support of our government, despite the difficulties that we are going through."

Airline looking for

Air Namibia has the rather odd accolade of serving the second most sparsely populated country on Earth, with just 2.2 million people occupying a space the size of France and Germany combined. Now, as **Victoria Moores** *reports, it has a simple mission to promote tourism and provide essential air links for its homeland… which is 80% desert.*

Attracting visitors to a hot and dry desert climate with erratic rainfall may sound like a difficult feat, but Air Namibia has plenty assets at its disposal.

The Republic of Namibia is a country of stark natural beauty, rich in natural minerals, wilderness and wildlife. It boasts the red-sanded Namib Desert, the oldest desert in the world, which has accumulated the world's highest sand dunes over its 80 million years of existence. It is also home to the world's largest underground lake, intriguingly named Dragon's Breath, and the 500 million year-old Fish River Canyon, the second largest in the world.

Against the backdrop of so many million years of history, Air Namibia seems quite the infant with just 67 years of history under its belt. The airline was formed in 1946 as South West Air Transport and has, over time, undergone several name changes and amalgamations.

When the government acquired a majority stake in 1982, Namib Air was designated as the republic's national carrier, prompting the 1989 launch of Boeing 737-200 flights between Windhoek, Cape Town and Johannesburg. Namib Air then became today's Air Namibia in 1990, when the republic gained independence from South Africa. In that same year it launched long-haul services to Frankfurt, which remain significant, rooted in Namibia's status as a German colony between 1885 and 1914.

Skip forward 23 years and today government-owned Air Namibia operates a fleet of 10 aircraft comprising two A340-300s, four A319-100s and four Embraer ERJ-135s. From Namibia's Windhoek capital, which literally translated from Afrikaans means 'windy corner', the airline serves six domestic routes – Katima, Luderitz, Mulilo, Ondangwa, Oranjemund, Rundu and Walvis Bay – and nine regional destinations linking Namibia with Angola (Luanda), Botswana (Gaborone and Maun), Ghana (Accra), South Africa (Cape Town and Johannesburg), Zambia (Lusaka) and Zimbabwe (Harare and Victoria Falls). It operates one long-haul service, that vital Frankfurt link, which delivers the majority of Air Namibia's revenues and available seat kilometre (ASKs).

With Angola and Zambia to the north, the Kalahari Desert and Botswana to the east, South Africa to the south and the Atlantic Ocean to the west, these air links are vital to Namibia. "The Namibian economy basically rests on four pillars: mining, agriculture, fishery and tourism," said Air Namibia general manager commercial services Xavier Masule. "Air Namibia's role is to promote these industries and sectors, primarily tourism development and sustenance, as well as being a vehicle for promoting trade."

The Namibian economy basically rests on four pillars: mining, agriculture, fishery and tourism

Namibia is home to Africa's tallest elephants, the largest free-roaming cheetah population, endangered black rhinos, lions, leopards, zebras and hyenas.

The country is a prime source for gem-quality diamonds; it is a major uranium producer and is rich in gold, granite, lead, marble,

growth in a harsh homeland

silver, tin, tungsten and zinc. Without strategic air links, Namibia would miss out on essential opportunities to maximise these natural assets for trade, growth, development and employment.

Masule explained that Air Namibia is judged on fulfilment of this mandate – on its contribution to GDP, tourism and the Namibian economy – rather than absolute profitability. This means Air Namibia must deliver reliable and consistent air operations. However, just lately the airline has faced a number of challenges, which have hampered its operations. "Air Namibia went through a very difficult time in the last months, which compromised our reliability," admitted the carrier. "The main areas of concern included flight disruptions, which affected many of our key stakeholders."

Specifically, these issues included a pilots' strike in November 2012, flight cancellations and delays due to technical problems with its A340-300s, disruption to its regional services and frequent schedule changes as it tried to rationalise its route network,

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including cutting Windhoek-Frankfurt from daily to four times weekly.

Air Namibia admits that these troubles compromised its product and service levels. However, it has now rolling out a series of measures to get things back on track.

The government has recapitalised the airline by buying two new 112-seat A319-100s as an equity injection aimed at stabilising Air Namibia's regional operations. The first of these two aircraft arrived in January and was joined by its twin on March 8. These build on two leased A319-100s, each under four years old, that Air Namibia took in 2011. By the start of the summer season on March 31, it had completed its network optimisation and the airline now assures its stakeholders that there will be "no further schedule rationalisation".

Masule said delivery of the two A319s marked the closure of Air Namibia's regional re-fleeting programme, which had been a prime focus for the airline over the last 24 months. "Air Namibia embarked on a re-fleeting programme as part of strategy to move away from operating old aircraft, retired by other operators. We started about two years ago, phasing out the Beechcraft B1900s and replacing them with Embraer ERJ-135 regional jets. These are used primarily on our domestic routes and some of the smaller cross-border flights in southern Africa. The aged Boeing 737-500 fleet was phased out during January 2013 and replaced with four newer Airbus A319-100s."

Air Namibia is also working to stabilise its long-haul operations, safeguarding and reinforcing its position on its key Windhoek-Frankfurt service. It is abandoning the A340s and switching to two new A330-200s, which are scheduled to arrive in October and November 2013 and will pave the way for a product ramp-up. These additions, which are currently on the production line, will be configured with 30 business class seats with lie-flat beds and state-of-the-art IFE. Down the back there will be 214 economy seats fitted with modern seat-back screens. In the interim, it has extended the lease on the A340-300s to "beyond mid-2013", ensuring a smooth transition to the new aircraft.

On June 26 the Windhoek-Frankfurt route returned to a daily service. However, between December 1 2013 and June 2014, the Tuesday rotation will be suspended.

"The cost of operating an air service, especially on a long-haul flight such as Windhoek-Frankfurt, keeps increasing and, as such, we are improving our revenue management function to optimise revenues and ensure that we operate sustainably into the future," said the carrier. "We are confident that the developments stated herein will bring about the required stability, and restore our service to levels to meet all our key stakeholders' and industry partners' expectations."

African airlines, regardless of size – small or large – or geographic location, must collaborate to survive and succeed.

Air Namibia is also evaluating new routes and increased frequencies to existing destinations, focusing on services that will either be profitable or serve its strategic objectives, as it seeks to maximise its aircraft utilisation and grow its passenger numbers. "Customer service elements are high on our list of strategic focus areas, which include improved levels of dispatch reliability," said Masule.

Today Air Namibia has just one codeshare with TAAG Angola Airlines but it also has a number of interline partnerships including Air France, British Airways, Delta Air Lines Kenya Airways, KLM, Lufthansa, Singapore Airlines and South African Airways (SAA). Feeding key gateways such as Accra, Frankfurt, Johannesburg and Lusaka, and receiving feed in return, forms an integral part of its strategy. "This year we signed two other codeshare agreements, which will be launched in the near future. After all the required approvals have been obtained, only then can we disclose details," said Masule.

This partnership strategy could be fundamental to Air Namibia's future success. "African airlines, regardless of size – small or large – or geographic location, must collaborate to survive and succeed," said Zemedeneh Negatu, managing partner at consultancy Ernst & Young. "Even the three biggest African carriers – Ethiopian Airlines, SAA and Kenya Airways – combined are only 30% the size of Emirates. Therefore, collaboration is key. Standalone airlines in Africa, especially the smaller ones, will face major headwinds in a rapidly consolidating global airline industry."

Negatu cites positive examples such as ASKY airlines in Togo, which has Ethiopian Airlines as a strategic investor and manager. "I think this could be a best-practice example to follow by other airlines, especially in southern Africa," he said. "Air Namibia, Air Botswana and LAM Mozambique Airlines all have the potential to grow and prosper if they seek collaboration with successful larger African carriers."

At the moment the Ernst & Young team is advising the Malawi government on its plans to form a joint venture with Ethiopian Airlines. "We have been approached by other African governments in the region to advise them on similar link-ups. Therefore, I expect we will be able to conclude more joint ventures in the region in the next 12 to 18 months," said Negatu.

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However, he stressed that regional integration must be fast-tracked to allow smoother cross-border operations between African carriers. "If not, carriers outside of Africa, which already account for up to 80% of the to-and-from African air traffic, will be the main beneficiaries and not African carriers," he warned.

Against a backdrop of stiff foreign competition and changing market conditions, Air Namibia will need to adapt to survive. "Air Namibia is under pressure to perform in all dimensions of the business," said Lufthansa Consulting associate partner Africa Bruno Boucher. "It cannot only be good, it needs to be excellent. That is the challenge they have."

Namibia's rugged and wild Skeleton Coast is dotted with shipwrecks. Many sailors perished here but, even if they succeeded in reaching dry land, they were met with a desolate landscape devoid of water and vegetation. However, elephants can be seen wondering peacefully through the sand dunes, acclimatised to the unforgiving landscape. Perhaps with these latest turnaround measures, Air Namibia will flourish in its harsh homeland.


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Air Austral a enregistré des résultats encourageants pour son année financière 2012-2013. Son objectif est de retourner à l'équilibre au prochain exercice financier puis d'asseoir son positionnement régional en tant que compagnie phare de l'océan Indien.
Une enquête de **Vincent Chappard.**

Ciel bleu à venir pour Austral

«Eclaircie en vue pour Air Austral» – Page 34

Air Austral, la compagnie française de l'océan Indien, a réalisé un chiffre d'affaires de 367,21 millions d'euros et une perte de 27,1 millions d'euros pour son exercice 2012-2013.

«Ces résultats, plus qu'encourageants, confortent assurément les actions stratégiques lancées par le Directoire et permettent de maintenir, malgré un contexte économique dégradé et morose, la perspective de retour à l'équilibre de la compagnie au 31 mars 2014, », a déclaré Marie Joseph Malé, président du directoire et directeur général d'Air Austral.

Air Austral, depuis son hub de la Réunion, s'est toujours positionnée comme un acteur régional de l'océan Indien avec une desserte forte sur Paris qui représente la moitié de ses recettes. Comme de nombreuses compagnies aériennes, Air Austral a été contrainte de mener un plan drastique de restructuration.

Le premier volet de restructuration a concerné le plan de vol de la compagnie avec la suppression essentiellement des lignes les plus déficitaires.

Air Austral a recentré ses routes de la métropole française sur l'aéroport de Paris Charles de Gaulle avec 12 fréquences par semaine. Sa part de marché se situe à 40%, au coude à coude avec Air France puis vient Corsair Fly.

Son offre en province se fait désormais en partenariat avec la SNCF via le TGV qui prévoit le pré-acheminement au départ de 20 villes de province. La compagnie a fermé la route Perth-Nouméa.

Air Austral a procédé à un accord de partenariat avec Air Mauritius. Air Austral a également supprimé la desserte directe vers Bangkok en Thaïlande via un Boeing 777. La compagnie a trouvé une solution pour ne pas suspendre cette route et a pris le pari de la desservir via Chennai (Madras) dans le sud de

«On a besoin d'être bien engagé à ce retour à l'équilibre pour pouvoir engager des actions de développement.»

MARIE JOSEPH MALÉ

l'Inde en utilisant un Boeing 737-800. Air Austral a ainsi privilégié une route avec la plus faible déviation ce qui a permis par ricochet à la compagnie d'ouvrir une destination importante en Inde au départ de la Réunion.

"Cette ligne donne d'excellents résultats puisque le remplissage oscille entre 75 et 80% et la recette unitaire s'est considérablement améliorée. On peut envisager une ligne qui retrouve son équilibre et pouvoir sans doute se développer dans le futur," a expliqué Marie-Joseph Malé.

Air Austral est revenu sur ses fondamentaux par un renforcement de sa présence au niveau de l'océan Indien à savoir un programme plus rationalisé sur Madagascar, plus de vols sur Mayotte et Moroni et un maintien de l'ensemble des vols sur l'Afrique du Sud. Air Austral offre ainsi plus de fréquences sur l'île Maurice en ATR avec des renforts prévus en Boeing B737-800, en week-end et des Boeing 777, en période de pointe.

Le second volet concerne le contrôle des coûts avec un plan de renégociation avec les banques, une révision des contrats de maintenance des avions avec Air France Industries et de restauration en vol et un plan d'économie sur les achats. Enfin, Air Austral a procédé à un ajustement de ses effectifs lié à sa diminution des activités. Les contrats à durée déterminée n'ont pas été renouvelés et un plan de départs volontaires a été mis en place. Les effectifs ont été réduits d'environ 17%.

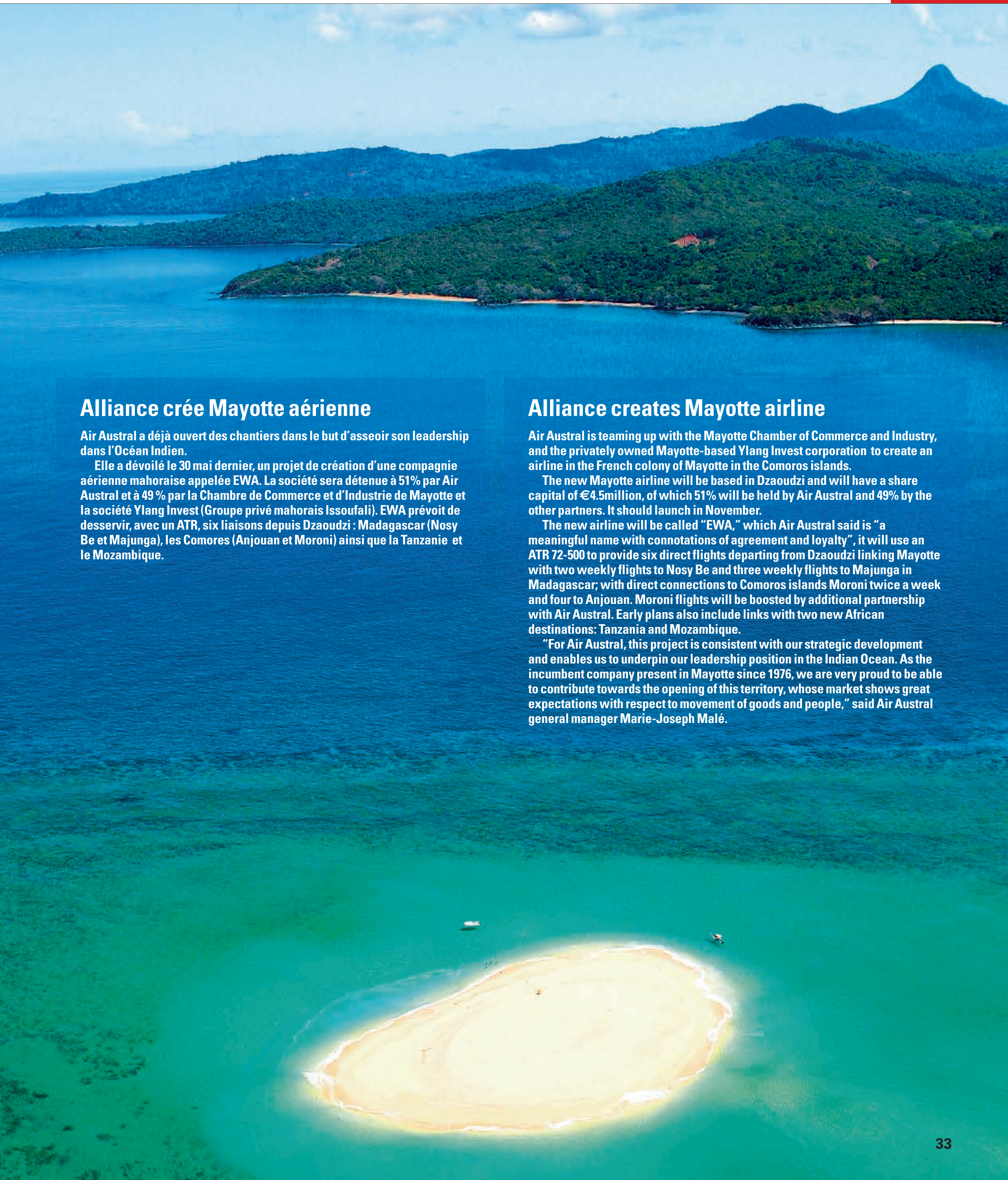
Ce plan de réduction des coûts a permis une nette diminution du niveau d'endettement de la compagnie suite à la cession des actifs liés à la baisse d'activités et la mise en place d'une convention de crédit avec les banques.

Air Austral a également lancé le 2 mai dernier, une carte d'abonnement payante "Capricorne Abonnements".

"Cette carte est destinée aux passagers en classe affaires qui voyagent régulièrement à la Réunion et dans la région océan Indien. Cela répond véritablement à une demande du marché, pour un type de clientèle de l'île dans un contexte économique tendu", souligne Marie-Joseph Malé.

Elle offre ainsi aux clients des réductions allant de 5 à 10%, la possibilité de modifier sans frais tout voyage au tarif abonné, d'avoir priorité sur les listes d'attente, un comptoir d'enregistrement dédié,

Continuer à la page 34



Alliance crée Mayotte aérienne

Air Austral a déjà ouvert des chantiers dans le but d'asseoir son leadership dans l'Océan Indien.

Elle a dévoilé le 30 mai dernier, un projet de création d'une compagnie aérienne mahoraise appelée EWA. La société sera détenue à 51% par Air Austral et à 49 % par la Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie de Mayotte et la société Ylang Invest (Groupe privé mahorais Issoufali). EWA prévoit de desservir, avec un ATR, six liaisons depuis Dzaoudzi : Madagascar (Nosy Be et Majunga), les Comores (Anjouan et Moroni) ainsi que la Tanzanie et le Mozambique.

Alliance creates Mayotte airline

Air Austral is teaming up with the Mayotte Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the privately owned Mayotte-based Ylang Invest corporation to create an airline in the French colony of Mayotte in the Comoros islands.

The new Mayotte airline will be based in Dzaoudzi and will have a share capital of €4.5million, of which 51% will be held by Air Austral and 49% by the other partners. It should launch in November.

The new airline will be called "EWA," which Air Austral said is "a meaningful name with connotations of agreement and loyalty", it will use an ATR 72-500 to provide six direct flights departing from Dzaoudzi linking Mayotte with two weekly flights to Nosy Be and three weekly flights to Majunga in Madagascar; with direct connections to Comoros islands Moroni twice a week and four to Anjouan. Moroni flights will be boosted by additional partnership with Air Austral. Early plans also include links with two new African destinations: Tanzania and Mozambique.

"For Air Austral, this project is consistent with our strategic development and enables us to underpin our leadership position in the Indian Ocean. As the incumbent company present in Mayotte since 1976, we are very proud to be able to contribute towards the opening of this territory, whose market shows great expectations with respect to movement of goods and people," said Air Austral general manager Marie-Joseph Malé.

SUITE DE LA PAGE 32

une franchise bagage, l'accès gratuit aux 6 salons d'aéroports proposés par la compagnie.

Air Austral se trouve désormais dans la ligne du retour à l'équilibre pour pouvoir entreprendre des développements.

"On a besoin d'être bien engagé à ce retour à l'équilibre pour pouvoir engager des actions de développement", rappelle Marie-Joseph Malé. "J'ai développé dès mon arrivée des partenariats avec Air Mauritius, Air Madagascar, Air Seychelles et des développements en Afrique du Sud."

Malgré une avance à Airbus, la commande de 2 A380 avec une configuration initiale de 800 sièges n'est plus d'actualité.

"Ce projet dans sa version densifiée, est abandonné et il risquait de cannibaliser l'activité traditionnelle d'Air Austral. Nous avons conservé toutes les options ouvertes avec Airbus, notre négociation se poursuit," précise Marie-Joseph Malé.

La compagnie Air Austral possède une flotte des plus récentes avec 4 Boeing 777, 2 Boeing 737-800 et 3 ATR 74-500.

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Selon Marie-Joseph Malé, la zone de développement d'Air Austral se situe dans l'océan Indien et dans le « grand régional » avec déjà 3 destinations phares (Johannesbourg, Chennai et Bangkok). L'avenir de la compagnie se fera avec davantage de coopérations et de partenariats. Il ne s'agira en aucun cas d'un partenariat stratégique.

Air Austral a déjà ouvert des chantiers dans le but d'asseoir son leadership dans l'Océan Indien.

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Air Austral prévoit également l'ouverture d'une ligne Réunion - Maurice - Seychelles en partage de code avec Air Seychelles. Le dossier a aujourd'hui l'agrément des autorités Françaises et Seychelloises. Il est désormais entre les mains des autorités mauriciennes.

« Cet accord se fait attendre », déplore Marie-Joseph Malé. « La Commission de l'océan Indien pourrait se pencher dans un premier temps sur la simplification des autorisations entre les états. »

Air Austral se penche également sur l'organisation de partages de codes avec la compagnie sud-africaine Comair. L'objectif reste de passer de 2 000 à 8 000 passagers par an.

Marie-Joseph Mahé est conscient que le modèle économique d'Air Austral, premier transporteur de l'île de la Réunion, doit évoluer dès son retour à l'équilibre afin d'assurer non seulement sa pérennité mais aussi une croissance économique et touristique pour l'île, celle-ci étant également actionnaire majoritaire de la compagnie.

SUMMARY

Blue skies ahead for Air Austral

Air Austral has shown encouraging results for 2012/13 following a major restructuring. Its goal is to return to profit in the next financial year and to establish its position as a regional flagship company of the Indian Ocean. **Vincent Chappard** *reports.*

Air Austral, the French company based in the Indian Ocean, is fighting back having lost €27.1 on a turnover of €367.21m in the 2012-2013 financial year.

"This result came in a dismal economic climate," admitted Marie-Joseph Malé, CEO and general manager of the airline, which is headquartered at Roland Garros Airport in Sainte-Marie on the French island of Réunion.

Air Austral has, like many airlines, been forced to conduct a drastic restructuring plan, which includes route reorganisation, cost controls, the shelving of new aircraft orders and workforce cuts.

As a major part of its strategy, the airline has refocused its connections to Paris Charles de Gaulle Airport with 12 flights per week and it has also agreed a partnership with SNCF using the TGV, which provides pre-routing from 20 provincial towns.

The carrier also closed its route from Réunion to Perth, but was able to maintain its presence in Australia via a partnership agreement with Air Mauritius.

It suspended the Boeing 777 direct service to Bangkok, Thailand, but now offers the service via Chennai (Madras) in southern India using a Boeing 737-800, thus opening up an important new destination. "This route gives excellent results because it is between 75 and 80% full and unit revenue has improved significantly," said Malé. "We will probably be able to develop it in the future."

Air Austral also went back to basics by strengthening its presence in the Indian Ocean with a more streamlined programme in Madagascar, increased flights to the Mayotte archipelago and Moroni in the Comoros archipelago, and to Mauritius, where ATR services were reinforced by Boeing B737-800s at the weekend and the Boeing 777 during peak periods.

The sale of assets and the establishment of a credit agreement with the banks have led to a marked decrease in the level of debt.

The company also cut its workforce by about 17%, not renewing fixed-term contracts and implementing a voluntary redundancy plan.

Aircraft maintenance contracts with Air France Industries were reviewed, as was in-flight catering and general purchasing.

Orders for two Airbus A380s, with an initial configuration of 800 seats, were also cancelled. "This project in its original form is abandoned," confirmed Malé, although he admitted that the airline had kept all options open with Airbus and negotiations were continuing.

The airline has, however, launched its 'Capricorn' subscriptions card.

"This card is for business class passengers who regularly travel to the Indian Ocean region," explained Malé. "It truly responds to market demand from a particular type of clientele."

Among other benefits, the card provides customers with discounts ranging from 5 to 10%, gives priority on waiting lists, offers dedicated check-in counters and free access to airport lounges.

"We need to be very committed to this return to profit in order to engage in development activities," said Malé, who has been creating working partnerships with Air Mauritius, Air Madagascar, Air Seychelles and in South Africa.

«We need to be very committed to this return to profit in order to engage in development activities. »

MARIE-JOSEPH MALÉ

Air Austral's fleet includes four Boeing 777s, two Boeing 737-800s and three ATRs.

According to Malé, three destinations offer outstanding future possibilities for the airline – Johannesburg, Chennai and Bangkok – with more cooperation and strategic partnerships likely.

Air Austral is still aiming to consolidate its regional leadership in the Indian Ocean and Malé confirmed the existence of a project in Mayotte to serve Madagascar, Comoros and East Africa with ATR aircraft.

Air Austral also plans to open an online Mauritius - Seychelles codeshare with Air Seychelles. The plan is now in the hands of the Mauritian authorities.

"This agreement is delayed," explained Malé. "The Indian Ocean Commission could consider the simplification of permits between states, before thinking to unite the companies in the region."

Air Austral is also considering organising a codeshare with South African airline Comair. The goal is to move from 2,000 to 8,000 passengers per year.


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The latest airliner to make its maiden flight could prove a vital tool for African airlines exploring new markets throughout the continent.
Alan Peaford *hears why.*

Emerging Africa will A-rate the CSeries

The first flight of the Bombardier CSeries is the catalyst that Raphael Haddad, the vice president for Bombardier sales in Africa and the Middle East, believes will give the manufacturer the breakthrough it needs to make an impact in the narrow-body market across the continent.

Speaking in a hotel next to Cape Town's convention centre on the sidelines of the IATA annual general meeting at the beginning of June, Haddad was enthusiastic about the new model.

"It is a 100% new aircraft and is ideal for Africa and the Middle East and well adapted for those markets. The aircraft will offer the right cost per seat, the right trip cost so airlines can manage risk according to the mission. It will fill a gap that is required in this market place."

He was talking just weeks ahead of the historic first flight and, like his colleague, Bombardier senior vice president, sales for commercial aircraft, Chet Fuller, he expected a "strong uptake" in CSeries orders in Africa. The company expects a doubling of its fleet in the continent over the next three to five years.

Some 60 operators are flying about 200 Bombardier aircraft in Africa and that number will double in that timeframe, Fuller said, adding that this number is expected to double again in a shorter period, perhaps two to three years, or two to four years. Haddad argues that the proof will be in the pudding. The entry into service (EIS) one year from now will make the big difference but the on-going flight test programme, with five test vehicles for the -100 and two for -300, will demonstrate the value of the new technologies adopted on the airframes.

"We didn't ask an old lady or an old man to put on a new dress or a new suit. We have a young guy in a new suit.

"It is not just window dressing or embellishing what we have. We have gone all the way with 100% new aircraft new technology, whether it is on the wing, on the fuselage, on the engine, or in the cockpit. We've done the right thing and that is the appealing part," Haddad said.

"We are really bullish on the CS100 in Africa," added Fuller.

While, so far, Bombardier has not won an African customer for the CS100, Fuller said the Canadian manufacturer is in talks with prospective customers and could conclude a sale "soon".

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That could be as early as 2015 or 2016 if African airlines choose to take aircraft from a lessor, Fuller said. Irish lessor Lease Corporation International has a firm order for three CS100s and 17 CS300s, while Russian lessor Ilyushin Finance is committing to 42 CS300s. The first CS300 should enter service in the third quarter of 2015.

Most of the interest for CSeries is from airlines that recognise it as an optimised tool to cover a particular segment.

The aircraft's performance matches its economic advantages. "The ability to operate at hot and high airports, as well as short runways, will make a difference," Haddad said.

"Most of the interest for CSeries is from those airlines that recognise it as an optimised tool to cover a particular segment – the 100-150 seat market. We know current solutions on the market are not designed by the market. Airlines are now doing their math, going through performance and economics. First of all they don't believe the figures then, as they realise, they become really attentive."

Bringing new aircraft to market is nothing new for Bombardier, the most prolific of manufacturers having certificated 21 aircraft in the past 20 years.

"Airlines recognise the advantages of technology from today – not from 35 years ago," said Haddad.

The CSeries introduces a number of new technologies for Bombardier.

Pratt & Whitney certificated the PW1500G engine with Transport Canada in February, the first such milestone in its new product line of PurePower geared turbofans.

Shenyang Aircraft Corp (SAC) is still unable to deliver the entire fuselage but Bombardier has developed a work-around while its Chinese supplier builds its skills by delivering the rear section.

Fly-by-wire supplier, Parker Aerospace, faced the most critical period of testing as Bombardier sought to avoid a repeat of the fly-by-wire problems that grounded the CRJ1000 for nearly a year shortly after it began flight-testing. It has invested in an elaborate testing infrastructure on the ground at Mirabel to detect any major technical surprises before the flight-test phase begins.

Bombardier forecasts that 1,000 deliveries will be made to Middle East and Africa in the 20 to

Raphael Haddad: "We can rightly claim now that the regional airline concept has taken root in Africa and will continue to build up."

149-seater market segment over the next 20 years.

"Our portfolio of optimised Q400, CRJ and all-new C-Series aircraft is well suited to meet these requirements," Haddad said. "Africa is changing. Ten to 15 years ago you had to go through Europe to connect between two cities in West Africa. That is changing. Airlines like Arik, with its Q400s, and Asky are making a huge difference and connecting cities like Libreville and Lagos.

Haddad believes there is a change in understanding the market potential.

"Africa is a continent in emergence," he said. "The aviation sector is booming. The governments are recognising that regional aircraft are a necessity for economic development of their countries and the trade with other regions. It is a tool for economic development. The regional airlines have become an essential tool. Ten years ago we spent our time educating governments and regional airlines. Then they wanted big aircraft to go from here to there, now they realise the advantages of the regional aircraft."

Haddad points to South Africa as a case in point. "Ten years ago SAA used to have just six destinations in Africa. Now it has 26. We can rightly claim now that the regional airline concept has taken root in Africa and will continue to build up. The momentum is there. Infrastructure is improving. Customers are investing in airports and technology. More airports are getting navigational aids that allow day and night or 24-hour service rather than the 12-hour sunrise to sunset availability we used to have. There is a noticeable improvement in the infrastructure. There are still issues with ATC but they are improving."

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And, while facilities are improving, so are service standards. Haddad said Bombardier is investing in its support service to airlines in the region. "There is no use in selling an aircraft without support. If you do it is going to fail. We are not just interested in the EIS but to develop successful relationships and support for years to come."

Even ahead of the first flight, Bombardier has been targeting CSeries aircraft line maintenance checks ('A' checks) at intervals of 850 flight hours rather than the planned 750 and a base maintenance check ('C' check) at intervals of 8,500 flight hours.

"The proposed maintenance plan will allow operators of CSeries aircraft to benefit from minimised downtime and more competitive maintenance costs, all while ensuring the inherent safety and reliability of the aircraft," Haddad said.

The OEM is also working on training programmes across the board and developing a spares depot strategy for the region.

"That is something we have always taken seriously," said Haddad.

The company announced authorised service facility status for South African Airways late last year and is to announce another shortly.

"Africa and Asia are equally important to us and are growth markets. We feel our product is the right one for this segment. Range at maximum take-off weight (MTOW) is 2,950nm and that means from Lagos, for example, you could cover all of Africa," Haddad said. "We are confident."

Erik Venter: LCC strategies applied in mature markets are largely not achievable.

Too much

As new breeds of airline attempt to master the low-cost formula, **Keith Mwanalushi** *asks Erik Venter – CEO of Comair and Kulula.com – about the unique challenges facing African LCCs.*

With the impact of FastJet, especially on the South African domestic market, the spotlight is once again on the no-frills business model in Africa – the final frontier for low-cost penetration.

The industry is fully aware of the usual challenges that face airlines of all types in Africa, but these are compounded by additional issues facing LCCs.

The aviation industry as a whole is recognised for its operating challenges. It is an industry that is capital-intensive, has small profit margins and is highly regulated. Some believe replicating the LCC model in Africa might be more difficult than is widely assumed.

"The fundamental principles of the low-cost model as applied by LCCs in Europe and the Americas are largely not achievable in Africa," stressed Comair CEO Erik Venter. "Many of the processes, infrastructure and standards that are taken for granted by LCCs simply do not exist in Africa."

Venter sees the hybrid model as possibly the most suitable.

While there is much talk of high percentage growth rates in Africa, the volume of passengers travelling by air is still extremely small. LCCs have traditionally relied on growing markets by reducing ticket prices in exchange for volume. However, as Venter observed: "This relies on the existence of a large middle class that has the discretion to travel, whereas in most African countries there are only the very rich and the poor. The middle class of Africa will grow but is coming off a very small base."

Interestingly, in South Africa, the slow economic growth is compounded by virtually no population growth, which means that few new potential passengers are being added to the market.

low-cost baggage?

Kulula is one of only two LCCs to survive in the South African market.

There is a case to be made for the untapped potential of the growing black middle class but those income levels are not quite high enough to afford to fly regularly... yet.

LCCs rely on fair competition in order to offer a price advantage supported by a lower operating cost structure than that of competitors. "In Africa there is still a proliferation of state-owned and funded airlines that have little concern for cost recovery and will, therefore, compete on commercially irrational principles," said Venter. "This is exacerbated by the general lack of competition and anti-trust legislation, or legal systems that are too slow to deal effectively with legislation that might exist. This also supports prejudicial treatment by service providers that are loyal to the government, or monopolies, or state-owned."

Also noteworthy is that fuel suppliers typically operate as cartels or a monopoly and, along with the logistical costs of supplying fuel, this makes the price of jet fuel in Africa among the highest in the world.

Very few cities in Africa have more than one airport, usually owned and operated by the local government. Venter said the LCC model of operating to alternative and, therefore, cheaper airports would not be relevant. "The monopoly position of most airports, along with the inefficiency of state-operated infrastructure, has resulted in African airport costs being among the highest in the world. This is exacerbated by the relatively small number of traffic movements and passengers over which the airports can spread their costs and, therefore, poor economies of scale."

LCCs rely on high aircraft utilisation in order to spread aircraft fixed costs. This requires fast turnaround times, quick maintenance, and a good daily window of operation. Venter argues that turnaround times in Africa are typically frustratingly long due to limited or broken infrastructure, fuel shortages, lack of skills, damage to aircraft by unskilled service providers, or the need to arrange 'additional' payments before services will be provided.

Airport designs typically do not provide for a smooth flow of passengers, resulting in boarding delays.

As demonstrated in the more mature US and European markets, the ability to operate at socially awkward hours attracts less cost but, in many locations in Africa, aircraft operations are limited to daylight hours as passengers do not want to travel to and from airports after dark due to safety concerns. It must be assumed this would also affect airline crew on night-stops.

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Many airports and air traffic control services are only operational for limited daylight hours, which might suit a scheduled flight but becomes critical in case of delays or the need for diversion airports. Poor navigation aids and runway lighting may also restrict airlines to visual landings and, therefore, daylight hours, thereby also restricting aircraft utilisation.

"Maintenance facilities are very limited outside of the main African cities, resulting in extensive down-time in case of any technical snag that cannot be fixed by the crew. It is usually necessary to operate with a flying technician on board. Major unscheduled maintenance usually requires that not only the components, but also all of the tooling and technicians, be flown into often remote locations that might not be served directly from the supporting MROs in Europe," added Venter.

LCCs also rely on low-cost distribution, typically via the internet. Internet penetration and bandwidth is still very limited in many parts of Africa. The inability to transact on the internet is exacerbated by the limited use of credit or debit cards, and the prevalence of cash transactions.

"Ticket sales are largely done at the airport, for cash, on the day of travel," explained Venter. "This adds significant risk in the handling of cash and related opportunities for fraud and theft. Travel agents are still widely used, but global airlines have withdrawn from selling tickets through travel agents in many African countries due to the high incidents of defaulting on payments."

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Then there is the issue of operating risk. There are still no common pan-African airspace management standards, resulting in different practices, levels of competency, and language proficiency when crossing borders.

Venter added that this was exacerbated by the general lack of control over the standard of aircraft, the use of transponders, the filing of flight plans or air traffic communication. "Broken navigation aids, damaged airport infrastructure and runway incursions are also common," he said. "All of the above increases not only the operating risk to the airline but also the cost of insurance."

He also stressed that it's not uncommon for lessors to prohibit the operation of their aircraft in some African countries, or charge a risk premium to cover potential aircraft recovery.

"Controlling costs and increasing business efficiencies are top priority for Comair. The company has adopted a similar approach taken by airlines world-wide in terms of operating larger but more fuel-efficient aircraft; the implementation of new generation IT systems delivering efficiency and commercial opportunities; embracing new pricing models, as well as offering ancillary products and services," he concluded.

An auditor's warning about unsustainable losses at FastJet sent investors fleeing the pan-African start-up in early June, but strong sales growth in Tanzania and the prospect of a new operating base in South Africa is keeping interest in the airline afloat. **Martin Rivers** *spoke to the company's CEO.*

WINTER'S WARMER

Shares in FastJet halved in value over the course of two days in June, when auditor KPMG warned of "material uncertainty" about its ability to continue operating amid deepening losses.

The Stelios Haji-Ioannou-backed carrier posted a net loss of $56 million across its FastJet and Fly540 brands during the 18 months to December 2012, prompting KPMG to warn that continued fundraising would almost certainly be required if the airline is to stay afloat.

But strong sales figures coupled with steady progress in entering the South African and Nigerian markets saw its share price immediately bounce back. Though the volatile stock was still 75% down on its January peak as *African Aerospace* went to press, chief executive Ed Winter is confident the tide has begun to turn in Africa's fledgling low-cost carrier market.

"Most companies in our position, which are just developing, raise money as they need it," he said at the IATA AGM in Cape Town, shortly after KPMG issued its profit warning.

"I can't sit down and say yes I've already got in the bank enough money for the next 12 months, because I haven't. But I've got the absolute expectation that the facilities and the arrangements will continue to raise funds."

Insisting that FastJet is "not facing a liquidity problem", Winter acknowledged that the 18-month result was disappointing. However, the cut-off point of December 2012 was just one month after the FastJet brand launched, meaning that the vast majority of its losses stemmed from weak performance by subsidiary Fly540.

FastJet acquired Fly540 in June 2012 – mainly to gain control of its air operator's certificates in Tanzania, Kenya, Ghana and Angola – and the London-listed parent company had always envisaged winding down its loss-making subsidiary as the new brand expanded. Those plans hit turbulence late last year, however, as the two companies became embroiled in a branding and ownership dispute that threatened to unravel the partnership. To date, FastJet has only launched operations in Tanzania.

Winter admitted that a "lack of clarity both before and after the transaction" had given rise to bitter divisions between FastJet's management and Don Smith, chief executive of Fly540 parent Five Forty Aviation. At the height of the dispute, Smith was demanding that FastJet repay $14 million in debt to third parties as well as repaint Fly540-branded aircraft in Ghana and Angola – leaving him to run the comparatively well-performing Kenyan unit. FastJet responded by hauling Smith before Britain's High Court.

Confirming that all legal action has now ceased, Winter said a Memorandum of Understanding signed by both sides in April has laid down "a protocol of how we will work together towards joint objectives".

He added: "We're in a position now whereby we can just work together to allow Fly540 to develop for the moment and be ready for transition to FastJet at the appropriate time."

Though KPMG's stern warning undoubtedly rattled nerves, FastJet pounced on the subsequent news that its Tanzanian unit is "regularly flying profitably" after just six months of operations. That reflects a 50% surge in sales since the local Fly540 operation at Dar es Salaam was wound down and replaced by FastJet's three Airbus A319s.

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Winter said the introduction of international flights from Tanzania will further strengthen its results. The airline currently operates solely domestic services to Mwanza, Kilimanjaro and Zanzibar, but in June it obtained route approvals for South Africa, Zambia and Rwanda.

"We have expended huge effort over the past six months in obtaining these rights, and we can only thank the government and population of Tanzania, who have lobbied hard to allow us to gain access to the bilateral rights," Winter said at the time.

"In Tanzania the key is to get international routes," he affirmed. "We've been lobbying hard."

Even more significantly, the resolution of the dispute with Fly540 means that "Kenya is actually on our radar for somewhere in the next six to nine months".

Expansion in Tanzania and Kenya will pave the way for the fleet to begin growing – operations director Rob Bishton has said 14 specific aircraft are being reviewed by FastJet – meaning the airline could still meet its target of between six and 12 units by the end of the year. Speaking shortly before a Memorandum of Understanding with Nigeria's Red1 Airways was unveiled, he added that "active discussions with a number of other countries" are under way. However, he also conceded that negotiations in Ghana and Angola have not significantly advanced.

In Ghana, FastJet has now "re-engaged in discussions with the government" about passenger taxation. The airline's bargaining hand will be strengthened by news that Fly540's passenger numbers in the country have risen 52% year-on-year since Winter's team took the helm. But parallel capacity growth by local operators Starbow and Africa World Airlines could undermine calls for reform, and delays to resurfacing the runway at Kumasi Airport highlight the infrastructure challenges facing FastJet all over Africa.

Angolan flights remain "a way off", Winter admitted, with restrictions on moving currency and spare parts impeding the viability of the low-cost model. Although Ethiopian Airlines subsidiary ASKY has gained ground in west Africa, Winter said there will be no "mad rush" to enter the sub-region.

"I don't think we're losing ground there," he insisted. "The important thing is to enter those markets when we're ready, when we've actually got the right level of agreement with the governments, and as we see infrastructure improving."

The biggest feather in FastJet's cap looks set to be the introduction of domestic South African flights, though a precise launch date remains unclear. A twice-daily Johannesburg-Cape Town service - planned in conjunction with local carrier Federal Airlines - was suspended at the eleventh hour.

Division chief executive Kyle Haywood has yet to confirm whether he will still wet-lease a Boeing 737-300 from Star Air Cargo for the route. But Winter emphasised that he is "totally committed" to opening the South African base.

«We've now got bookings stretching out for months and months, whereas when we started people wouldn't book more than a couple of days ahead. »

ED WINTER

The launch of the South African unit has come under intense media scrutiny domestically. FastJet's earlier attempt to buy out defunct local operator 1time Airline failed due to the country's strict foreign ownership laws.

In response, Winter struck a deal with local investment firm Blockbuster, since renamed FastJet Holdings, which will own 75% of the new South African venture. It counts Edward Zuma, son of the country's president, among its directors. But its hazy corporate structure has led critics, such as Erik Venter, chief executive of rival Comair, to question whether FastJet plc in London is pulling the strings from behind the scenes.

"Fed Air is an absolutely independent airline with its own accountable manager and there'd be no way I'd be allowed to influence or control what they do," Winter said when asked about Venter's concerns. He emphasised that UK involvement in the business unit is restricted to its 25% stake plus commercial arrangements for consultancy services.

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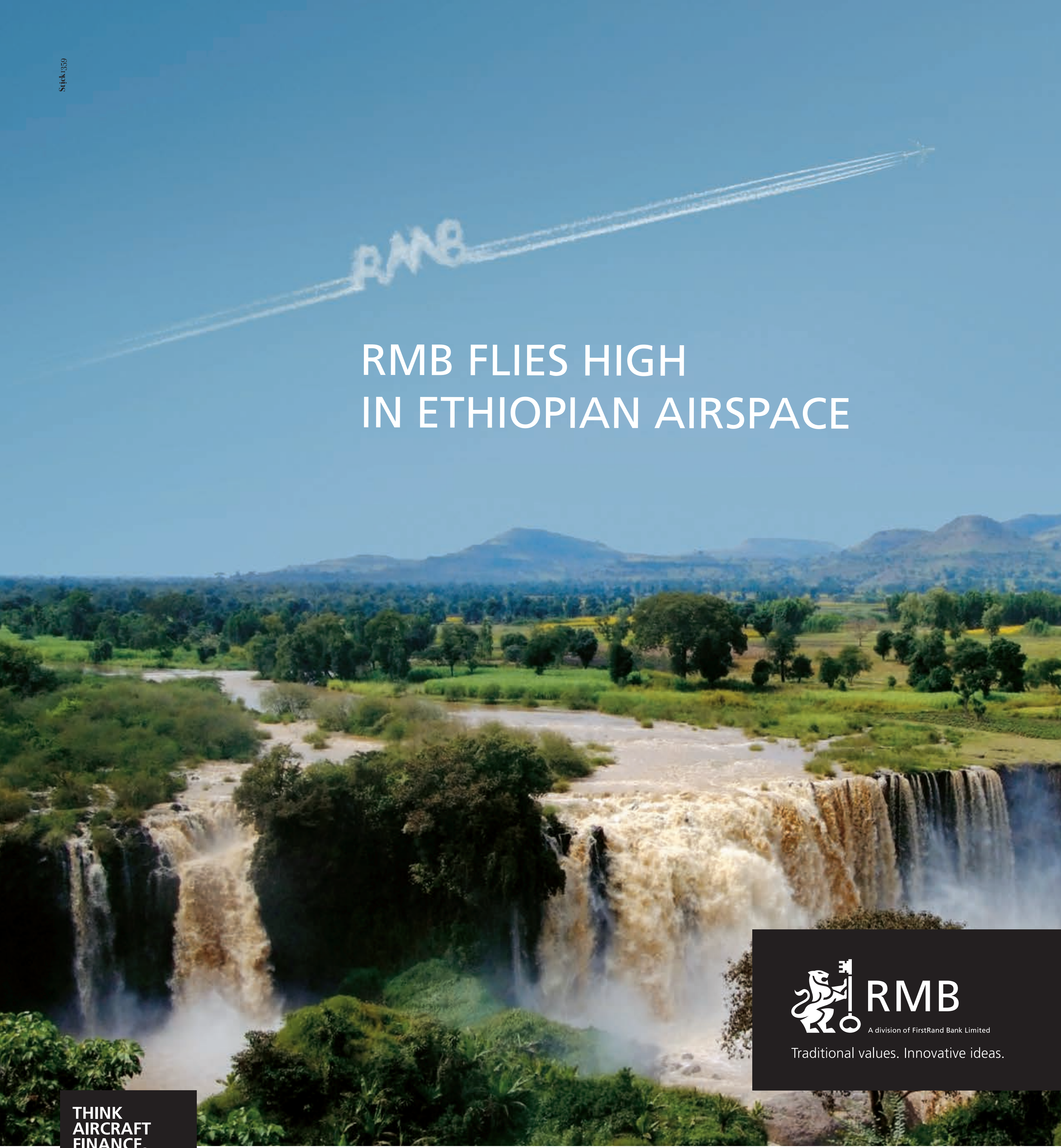
Drawing parallels with hotel chain Hilton – which functions as a central company providing expertise and branding to franchisees – Winter said the South African model could be replicated elsewhere in the continent. He also questioned Comair's motivation for objecting to FastJet's entry, complaining: "Venter continually says he believes in a competitive market, and I support him in his arguments against [flag carrier] SAA's subsidies. But the way he's acting is absolutely [suggestive] that he doesn't want competition."

Having fought pitched battles with regulators, governments, rivals and even its own subsidiary, FastJet's first six months of operations have been every bit as painful as sceptics warned. However, no-one ever claimed that introducing low-cost air travel to Africa would be easy. Noting that 38% of FastJet's passengers are first-time flyers, Winter said the seeds of change have sprouted.

"People are getting confidence in us," he insisted. "We've now got bookings stretching out for months and months, whereas when we started people wouldn't book more than a couple of days ahead. And this is enabling us to really roll out the proper low-cost model, because people are accessing $20 fares by booking early. It's amazing how quickly people are adapting and learning. Critics have said, 'Oh it won't happen in Africa'. Well, it is happening in Africa."



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Small steps sees new airline on the flight-path to success

Less than 18 months after launch, ECAir is cementing its position as an airline here to stay. **Tom Pleasant** *looks at the carrier's promising beginnings.*

Started by the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in September 2011, ECAir has been taking small but well-placed steps so that it will eventually be able to stand on its own feet without support from the government.

"The company is 100% state-owned so we don't need to look for any third-party finance," explained Fatima Beyina-Moussa, the ECAir CEO who launched the airline.

"The state gives us everything we need but that's not a model that can last. We need to talk to the big African carriers, one of those with high international standards, to come to us so that we can work together. We can grow with their help and they will have the access to the Congolese domestic market."

Oil is the basis of most of DRC's economy and it is drilled in the Atlantic Ocean off the coast of Point Noire, DRC's second city. That means traffic between the city and Brazzaville is frequent, currently three times daily.

With a strong ex-patriot community in Paris, the airline also flies three times a week between Brazzaville and the French capital. There is also a sizable community in Belgium so Beyina-Moussa says she plans to add a leg from Brussels to the Paris-Brazzaville route in the near future.

Intra-Africa destinations are what she is most keen to develop – but there are problems to overcome first.

"It is easier to go to Paris or Johannesburg than to go to another Central African country. We want to expand regionally, but when you have a small fleet you can't disperse yourself too thin. We can't start operating to some African cities, such as Dakar, because our business model just won't support that. At the beginning we have to go where the traffic is," she said.

The airline currently has two 737-200s and one 757-200, which it uses to fly to Paris. One of the 737s is fully owned but the other, Beyina-Moussa says, will be paid off by June this year. She hopes to have another 757 in the near future, which she will use to fly to the Middle East or increase frequencies to Paris later this year. For the time being though, if she wants to start flying to those nearby African countries, she needs help from other African carriers.

"We're trying to do something good in Central Africa. We want the other carriers to see that and to be interested. They already are. South African comes, so does Kenyan. Ethiopian comes daily. If we work very hard we should be able to connect Congo with the rest of the world, but we have to work together to make it work. Co-operation is so important. If a big African carrier is interested in a partnership, if they're interested in making synergies, to make a good presence in Central Africa, we're willing to talk."

Until then, she says, she can only consider other African destinations when the market can support the

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«ECAir se place progressivement sur la trajectoire du succès» – Page 44

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services. Head of the list is likely to be Cameroon and Cotonou (Benin). Cotonou is important because of the large amount of trade that goes on there.

Beyina-Moussa's focus in the meantime is to develop the carrier's skills and expertise.

"We're really trying to train everybody in the company. We've set up a small pilot training school with CAE in Belgium and hired 20 young pilots, who will be qualified in about two years. We have a partnership with PrivatAir, which operates our flights and really helps us with the training of the cabin and cockpit crew. We're also training our service agents, our quality officers and, with Lufthansa Technik, our maintenance people, so that in a couple of years we will be able to look after our aircraft ourselves.

"We want to have an international quality of service but with a strong Congolese identity, so we're approaching all the Congolese pilots and crew members in the world and are asking them to come back and work for us. So far, we haven't seen many staff leave after we trained them."

Still, she admits that service is only one part of the equation: "The cost of fuel is a big problem and we sometimes have maintenance and repair problems. We're new and only have a small fleet, so it is difficult to replace an aircraft with another if something goes wrong. We pray a lot that there are no technical problems so that we can systematically expand and grow our expertise and our reputation."

With all these challenges, is she regretting her recent move into aviation? "No! I got the aviation bug as soon as I started working on the project to launch ECAir. It's my passion; I love it," she concluded.

SOMMAIRE

ECAir se place progressivement sur la trajectoire du succès

ECAir compte renforcer sa position en République démocratique du Congo (RDC), moins de 18 mois après son lancement. **Tom Pleasant** *revient sur les débuts prometteurs de la compagnie.*

Créée en septembre 2011, ECAir a débuté ses activités modestement pour être en mesure d'opérer sans le soutien du gouvernement dans la durée.

« La compagnie est détenue à 100% par l'état et nous n'avons pas besoin de chercher d'autre financement, » explique Fatima Beyina-Moussa, directeur général d'ECAir et fondatrice de la compagnie aérienne.

« L'état nous donne tout ce dont nous avons besoin, mais ce modèle ne peut pas perdurer. Nous devons mener des discussions avec les grands transporteurs africains pour travailler ensemble. Ils auront ainsi accès au marché intérieur congolais. »

Le pétrole est la pierre angulaire de l'économie congolaise et les gisements se situent dans l'océan Atlantique au large de Pointe-Noire, deuxième ville du pays. Cela signifie qu'il y a un trafic fréquent avec la capitale Brazzaville avec actuellement trois rotations quotidiennes. Avec une communauté congolaise importante en région parisienne et en Belgique, ECAir dessert trois fois par semaine la route entre Brazzaville et Paris. Fatima Beyina-Moussa envisage prochainement d'y inclure Bruxelles.

« Il est plus facile d'aller à Paris ou à Johannesbourg que dans un autre pays d'Afrique centrale. Nous voulons nous développer régionalement, mais vous ne pouvez pas vous disperser quand vous avez une petite flotte. Nous devons aller là où se trouve le trafic », souligne Fatima Beyina-Moussa.

La compagnie opère actuellement deux Boeing 737-200 et un Boeing 757-200. Fatima Beyina-Moussa espère disposer d'un Boeing 757 supplémentaire pour voler jusqu'au Moyen-Orient ou augmenter ses fréquences sur Paris dès cette année.

« Nous essayons de créer une dynamique en Afrique centrale et d'attirer les autres compagnies Des transporteurs d'Afrique du Sud, du Kenya et d'Ethiopie viennent déjà en RDC. Nous devons coopérer ensemble pour que cela fonctionne. Si un grand transporteur africain est intéressé par un partenariat ou des synergies, nous sommes prêts à discuter. »

Même si ECAir ne peut envisager d'autres destinations africaines pour le moment, la compagnie serait intéressée d'être présente au Cameroun et au Bénin, en particulier à Cotonou.

Fatima Beyina-Moussa souhaite également développer les compétences et l'expertise d'ECAir. Nous essayons de former l'ensemble du personnel avec la mise en place d'une école de formation des pilotes. 20 jeunes pilotes seront qualifiés d'ici à deux ans. Nous avons un partenariat avec PrivatAir et formons nos agents avec Lufthansa Technik pour être en mesure d'assurer la maintenance de nos avions. Nous voulons avoir une qualité de service répondant aux normes internationales avec une identité congolaise forte.

Fatima Beyina-Moussa admet que le coût du carburant reste une problématique importante. Il existe parfois des problèmes d'entretien et de réparation étant donné la taille de la flotte. « Nous prions beaucoup pour qu'il n'y ait pas de problèmes techniques majeurs afin de développer notre expertise et notre réputation. » Malgré tous ces défis, la passion de Fatima Beyina-Moussa pour l'aviation et ECAir reste intacte.

New Cameroon Airlines Corporation (Camair-Co) CEO Matthijs Boertien has outlined an ambitious five-year growth plan aimed at taking the Douala-based carrier to break-even by mid-2015. **Victoria Moores** *reports.*

Dutchman Matthijs Boertien took on the role of CEO on January 3, replacing former chief Alex Van Elk, but he is no stranger to Camair-Co.

He joined the company as a consultant in 2010 and advised on the technical and safety preparations ahead the airline's March 2011 launch.

As a former A320, MD-11 and 767 pilot with more than 40 years' experience, he helped Camair-Co introduce its 767s from the flightdeck. He became chief operating officer in November 2011 and, after a brief break, returned to the carrier as CEO.

"The government called me in to explain why I'd left," said Boertien. "I gave them 10 pages of background and 20 pages of recommendations. I heard nothing for three or four months, so I went to Turkey as lead technical advisor on the Onur Air acquisition. Then they called me back to become CEO."

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Boertien inherited an airline with three aircraft and around 500 staff, about twice the headcount it needs by international standards. Reducing staff is not an option, so to make Camair-Co profitable he needs to grow the business and dramatically increase its productivity.

"With one 767-300ER and two 737-700s we will never be profitable," he said. "We need to invest in new aircraft, grow the fleet and make a number of changes – without increasing our overheads – to make a profitable business. The government will need to take certain steps but if these are taken, the airline can flourish."

Boertien wants to empower the airline's senior managers, stabilise and grow Camair-Co's core passenger operations and expand into cargo, line maintenance, training and ground handling. However, in the shorter-term, his priorities are to improve dispatch reliability, strengthen revenue management and develop a marketing presence.

Last year former CEO Van Elk outlined plans to increase Camair-Co's fleet to a maximum of

Matthijs Boertien: "We are one of the few countries in our region where the operators are not blacklisted by the European Union."

How Boertien plans to pilot Camair-Co towards profit

« Comment Matthijs Boertien compte piloter Camair-Co vers la rentabilité » – Page 47

10 aircraft over the next couple of years, with the addition of three Embraer 190/195s or CSeries and up to three Boeing 787s. However, Boertien is looking to go further, operating 20-22 aircraft within five years, including three or four freighters.

"We are one of the few countries in our region where the operators are not blacklisted by the European Union. We have about three to four years before they will come off the blacklist, so we need to work really hard to capitalise on that. You need to deliver reliability and a good quality of service. The one who does that first will dominate the market for some time," he explained.

As *African Aerospace* was going to press, the Camair-Co board was scheduled to be taking a decision on its long-haul fleet plans, selecting between the Airbus A330,

We need to invest in new aircraft, grow the fleet and make a number of changes – without increasing our overheads – to make a profitable business.

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Boeing 777LR or 787. "We have now completed the study. In the future it is clear that our 767 can't deliver what is needed in terms of a quality product for our passengers. We can't attract business travellers because we don't have lie-flat beds and we also struggle in economy because we have no IFE on the aircraft."

Boertien wants to take three to four long-haul aircraft by 2018, which would be used to launch non-stop services to destinations including Guangzhou in China. "No one operates from West Africa to China. We are looking at a niche, flying non-stop to Guangzhou. Maybe in the longer term we would look at East Coast USA, but that would be in three to four years."

At the moment Camair-Co operates just one long-haul service to Paris Charles de Gaulle and it needs to expand its international route network to offset losses on its domestic and regional operations. In a bid to stem these losses, Boertien is considering downsizing the regional operations from 737-700s to smaller aircraft with 90- to 140-seats. Contenders for the 10-12 aircraft order include the CSeries, re-engined Embraer 190 and the Sukhoi SSJ100. "These are the main ones we are looking at but it will be three to four months before a decision is taken. Around half of them will be leased," he said.

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Camair-Co serves four domestic routes – Garoua, Maroua, Ngaoundere and Yaounde – along with eight regional destinations, comprising Abidjan, Brazzaville, Cotonou, N'Djamena, Lagos, Libreville, Kinshasa and Malabo. The expanded regional fleet will be used to add destinations such as Abuja, Dakar, Lome, Luanda, Pointe Noir, Port Gentil and Port Harcourt.

However, building a strong regional network with daily frequencies is more important to Boertien than the number of dots on his route map. "We need to fly a minimum of six frequencies a week, and preferably two frequencies a day, on each route to be the airline of choice."

For long-haul cargo operations Camair-Co is evaluating used 767s and MD-11 freighters. It is also considering 737Fs for short-haul cargo services, but these will most likely be brought in on a wet-lease basis. "We expect to be able to start freight operations possibly as early as next year in partnership with European Cargo Services (ECS). They are working on a proposal for us. Typically we will form joint ventures on anything we do," he explained.

One limiting factor on the fleet expansion is the availability of trained pilots, technicians, cabin crew and ground operations staff, so Boertien is working with the Cameroon government to set up a training venture called Camair-Co Academy, which will cover all these functions, including ab-initio pilot training.

Boertien is planning to bring line maintenance back 'in-house'.

"It will be a breeding ground for aviation professionals in the future and will even include middle- and senior-management," he said. "We will work with a local university to give experienced people a part-time MBA so they can take over the management of the company in the medium-term."

Camair-Co employs 30 pilots, including around 22 Cameroon nationals, and all its cabin crew are locals. It is hoping to team up with CAE on the training venture.

Boertien also plans to bring line maintenance in-house by re-hiring staff who were formerly employed by Cameroon Airlines and training up new talent.

Until recently Lufthansa Technik provided Camair-Co's line maintenance but this work is now being performed by Dutch firm Aviacare on an interim basis until a new tender is awarded. In addition to providing line maintenance services, the winning bidder will be tasked with helping set up new venture Camair Technics. It will assist with the necessary approvals and train up Camair-Co's staff to take over the operation in about two years.

Camair's Cameroon ground handling will also be brought in-house. Boertien describes this as a "very important" initiative because the airline is paying around $7 million a year to its existing supplier. This represents a very high proportion of the airline's turnover, which is roughly $80 million based on its current network and fleet.

All these changes will require up-front funding. "Clearly we need help from the government and we are working with them to solve our tight financial situation," said Boertien. "We will need a capital injection to pay for the equity on the aircraft and the rest will be covered by commercial bank loans with sovereign guarantees or Ex-Im funding."

Clearly we need help from the government and we are working with them to solve our tight financial situation.

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Partnerships are also high on Boertien's already lengthy list of priorities. He is hoping to secure IOSA certification by August so that Camair-Co can strike a codeshare or interline deal with Air France effective from the start of the winter 2013-14 season on November 1. "IOSA is a very important self-reflection aid. It is a great thing because it makes you go through and improve your processes," said Boertien. "We have worked a lot with AFRAA. They have really good people who helped us to do the work we needed."

He says Air France is "a logical choice" as a partner so Camair-Co can sell onward flights from Paris – its sole long-haul service.

Closer to home, Camair-Co is awaiting board approval for a codeshare with ECAir on Kinshasa and Brazzaville. This will help both carriers to rationalise their services but at the same time offer more frequencies.

Another potential partner is Punta Azul, a fledgling ERJ-145 operator that is about to launch services from Malabo in Equatorial Guinea. “They will start services very soon, flying twice a day to Douala. We might codeshare with them, which will allow us to use our 737 on more profitable routes.”

Partnership talks are also under way with Air Ivoire. “I would rather try to cooperate than fight to the death and have everyone lose in the end,” said Boertien.

Kenya Airways CEO Titus Naikuni recently voiced frustration at the lack of any viable regional partners in West Africa, where he would ideally like to form a hub.

“If we worked with Air France-KLM, the most logical people to work with would be [their SkyTeam partner] Kenya Airways. Our main destinations are not in East Africa, we are concentrating more on regional routes, but first we need to establish ourselves a bit more substantially before someone would consider us for that type of role.”

Over his career Boertien has racked up 40 years’ experience with Dutch carriers Martinair, Denim Air and his own Amsterdam Airlines venture. Most recently he worked for Aircraft Financing and Trading (AFT) as a consultant. However, he confesses that Africa is a “totally different environment” from his previous experience, presenting new challenges as he puts Camair-Co back on track to profitability.

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Comment Matthijs Boertien compte piloter Camair-Co vers la rentabilité

Matthijs Boertien, nouveau directeur général de Camair-Co, a lancé un plan de croissance ambitieux sur cinq ans permettant à la compagnie aérienne de retourner à l’équilibre d’ici la mi-2015. Une enquête de **Victoria Moores.**

Le Néerlandais Matthijs Boertien a pris la fonction de directeur général le 3 janvier dernier, en remplacement d’Alex Van Elk. Il a rejoint la société comme consultant en 2010 et a travaillé pour le lancement de la compagnie. Il est ensuite devenu directeur des opérations.

Matthijs Boertien a hérité de trois avions et environ 500 employés, soit le double d’un effectif dont la compagnie a besoin par rapport aux normes internationales. « La réduction des effectifs n’est pas une option » et Camair-Co a besoin de croissance et d’augmenter considérablement sa productivité.

« Nous ne serons jamais rentable avec un B767-300ER et deux B737-700 », précise Matthijs Boertien. « Nous devons investir dans de nouveaux avions, augmenter notre flotte et procéder à des changements, sans augmenter nos frais généraux. »

Il souhaite par ailleurs responsabiliser les cadres supérieurs, développer le trafic passagers et le fret, la maintenance, la formation et la manutention. Ses priorités à court terme restent toutefois d’améliorer la fiabilité, la gestion de la compagnie et déployer une stratégie marketing.

« Nous sommes l’un des rares pays de la région où les opérateurs ne sont pas sur la liste noire de l’Union européenne. Nous devons offrir un service fiable et de bonne qualité et ainsi prendre de l’ascendance sur le marché », explique-t-il.

Camair-Co devait prendre une décision sous peu sur l’évolution de sa flotte d’avions et choisir entre l’A330, le B777LR ou B787, le B767 ne pouvant pas offrir la qualité nécessaire pour les passagers, en particulier les voyageurs d’affaires.

Camair-Co opère vers Paris mais a besoin d’élargir son réseau international pour compenser ses pertes sur les opérations domestiques et régionales. Matthijs Boertien envisage d’utiliser des avions de 90 à 140 sièges avec l’achat et la location d’avions comme le C-Series, l’Embraer 190 remotorisé ou le Sukhoi SSJ100.

Elle dessert actuellement quatre lignes intérieures (Garoua, Maroua, Ngaoundéré et Yaoundé), huit destinations régionales (Abidjan, Brazzaville, Cotonou, N’Djamena, Lagos, Libreville, Kinshasa et Malabo). Une flotte d’avions plus importante lui permettra de relier des destinations comme Abuja, Dakar, Lomé, Luanda, Pointe Noire, Port-Gentil et Port Harcourt avec si possible un minimum de six fréquences par semaine sur chaque route régionale. Matthijs Boertien souhaite desservir directement Guangzhou en Chine et à long terme les Etats-Unis.

Camair-Co évalue le B767 et le MD-11 pour ses opérations de fret.

« Nous nous attendons à être en mesure de commencer nos opérations de fret d’ici l’année prochaine », affirme-t-il.

Camair-Co emploie 30 pilotes, dont environ 22 ressortissants du Cameroun. La disponibilité des pilotes et de personnels qualifiés freine l’expansion de la flotte de Camair-Co. Matthijs Boertien travaille en collaboration avec le gouvernement pour mettre en place un projet de formation intitulé « Camair-Co Academy ».

« Nous avons clairement besoin de l’aide du gouvernement et nous travaillons ensemble pour résoudre notre situation financière tendue»

MATTHIJS BOERTIEN

La compagnie prévoit également d’opérer la maintenance en ligne en interne ainsi que les opérations de manutention au sol. Elle paie environ 7 millions de dollars par an à son fournisseur actuel pour ce type de prestation soit une part importante de son chiffre d’affaires (environ 80 millions de dollars).

L’ensemble de ces changements nécessitera un financement important.

« Nous avons clairement besoin de l’aide du gouvernement et nous travaillons ensemble pour résoudre notre situation financière tendue », précise Matthijs Boertien.

Nouer des partenariats reste une priorité pour Matthijs Boertien. Il espère obtenir la certification IOSA d’ici août pour que Camair-Co puisse conclure un accord de partage de codes avec Air France ou encore avec ECAir sur Kinshasa et Brazzaville. Un autre partenariat pourrait se faire avec l’opérateur Punta Azul ou Air Ivoire avec laquelle la concurrence est rude.

Il reste donc de nombreux défis à relever pour Matthijs Boertien afin de mettre Camair-Co sur le chemin de la rentabilité.

CARGO

Africa's riches have led to a cargo boom but, as **Tom Pleasant** *finds out, ensuring shipments are flown safely and securely is a challenge.*

WEALTH AND SAFETY

It is no secret that cargo is increasingly big business for Africa. Whether fresh food exported for Europe's supermarkets or telecommunications equipment imported for the thriving mobile phones networks, airfreight is moving in greater amounts to more destinations to and from the continent every day.

Securing the supply chain is challenging, however. With increasing crime, and the threat of terrorist attack and the war on drugs still strong, around the world countries, such as the US and the UK, are demanding greater compliance with stricter regulations.

But how do the emerging markets of Africa manage to introduce the processes and standards demanded by more-established economies? As with many things, a key piece of the puzzle is people.

David Stockton, director of global aviation at security provider G4S, which has operations in all but four African countries, said: "There are challenges to getting the right people in some areas but there are benefits [to this kind of job]. An airport is not going anywhere, so it is a good source of stable employment to the local community. There is also job satisfaction. I believe people recognise that working in security at an airport they are adding value to the safety of others. That is important to a lot of people.

"But you have to put the effort into the recruitment process, training and career growth. It's very easy to get 50 staff, but to actually get the right 50 staff is more difficult. They need to be able to have the right level of credentials and background checks, and also the ability to constantly learn and improve. You also have to put as much effort into retention as you do recruitment because, if you don't, you'll find someone takes the role but they'll constantly be looking for the next one."

Air cargo security expert James Pike agrees. Pike once headed up security training for British Airways (BA) but now has his own training company, JP International Aviation Security, and deals extensively with African civil aviation authorities (CAAs). He highlights the growing requirements for staff to have higher and further education.

«Ten years ago if you didn't go in with an open suitcase of money you wouldn't get through the door. »

DAVID STOCKTON

"The industry has also started to pay them a decent wage," he said. "That encourages people who go abroad for their final education to come back home and introduce what they have learned."

Another aspect to introducing secure cargo is hardware, but that has considerably more challenges.

"Funding is a problem," said Pike. "Some of this scanning equipment is £250,000," he explained, "and that's a lot of money whatever country you are in. Things are changing now, though, with regulators saying they don't care how the cargo is screened, just that it has to be done to certain standards."

Stockton agreed, but suggested the leasing of screening equipment usage will become more common globally. "Besides the purchase cost, buying the physical asset is an eight-week process and then there's all the training too. For smaller operators you're not going to be able to invest in that type of capital equipment. You have to look to what your core business is. If you're an SME cargo operator its about moving product as quickly and efficiently as possible. You didn't start it to be a security company.

"We've just opened a cargo-screening facility in Brussels that we hope will become a turn-key solution we can export elsewhere. That's embryonic but it's something that we can see growing. I'm quite excited about that."

Stockton also said that while the high level of investment in equipment was traditionally expected, it was now acknowledged that different cargos have different threats and should, therefore, be treated differently.

"One size should not fit all. After all, 100% screening of cargo is simply physically impossible," he said. "You have to review the threat and plan accordingly, working out where you can add value. G4Si – which deals with high-value cargo such as gold bullion – is obviously very good at securing the entire supply chain, but you don't need to do that for Kenyan beans because of their lower value and because the need for speed is of the essence.

"It all comes back to the threat of the moment and what the client needs in terms of speed and efficiency, but it needs to be balanced. You also need to push back up the supply chain so you can manage what comes through that facility."

Regardless of changing regulations and the varying levels of threat, delivery of security standards has often been lacking on the continent. Pike has provided training to various African countries for almost 20 years and he says the change over the last two or three has been significant.

"There is still corruption but it's nowhere near as bad as it was. If people are caught now they are

summarily dismissed from their jobs. Ten years ago if you didn't go in with an open suitcase of money you wouldn't get through the door. It's a refreshing change. You can go in there and sell your services on it's price and merit, not 'little brown envelopes'.

"In general, there used to be a lot of lip service to cargo security but I knew that if I went back the following week it would be back to how it was. It's a slow process, but Africa is finally taking it seriously.

"I've just completed a year-long contract training the Nigerian CAA inspectors. It was interesting because they just didn't know how much authority they really had now. The CAAs have become far more independent from the government these days and they aren't afraid to challenge people with 'pips' on their shoulder (the military, police or government). It used to be they would just let them through security or you would be arrested. That mind-set is changing massively now."

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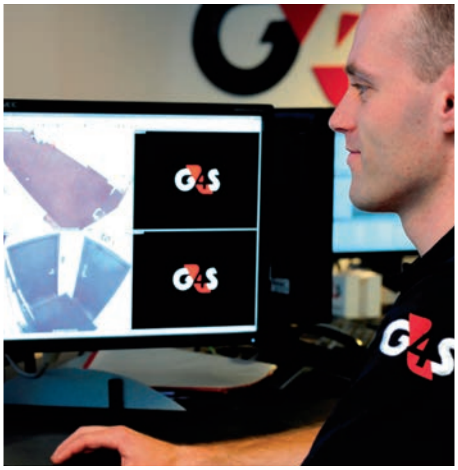
Pike said that is happening for a variety of reasons, not only because of the CAAs changing roles and greater independence, but also because African countries are becoming wealthier and more politically stable. Perhaps the largest factor, though, is that non-African governments are putting pressure on airlines to take more responsibility for the cargo they carry.

"The final sanction any government has is that they can ban all cargo from a country," said Pike. "I was in Kenya when the UK banned all British flights there in 2003 and I can tell you it hurt the country a lot, but they soon got their house in order. If you shut down air you're shutting down the country. With all the cargo now coming out of Africa that threat has really concentrated the minds of airlines.

"However, in some countries the airline isn't allowed to search its own cargo; maybe it's the police or customs instead. That can lead to bad practice, not always, but sometimes. That's coming under control more with airlines willing to say, 'We can't wait around for one of you to come and search this cargo, we need to do it now'. While they can't tell their own government what to do they do still have a lot of influence because of the money they bring to the country and the people they employ."



Consistency in service deliver is making business planning easier says G4S.

What the international community really wants, though, is consistency in service delivery, to make business planning easier. The European Union was born largely on the back of standards and regulations that made it easier to do business across its founding countries' borders.

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Pike supports the idea: "The big challenge is to get all countries in Africa – which naturally have different ideas and approaches – to agree to common standards. In Nigeria, when I went last year, they still have an open-fronted cargo receiving area, while hundreds of people are wandering about trying to find work to unload lorries. Go to Kenya, though, and it's all fenced in with guards and you can't get in without ID."

It's obvious that more change is needed, but it is coming. Whereas a commercial venture can evolve though, security provision has to be right first time, every time.

"It has to be done in a sure and measured way," said Stockton, "You have to deliver what you set out to do from the start. You can cause yourself a great deal of damage if you get it wrong and that's in nobody's interest. You may be ok from a commercial perspective but if you put the wrong people or processes in place then your business plan is shot to pieces."

A combination of products suited to the marketplace and geopolitical links with Africa are fuelling optimism at Brazilian aerospace manufacturer Embraer that it can increase its presence on the continent. **Alan Dron** *reports.*

Brazilian defence goes on the attack

Embraer sees Africa as one of its main developing markets in the defence and security fields.

The company believes that further sales of its A-29 Super Tucano advanced trainer and light attack aircraft will be forthcoming on the continent and has considerable hopes of selling its soon-to-be-released KC-390 military jet transport and tanker there.

Best-known for its range of regional jets and executive aircraft, Embraer's defence business is expanding rapidly. Although it has produced military equipment since its earliest days (the Bandeirante light utility aircraft that launched the company on to the international market was designed for the Brazilian air force), it only set up its defence and security division as a separate business unit on January 1 2011.

It is a measure of how its military operations are expanding when one notes that, in 2006, defence sales accounted for just 6% of Embraer's total revenues. Last year, it had risen to 17.1% and further increases are forecast for coming years. The defence unit last year had revenues of $1.05 billion.

"Defence markets worldwide are shrinking, so growing in that climate is a great accomplishment," said Luis Carlos Aguiar, the defence unit's president in a briefing at Gavião Peixoto, the main defence site situated some 40 minutes' flying time inland from São Paulo.

Gavião Peixoto is the manufacturing site for the Super Tucano and for major modernisation programmes on Brazil's F-5E, AMX and A-4 Skyhawk fleets.

"We believe over the next eight years we will have double-digit growth," he added, predicting a 25% rise in revenues in 2013, following a 24% rise last year.

"We're trying to tempt customers away from the US and Europe," he admitted. To do that required not only attractive prices and quality products but also a geopolitical relationship with potential clients.

This, he believed, was an important and sometimes overlooked factor in making sales and formed an important aspect of Embraer's drive to increase sales in Africa.

Historically, around half of Brazil's population can trace their roots to the African continent and Brazil has ethnic and linguistic connections with the former Portuguese colonies of Angola, Mozambique, Equatorial Guinea and Cape Verde. Embraer has spent considerable efforts over the past 15 years developing relationships with African nations.

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Another geopolitical advantage may lie in the fact that some African nations may find it more comfortable to buy military equipment from a fellow non-aligned nation like Brazil rather than one of the major powers.

Intriguingly, Aguiar and several other company executives mentioned that they believed they had a real chance of selling not only aircraft but also the components of integrated border protection and surveillance systems to Africa. These would be built on Brazil's experience with its SISFRON system, which meshes aircraft with both ground and air-based sensors and which is ultimately aimed at protecting Brazil's 16,000-plus kilometre border. A contract for the project's initial phase, covering some 650km along the Paraguayan and Bolivian borders, was signed last November.

In the Super Tucano Embraer believes it has a product particularly suited to African air arms.

Just as the problem of pirates off the Somali coast has seen the somewhat ludicrous sight of billion-dollar Western guided missile destroyers hunting for small groups of men in skiffs armed with no more than some AK-47s and RPGs when much simpler vessels would be just as effective, so highly-sophisticated combat aircraft are not always required for many of the roles that African air forces need to undertake.

Border patrols, close air support and counter-insurgency (COIN) sorties feature high on the priority list of many nations, rather than hi-tech air-to-air or air-to-ground missions.

Just having a visible, regular presence in an area is a solution to many requirements.

The Super Tucano is ideal for this role, says Embraer. Importantly, it can operate from unimproved airstrips and its turboprop powerplant gives a much lower hourly cost of ownership than jet types.

The Super Tucano has made several sales in Africa in the past couple of years, to Angola (six), Burkina Faso (three) and Mauritania. Embraer declines to say how many Mauritania has bought, but Flight International's World Air Forces directory puts it at three.

Pictures issued by Embraer show the first Mauritanian aircraft with an under-fuselage electro-optical turret. Angola and Burkina Faso

Mauritania's Super Tucanos mount an under-fuselage electro-optical turret for use in the type's border patrol mission.

say their examples will be used in the border patrol role, while Mauritania says its aircraft will also be used on counter-insurgency duties.

These are, as yet, small numbers, but Embraer believes that more will be forthcoming – perhaps this year. The company is reticent over potential African orders, but press reports list Senegal and Libya as being in negotiations with the South American airframer. Reports in 2010 of oil-rich Equatorial Guinea ordering a batch of Super Tucanos have so far not firmed up.

Embraer believes that the Super Tucano's choice by the US Air Force as the winner of its re-run Light Air Support (LAS) competition, which is intended to deliver 20 LAS aircraft to bolster the fledgling Afghan Air Force following the withdrawal of US and international forces, will further improve prospects for the type.

Embraer (together with its US partner, Sierra Nevada Corporation) initially won the LAS contract in early 2012, but US competitor Hawker Beechcraft, which had offered its AT-6 Texan II, lodged a legal objection to the Brazilian team's victory. The US Government Accountability Office found flaws in the US Air Force's handling of the competition and ordered it re-run. When the new competition again found in favour of the Brazilian entry in February 2013, its US competitor – now rebranded as Beechcraft after emerging from Chapter 11 bankruptcy proceedings and desperate to win the $427 million contract – once again reached for its lawyers to object, voicing concerns at unspecified "significant errors" in the selection procedure.

The US Air Force overrode Beechcraft's objection, citing a US law that allows it to do so when it 'is in the best interests of the US' or if there are 'unusual or compelling circumstances'.

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As *African Aerospace* went to press, the final outcome of the row was unknown. Despite the uncertainty, however, Aguiar said during his briefing that the mere fact that the US Air Force had twice chosen the Super Tucano could only help the aircraft's international prospects. "It opens the doors to future sales," he commented. Embraer believes that there is a worldwide market of almost 350 aircraft in the Super Tucano's market category.

Aguiar was sanguine over Beechcraft's repeated legal challenges to Embraer's victories in the LAS contest: "I don't want to say too much, but this is part of the game," he said.

Further enhancements to the Super Tucano are in the pipeline. For example, Embraer is studying a small-podded radar that could be fitted to the aircraft to enhance its surveillance capabilities.

If the Super Tucano is taking up the efforts of the Embraer sales team today, attention will increasingly switch to the company's KC-390 military transport aircraft.

As the designation indicates, the KC-390 will, unusually for what is primarily intended to be a transport aircraft, have an inbuilt air-to-air refuelling capability. Embraer believes that, conservatively, there is a market for 700 aircraft in this category up to 2025.

Although it was not designed as a competitor to the Lockheed Martin C-130 Hercules, its main target market will be those air forces operating the long-lived US type. Although the C-130's design is seemingly ageless, many examples in service around the globe are now extremely elderly.

The other type in the KC-390 sales team's sights is the equally elderly Antonov An-12, which still soldiers on with several African nations.

Continued on Page 52

Angola has ordered six Super Tucanos, with examples on the Brazilian assembly lines in March 2013.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 51

The KC-390 will have a slightly larger payload (23tonnes compared to the C-130's 19-21 tonnes) and, with a cruising speed of 465kts (850km/h) will be 100kts faster than even the latest C-130J. With maximum payload, it will have a range of 1,200nm (2,220km), compared to the C-130J's 1,600nm (2,960km), although the C-130J achieves that range with a lower (15.5tonne) payload. Like the C-130, it will be able to operate from unprepared runways and is calculated to be able to make 10 passes over a particular patch of ground before it renders it unusable.

According to KC-390 programme vice-president Paulo Gastão Silva, the aircraft is on schedule for first flight in late 2014, with initial operating capability a year later and full operation by mid-2016.

The type contains a mix of mature and advanced systems. The powerplants will be the well-established IAE V2500 turbofans and the avionics will be the Rockwell Collins Pro Line Fusion range used on the Boeing 787.

More novel will be features such as sidesticks and dual HUDs for the pilots, HOTAS controls for chaff and flare dispensers plus several warning systems and a directional infrared countermeasures (DIRCM) pod to foil approaching heat-seeking missiles.

The self-protection suite, together with air-to-air refuelling and control of the EO/IR pod, will be undertaken by a third crew member sitting behind the co-pilot.

In mid-March Embraer undertook a critical design review, together with the Brazilian air force. Its successful completion would mean the release of manufacturing drawings and the beginning of component production for the first prototype aircraft. "This is the year when CATIA files start to become a real aircraft," said Silva.

Currently, there are few competitors in this category. The only new design aimed at the KC-390's market segment is the Russo-Indian Medium Transport Aircraft, whose go-ahead was announced in October 2012. "If they succeed, they could compete with us," admitted Silva. "However, their aircraft is slipping all the time in development and will come to market much later than us."

He believed that, importantly, Embraer was recognised worldwide as an established OEM due to its history of commercial and military designs, whereas the Russo-Indian consortium of Irkut and HAL did not have that advantage.

Boeing has been working on a marketing study on behalf of Embraer for the KC-390. The Brazilian company was reluctant to talk about this during March's briefing sessions, but US marketing know-how would certainly be of use in selling the aircraft.

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The big question is will the KC-390 be too sophisticated for many African air arms – will it simply be 'too much aircraft' for them?

Few are likely to require the built-in tankering capability it offers, while its fly-by-wire and advanced self-defence systems may stretch the personnel capabilities of some nations.

Richard Aboulafia, vice-president, analysis, at US aviation consultancy Teal Group, thinks the KC-390 may appeal to only a few nations in the region. "This plane is basically in a C-130 price class, or close to it. The big wild card is US foreign aid. There are still plenty of C-130s and other smaller planes to give away."

It could, however, be of interest to major regional players such as South Africa, which has a small fleet of elderly C-130Bs and an even more ancient group of four DC-3s that take on the unlikely role of maritime patrol aircraft. With South Africa's need to monitor the trade routes around the Cape of Good Hope, the KC-390 could be a good fit.

Brazil's maritime patrol responsibilities for a huge swathe of the South Atlantic has led to Embraer designing the KC-390 to have an operational radius in the SAR role of 1545nm (2,860km), with two hours on station at that range.

Its Selex Galileo Gabbiano X-band radar will be more than simply the weather radar normally fitted to tactical transports. It will have several maritime modes, including 'Spot SAR', designed to give a high-resolution image of a particular patch of ocean. It will also be designed to carry an Israeli Rafael Litening II EO/IR SAR pod on a dedicated hardpoint on the forward lower left fuselage.

Additionally, it will be able to support helicopters on SAR missions at the limits of their range, with the KC-390 able to undertake air-to-air refuelling at speeds as low as 120kts.

Also useful in the SAR role is the remarkable field of view from the cockpit. Standing in the cockpit of the KC-390 simulator at Embraer's Eugênio de Melo plant, I was struck by the depth of the side cockpit windows. In fact, so large were these, said one Embraer official, that the simulator's image projectors had difficulty generating the necessary field of view.

The other main risk to Embraer racking up sales in Africa is that many nations may consider the best replacement for an old C-130 to be a newer C-130.

The KC-390's final price has not been revealed, but it would be a major item in any nation's defence budget.

However, Embraer notes that African nations sometimes do not live up to their image outside the continent of struggling to finance large military purchases. Economic growth in several parts of Africa meant that, in the past, nations had offered a lump sum cash payment for military aircraft, said Aguiar.

Financial challenges did exist for some nations, he accepted, but the Brazilian government was ready to participate in creating funding solutions.

One thing is certain: Embraer is serious about Africa. Traditional military aircraft suppliers may have a new competitor on the continent.

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ENGINEERED WITH PASSION

Segun Demuren: business aviation in Nigeria is an economic driver.

Nigeria really means business

Liz Moscrop *finds that business aviation is taking centre stage in one of the world's fastest-growing economies.*

Exuberant, upbeat and positive are not necessarily words written about Nigeria, but the recent inaugural Nigerian Business Aviation Conference (NBAC) bucked the trend.

There are around 150 private aircraft in the country, mostly large cabin types. Most of the aircraft are on foreign tickets, with around 20 on the local register. Owners in the country include clergymen, government entities and charter operators.

Hosted by Evergreen Apple Nigeria (EAN), the team behind the country's first private FBO, the event tackled tricky topics such as finance, security and infrastructure.

Around 120 attendees turned up to participate in what proved to be a lively debate, skilfully managed by moderator Alasdair Whyte, MD of Corporate Jet Investor. Despite the fact invited members of the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority did not attend (possibly due to the fact they were called to attend a conference announced at the last minute in Abuja, 300 miles away), the strong showing of industry heavyweights and high-net-worth individuals made for meaningful discussions.

EAN CEO Segun Demuren opened the day, outlining the need for better understanding of the value of business aviation in Nigeria as an economic driver, and its significance in developing international business.

First on the agenda was a vital discussion on how to finance new business aircraft. Segun Agbaje, MD of Nigeria's GT Bank, took some intense questioning from some of the journalists present about how willing his bank was to offer lending. In 2007 GT was the first sub-Saharan bank and first Nigerian joint stock company to list on the London Stock Exchange and

Continued on Page 56


Delegates at Africa's first business aviation conference got to hear first hand how the industry can boost national wealth.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 55

Deutsche Börse, and it is one of West Africa's largest companies. Agbaje rose to the challenge, explaining that, as usual in the business aviation sector, relationships matter. He pointed out: "Most transactions are cash-based in Nigeria."

He said that after the disaster year of 2008, when the business jet market shrunk dramatically from an industry growing 80-100% because of sub prime repossessions in the US, bankers became "a lot more gun-shy about financing aircraft". He added: "We saw an increased preference for borrowers with a broader portfolio, which stands aside from the aircraft itself."

Agbaje stressed the importance of the 'character' of the borrower.

Chris Miller, MD of Guggenheim Partners business aircraft investments, agreed. He said: "We wouldn't need a full financial disclosure bank but would want to know the character of a client."

The general tone of the panel was upbeat. Agbaje concluded: "We're used to financing rice and fish and it's nice to be doing something else."

Another session focused on the need for aircraft management expertise. "Don't learn the hard way," said Achuzie Ezenagu, MD of Toucan Aviation, a local operator that serves the oil sector.

Aircraft based here tend to get a better price in the second hand market when they are registered outside.

The panel suggested that very few Nigeria-based aircraft were operated by aircraft management companies, which could leave owners exposed. Ezenagu cautioned that management begins three or four months before aircraft purchase, and advised potential owners to recognise that experience in regulations, crewing, paperwork and safety is essential.

A big fear from the banks while the market is in its infancy is what to do in the event of repossession.

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Melanie Humphries, head of aviation finance at Investec, which has financed several Nigerian private jet transactions, said: "Aircraft based here tend to get a better price in the second hand market when they are registered outside."

Good management companies certainly help. CIT's Mike Kahmann, MD business aircraft finance, pointed out: "We look at an aircraft management company that has an established track history you can trust. A larger management company with a global presence would never let one client tarnish their reputation."

Humphries chipped in: "The relationship with the operator you deal with is key. This is not established overnight. You can draft the most beautiful tripartite agreements, but when the going gets tough you have to pick up the phone and have a very hard conversation with that owner or operator. You have to trust they can assist you with working out that situation."

She added: "We recently had a real situation in Africa (she did not specify where). We had the operator on the line and direct access to the pilot, who knew where the aircraft was. The operator said they would support us and bring the aircraft back to its home base if necessary. We always try to work things out that way first, rather than take the hard legal approach."

Given that Nigeria is the fastest-growing market in Africa in terms of business aircraft purchase, the major OEMs were naturally in attendance. Sales directors from sponsors Dassault, Embraer and Gulfstream, joined regional reps from Bombardier and Cessna, and mostly managed to curb their enthusiasm for delivering sales pitches. They were bullish about future prospects for the products in the region, while noting that the infrastructure remains patchy.

The general consensus was that establishing maintenance capabilities in Nigeria was a top priority. Robert Prentice, VP Africair, and Cessna's representative for the continent, said: "We are training local engineers. We have six engineers in Nigeria working in a supervisory role. However, sending an engineer to Europe to do a course doesn't make him an engineer – experience is important."

Embraer has just opened a facility in the

country, while both ExecuJet, which has a facility next to EAN's in Lagos, and MCM, which works in partnership with EAN, support Bombardier types.

Meanwhile Dassault's regional sales director, Gilles Apollis, said that his company would be opening a facility in Lagos later this year.

The expense of flying an aircraft to Europe or South Africa is a major factor for buyers when purchasing an aircraft. Embraer's VP sales and marketing, Colin Stevens, underlined the need to train and identify local engineering specialists to support the expanding sector. The panel also suggested that there was a strong market for smaller aircraft in the region, with more than 50 small airfields available.

Obtaining landing permits is another hot topic for private aircraft operating into Nigeria. A trip planners' panel noted that it could take airports between 48 and 72 hours to grant a permit.

Nwankwo Ifeanyi, representing the Nigerian Airspace Management Authority, acknowledged the need for automation of the process, and said plans were in place to implement an automated service in the near future.

The absence of the heavy hitters from the CAA was particularly noticeable in the next session. It would have been useful to hear how they were tackling threats of violence against staff. Sadly, security is a big issue in Nigeria.

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Obinna Onyeso, MD of Pathfinders Security Service, highlighted the need to protect his employees as they go about their daily business. He explained that they had been attacked on the way home and were sometimes in danger. He said: "This keeps me awake at night."

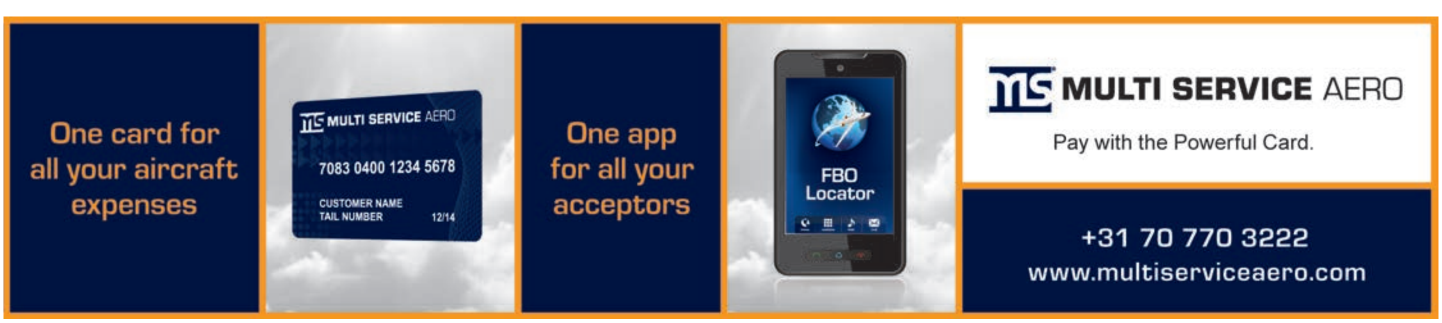
That said, the conference was a success by any measure, and proved to be a platform for highlighting the good and bad of the country's sector. The strong showing of key players from the local industry, international heavyweights and some 40 local journalists showed just how vibrant the market is there.

EAN's Demuren wound up the day, thanking delegates for attending. He said: "Undoubtedly Nigeria is a significant player in the business aviation sector for Africa and will play an important part in the development of the sector in the region.

" This conference has demonstrated that, while we have a lot of opportunity, we are still very much in our infancy and must aim to build the infrastructure to support business aviation and the associated framework necessary to create a solid base."

He confirmed that the event would be the first in a series of annual meetings.

"Plans are already in motion for the 2014 NBAC event, which we anticipate will be bigger and even better," he said.



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FOR THE JOURNEY

EMBRAER
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Birth of a versatile virtuoso

Alan Peaford *was in Geneva to witness the launch of a new jet that has its sights set very firmly on the rapidly growing African business aviation market.*

Oscar Schwenk: "We started asking our PC-12 customers what they would like to see in the next Pilatus aircraft. The answers were always the same – go further and faster."

A new business jet – ideally suited for some of Africa's roughest airports – was launched by Swiss manufacturer Pilatus at the European business aviation event EBACE.

The Swiss company has earned a strong reputation with its single-engine turboprop PC-21 but now the new twin-engined jet – the PC-24 – takes the company into new territory.

The new jet not only has the ability to use short runways but can also land on unpaved surfaces and will have a cargo door fitted as standard.

At the launch in Geneva, the Swiss manufacturer described the new aircraft as "the world's first super versatile jet".

The cabin interior will be available in a wide choice of configurations, ranging from an executive layout with six to eight passenger seats, to a commuter set-up with room for up to 10 passengers, or even combi-versions with ample space for passengers and cargo, right through to special installations for emergency medical flights.

According to the technical specifications, the PC-24 will have a maximum speed of 425kts (787km/h) and a maximum range of 1,950nm 3,610km with four passengers.

It will be powered by two Williams FJ44-4A turbines, each producing 15,124kN of thrust.

"The PC-24 is the first business jet to have the ability to use very short runways, paved or unpaved, and a cargo door as standard," said Pilatus chairman Oscar Schwenk.

"We started asking our PC-12 customers what they would like to see in the next Pilatus aircraft more than 10 years ago," he added. "The answers were always the same – go further and faster, while retaining the much-appreciated strengths of the PC-12, such as the ability to use very short runways. It was a huge challenge for our development team! We are all the more proud to be able to unveil an aircraft with exactly those qualities."

The new jet will be certificated for single pilot operations. Roll-out is expected in the third quarter of 2014, with first flight before the end of that year. Certification is targeted for 2017.

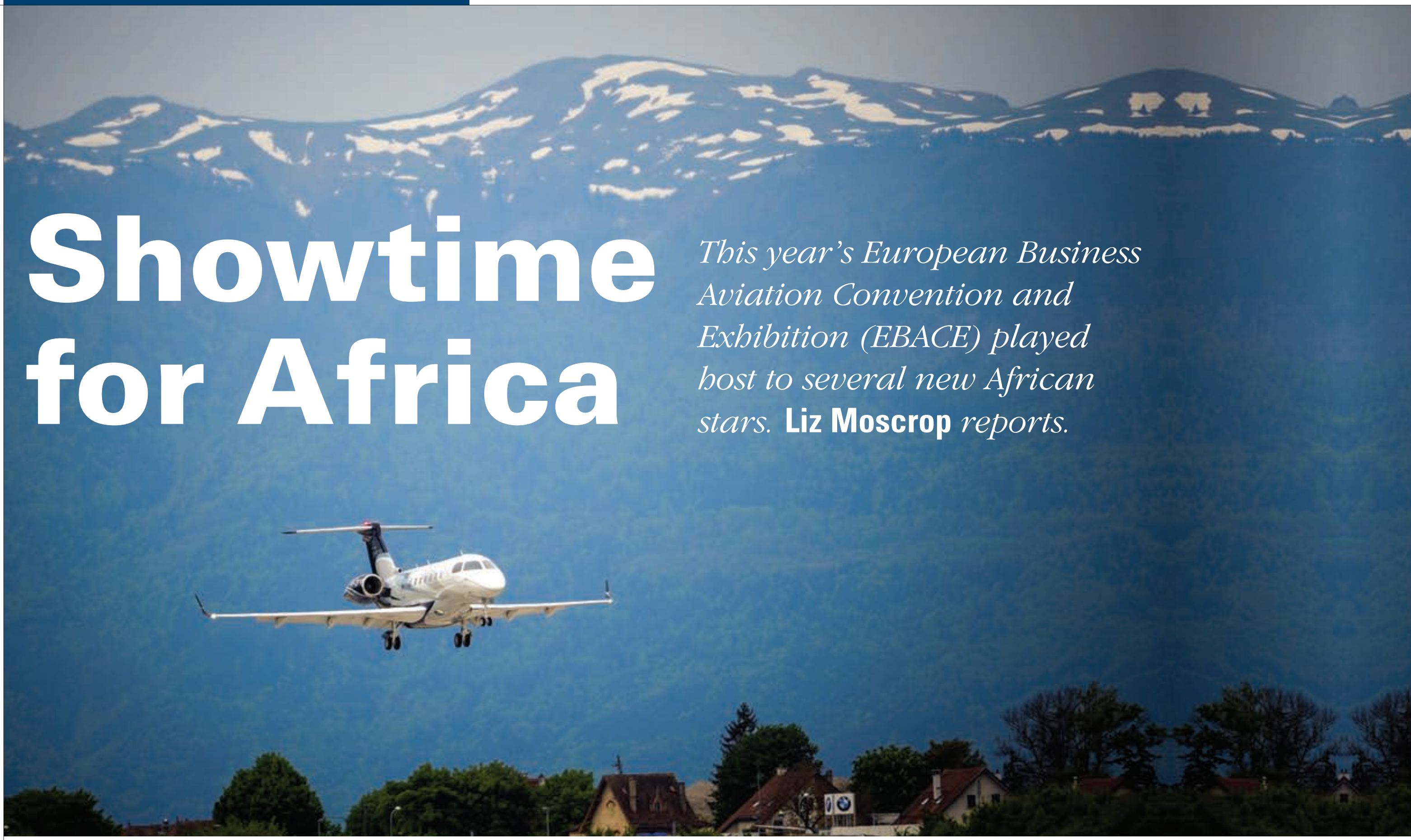
The avionics system is also new and is dubbed by Pilatus as the 'advanced cockpit environment' (ACE) system, developed especially to reduce cockpit workloads and to enable the single pilot certification.

It offers four 12-inch screens, featuring the SmartView synthetic vision system.

The list price is expected to be just short of $9 million.

Showtime for Africa

This year's European Business Aviation Convention and Exhibition (EBACE) played host to several new African stars. **Liz Moscrop** *reports.*



EBACE is a great barometer of emerging markets in business aviation. It started out 13 years ago as a cluster of exhibitors from Europe and North America. The Russians and Eastern Europeans followed shortly afterwards, with Middle East companies next in line.

Since around 2010 more and more Chinese companies have ventured over. However, for the last two years, the Africans have dominated news headlines, as canny players increasingly turn to one of the most promising markets around.

The African Business Aviation Association (AfBAA) used the show as a vehicle for two key announcements – a new conference and magazine, and its last founding member.

Just one year after the association launched, founding chairman Tarek Ragheb said that his organisation is to run AfBAA Expo in conjunction with the Marrakech Airshow from April 23-26 2014. It will be the first time the airshow has had a dedicated business aviation component.

The organisation will also run a regional symposium in Marrakesh in conjunction with conference producers Aeropodium on September 26 and 27 2013. This will be an annual event rotating between several African cities. Ragheb said: "We aim to provide the African market with a series of dedicated business aviation forums and networking events to advance issues affecting our community."

He also announced that the association had been granted observer role at the African Union, which brings more than 50 African countries together to discuss and plan pan-African policies. He noted: "We believe we are the only trade body or association from the aerospace industry to be involved in this. We have been allocated to the fifth committee, which is responsible for transport. It is so valuable to have a voice on behalf of aviation industry.

"Of course, there will not be an EASA overnight, but we are confident that this is a good step for our industry in Africa."

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AfBAA now comprises members from all over the continent, including north and central Africa, as well as the south, west and east.

On the podium with Ragheb was Madame Hind El Achchabi, AfBAA's chair of international relations. She explained: "We have seen great market enthusiasm and been accepted throughout the continent. We have now filled our founding board. The fact we have a financial institution with us (BMCE Bank) provides us with the capability to put together a fund for business aviation financing. We have tripled our membership since last year."

She continued: "This is the first time we have the tools to be able to influence the regulatory environment in 56 states. We can't believe the enthusiasm we have received."

Hind is also CEO of Dahlia Air, a Moroccan-based aviation services company that manages and charters an Embraer Legacy 600 and a Lineage 1000. She hinted that the company would soon be expanding beyond Morocco, but did not give further information.

There were several exhibitors with specific African focuses. Elite Avia, for example, started with an aircraft based in Ghana in Accra, eventually opening a base in Nigeria. CEO Michel Colomb lived in Lagos for six years flying Boeing 737s, and the company now has five aircraft in the continent – three Bombardier Global 6000 types and two Dassault Falcon 2000s.

Colomb said: "There is strong growth here. I believe Nigeria is like Russia 15 years ago. They are struggling to build a structure and need a lot of support. However, this growth will probably push the operators to get local AOCs to structure local regulations."

He added that Nigeria, Ghana and Angola were the strongest markets, although Cameroon and the Congo are rising fast. He explained: "They are all oil and gas areas. The countries have huge potential. They are not as strong as Nigeria, but are countries to be considered."

He is increasingly hiring locals to his staff.

EBACE had lots to offer African visitors from new business jets through to the dream of supersonic executive travel.

"Nigerian crew are all professional and well trained. I think we'll see more people coming online in the next two years, also on the maintenance side. We do need a flight training centre there. It would be interesting for a firm like CAE to consider."

Smaller firms, such as Future Flight Support and African Open Sky, also took booths, while stalwart ExecuJet fielded a large team. The company's home base is South Africa at Lanseria International Airport near Johannesburg. It also has a presence at Cape Town International Airport with a state-of-the-art FBO facility offering 5,000sqm of hangar and 7,000sqm of dedicated ramp parking.

It recently set up a MRO facility at Mohammed Murtala Airport in Lagos, Nigeria. The Lagos base is an authorised service facility for Dassault, Bombardier and Hawker Beechcraft. FBO services there include state-of-the-art ground support equipment, a VIP lounge, gymnasium and 24-hour support capabilities. A team of experienced staff, able to offer technical assistance, flight planning, weather reports, and catering, fuelling and hotel accommodation, provides world-class passenger and crew amenities.

The firm's CEO for Africa, Ettore Poggi, said: "People don't really understand how big Africa is. A flight from Johannesburg to Lagos takes six-and-a-half hours. We are pleased with our progress here. We started off moving some of our South African staff to Lagos and now have international expats among our senior engineers and we have employed local Nigerians. We have a friendly relationship with our competitors and neighbours, Evergreen Apple, as we are all keen to develop the industry there."

As the gateway between Europe, the Middle East and Africa, a Turkey-based company is in a strong position to serve an African market. AMAC Aerospace is the region's Pilatus dealer and the announcement of the new $8.9 million PC-24 jet has its owner excited. CEO Kadri Muhiddin said he could have taken six orders at the launch, although Pilatus will not take any orders before the next edition of EBACE.

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He said: "I'm anticipating a good response as it is the only twinjet that has a cargo door, as well as short take-off and landing capabilities on gravel and grass. It also has extremely low operating costs."

Comlux Aviation, too, takes care of aircraft in Africa. The Bahraini-based firm's commercial director, Claire Brugirard, said: "We are seeing a lot of investment going on. We have recently added a BBJ and a Global 5000 to our African fleet, which will soon be available for charter. We are seeing lots of connections from people from the Far East investing in Africa."

Chapman Freeborn, a British charter broker, has been in Africa for seven years, starting in Entebbe. It now has a base in Johannesburg and has recently added three members of staff. Its main operation is cargo and VIP transport for the local mining sector.

CEO Alex Berry was bullish about his company's prospects on the continent. He enthused: "We are about to be the inaugural customer under the new IATA Air Waybill scheme. We can interline with every other airline on the same waybill." This means that if a customer in Ohio, for example, wishes to ship 20 tonnes of mining equipment to Mozambique, Chapman Freeborn can facilitate the entire passage with one piece of paper, despite the requirement for aircraft changes.

Berry said: "Africa is interesting and challenging. From a safety standpoint we have a couple of very good operators we use. We are seeing a great deal of movement between China and Africa."

He added that north Africa to west Africa is mainly transcontinental oil and gas executives and equipment transport. "Elsewhere we are moving crew to the rigs 50 or 60 at a time on-board. We are also sending industrial tooling from factories in Shenzhen, for example, as fast as humanly possible."

The Embraer Legacy 600: perfect for Africa.

The EX factor

«L'E-Jet, la clé de la croissance en Afrique» – Page 65

Africa is top of the target list for Embraer Executive Jets' sales executives. **Alan Dron** *reports.*

Reviewing the business jet marketplace in the run-up to Geneva's annual EBACE exhibition Ernie Edwards, president of Embraer Executive Jets, gave notice of how seriously his division is taking the continent.

"We see Africa as the next growth market," he said.

Embraer Executive Jets revealed that its Europe, Middle East and Africa vice-president, Colin Steven, had moved from Farnborough in the UK to Dubai to be closer to potential and current customers.

Additionally, a new service centre is due to be announced for West Africa in the second half of 2013 and Embraer is looking at the possibility of adding further such facilities in both north and west central Africa.

At one time, South Africa had the world's fourth-largest concentration of executive jets, after North America, Mexico and Europe. It has slipped in recent years but remains important. Traditionally, the other major market for business aircraft in Africa has been Nigeria, which is home to a large number of wealthy individuals.

Embraer has "good penetration" in the west African nation, said Edwards, with several examples of both the Legacy and Phenom families having been sold there. A similar

Continued on Page 64

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File Photo

2011 AIRBUS A318 ELITE

2005 FALCON 2000EX EASY- SN 51

2006 CITATION CJ1+ - SN 525-0620

2001 CHALLENGER 604 - SN 5519

2003 GLOBAL EXPRESS - SN 9114

2011 CITATION CJ4 - SN 525C-0063

2005 CHALLENGER 604 - SN 5628

2003 HAWKER 800XP - SN 258626

ALSO AVAILABLE

1995 Challenger 601-3R
2010 Challenger 605
2007 Challenger 850ER
2006 Citation XLS
1997 CRJ 200
2013 Falcon 7X
2007 Global 5000
2014 Global 6000

2005 Global Express
2007 Global XRS
2003 Gulfstream 550
2001 Gulfstream 200
1997 Gulfstream IVSP
2006 Hawker 850XP
2008 Hawker 900XP
2006 Lear 60

AIRBUS BOEING BOMBARDIER CESSNA DASSAULT EMBRAER GULFSTREAM HAWKER

Above: African executive jet buyers frequently want an aircraft that can get out of the continent with a maximum of one fuel stop, such as the Embraer Legacy 600.
Right: Among new design features in Embraer's business jets are granite floors in galley areas to facilitate the cleaning of spills.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 62

combination of sales has been recorded in South Africa and he added: "We have a terrific customer in Morocco with two Legacies and a Lineage.

"What's important in South Africa, which is a long way down, is the ability to get out of Africa with no more than one fuel stop. The Legacy 600 and 650, even the Phenom 300, are well capable of doing that."

Customers in Africa tended to be 'high-net-worth individuals' (people fortunate enough to have a minimum of $1 million available for investment) rather than companies, he added.

Edwards was reluctant to give away too much information on specific growth points in the continent, although he pointed out that he wouldn't be giving away too many secrets by naming Angola.

"After being rife with civil war for decades the country is at peace and there are some huge investments going in there."

Embraer Executive Jets is a founder member of the African Business Aviation Association, which aims to promote understanding of the benefits that business aviation provides for Africa's economic development.

The Embraer group has a positive image in much of Africa, both for historical reasons (around 50% of Brazilians can trace their ancestries back to African roots) and because its jet airliners have, in many cases, been the equipment that has replaced elderly turboprops.

The 900th 'E-Jet', an Embraer 190, was delivered to Kenya Airways late last year and its airliners fly with 16 carriers, leasing companies or air taxi operators in 10 of the continent's countries.

Research by Embraer has found that 75% of all intra-African markets do not have a daily air service and that those markets are too sparsely travelled to support increased frequencies by aircraft with more than 120 seats.

In 2011, said Embraer, 87% of intra-African flights carried fewer than 100 passengers but 70% of all commercial jets on the continent had more than 120 seats. This explained why Africa has the world's lowest load factors, some 11% below the global average.

This, said the company, showed a clear potential for new commercial aircraft in the 37 to 120-seat bracket. Investing in this category of regional jet-sized aircraft would enable Africa to catch up on the long-established trend elsewhere in the world of using increased frequencies between cities to generate passenger traffic.

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Edwards made his comments at Embraer's new assembly facility in Melbourne, Florida, where a steady flow of Phenom 100 and 300 entry-level and light jets is now established, with US personnel assembling fuselages, wings and empennages shipped from Brazil.

In 2012, the first full year of production, 21 Phenom 100s were produced. This year, it will be 32 (with the larger 300 model making up around two-thirds of that number). The first US-assembled Phenom 300 is being used as a demonstrator; the second, the first to be handed over to a customer, was delivered at the end of March.

Next year, Phenom production at Melbourne will be close to 60 aircraft.

This is part of the equation that has seen Embraer's share of the worldwide business jet market rise from 3.5% in 2007 to 15% in 2012 in terms of unit volume, and from 4.6% to 7.3% in terms of revenue volume over the same period.

One reason behind Embraer's success in the business jet marketplace has been its habit of pitching its aircraft at the top of each of the various categories they inhabit and frequently taking features from the next class up the scale.

The entry-level Phenom 100, for example, has a lavatory – something generally not found on the smallest category of business jet – while the mid-light category Legacy 450 has a stand-up cabin and flat floor, typically not found until customers reach the super midsize category of other marques.

Another feature now being offered on several models is a granite (or other rock) floor for galley and lavatory areas. To keep weight down, the rock comes in the form of a 2.5mm veneer over an aluminium core. That veneer has to withstand one of the harshest stress tests available, the pressure generated by a women's stiletto heel. Once it has shown it can do so, it can save a customer money by being easily cleanable, whereas an expensive carpet might have to be replaced if red wine or food from the galley was spilled.

Embraer is aware that such features have to be judiciously applied to each model – there is no point in loading an aircraft with goodies if it is priced out of its category as a result – but they do help to produce sales.

It is not just factors such as range and payload that are important when it comes to attracting

customers prepared to spend anything from $4 million for an entry-level Phenom 100 to $53 million for a Lineage 1000. Interior design staff at Melbourne know there can be major differences in taste between European, North American and African customers.

Whereas the first two regions tend to favour either neutral shades or monochromatic colour schemes ('the Versace look' as they put it), African executive jet buyers of tend to favour interior deigns that are more colourful.

Riba Talib, senior manager, interior design, recalled from a previous job the Ugandan woman who wanted a striking blue and green colour scheme to remind her of the water and forest of her native land.

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African customers also tended to appreciate designs that were 'busier', more visually complex, than their European or North American counterparts, she said.

On the current marketing front there is what Edwards called 'the elephant in the room' – the fact that Beechcraft, newly out of Chapter 11 proceedings – had dropped its Hawker product, including the Hawker 4000 super-midsize jet. "That's an opportunity we hadn't seen when we launched the Legacy 450 and 500," he said. "There will be a lot of Hawker owners wondering what they do with their aircraft and what they move into."

He and his team hope that many will shift allegiance to the Legacy 450/500.

SOMMAIRE

Le directeur des ventes d'Embraer cible l'Afrique comme un marché prioritaire.

L'E-Jet, la clé de la croissance en Afrique

En passant en revue le marché des avions d'affaires lors de la dernière convention EBACE, Ernie Edwards, directeur des ventes "Executive Jets" d'"Embraer, a confirmé son intérêt pour le continent africain.

« Nous voyons l'Afrique comme le prochain marché de croissance », a-t-il déclaré.

La création d'un nouveau centre de services pour l'Afrique occidentale devrait être annoncée au cours du second semestre 2013 et Embraer étudie la possibilité d'ajouter d'autres sites de ce type dans le nord et l'est de l'Afrique.

« Embraer bénéficie également d'un bonne implantation en Afrique de l'ouest », a ajouté Ernie Edwards. L'"avionneur a vendu beaucoup de Legacy et de Phenom dans cette région mais également en Afrique du Sud.

"Ce qui est important en Afrique du Sud, c'est de pouvoir voler hors du continent en ayant au maximum une seule escale pour le ravitaillement. Les avions Legacy 600 et 650 et même le Phenom 300, sont capables de le faire. "

L'Afrique du Sud avait auparavant la quatrième plus grande concentration d'avions d'affaires au monde, après l'Amérique du Nord, le Mexique et l'Europe. Celle-ci a diminué au cours des dernières années, mais le potentiel reste important. L'autre grand marché des avions d'affaires en Afrique reste le Nigéria, qui abrite un nombre important de personnes fortunées.

Ernie Edwards semble cependant réticent à nous dévoiler ses plans pour le continent africain mais il désigne l'Angola comme un pays à suivre de près. Après avoir été en proie à la guerre civile pendant des décennies, l'Angola est désormais en paix et bénéficie d'énormes investissements.

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Embraer est un membre fondateur de l'AfBAA (African Business Aviation Association) qui vise à promouvoir les principes et les avantages que l'aviation d'affaires peut offrir pour le développement économique de l'Afrique.

Embraer bénéficie également d'une image positive dans la majeure partie de l'Afrique. Le 900ème E-Jet a été livré à Kenya Airways l'an dernier et les avions commerciaux de l'avionneur volent pour 16 compagnies aériennes, sociétés de leasing ou opérateurs dans 10 pays du continent.

Les recherches menées par Embraer ont montré que 75% de l'ensemble du marché aérien au sein de l'Afrique ne dispose pas d'un service quotidien et que celui-ci est trop peu utilisé pour assurer l'augmentation des fréquences par des avions de plus de 120 passagers. 87% de ces vols intra-africains transportent moins de 100 passagers or 70% de ces avions commerciaux sur le continent ont des capacités de plus de 120 passagers. Cela explique pourquoi l'Afrique comptabilise les taux de remplissage les plus bas au monde, environ 11% en dessous de la moyenne mondiale.

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Il y a donc un réel potentiel pour les nouveaux avions commerciaux dans le segment des 37 à 120 passagers. Investir dans ce type d'avions régionaux permettrait à l'Afrique de rattraper son retard, d'augmenter les fréquences entre les villes africaines et ainsi générer du trafic de passagers.

Ernie Edwards a souligné ce potentiel dans la nouvelle usine d'Embraer en Floride, où sont assemblés des avions Phenom 100/300, avec du personnel américain. C'est ici que se fait l'assemblage des fuselages ou encore des ailes provenant du Brésil. 21 Phenom 100 ont été produits en 2012 et 32 en 2013. Le Phenom 300 représente maintenant les deux tiers de la production. Celle-ci sera proche de 60 avions en 2014.

Cette stratégie a vu ainsi la part du marché mondial des avions d'affaires d'Embraer augmenter de 3,5% en 2007 à 15% en 2012 en termes de volume et de 4,6% à 7,3% en termes de chiffres d'affaires sur la même période .

Ce qui est important en Afrique du Sud, c'est de pouvoir voler hors du continent en ayant au maximum une seule escale pour le ravitaillement.

Embraer est consciente que les innovations qui font la spécificité de leurs avions d'affaires doivent être judicieusement appliquées à chaque modèle. Il est inutile de charger un avion avec des gadgets s'ils sont hors de prix pour sa catégorie, mais ils restent un outil pour générer des ventes. Il s'agit d'attirer des clients prêts à dépenser environ 4 millions de dollars pour un Phenom 100 ou d'investir 53 millions de dollars pour un Lineage 1000.

Enfin, Ernie Edwards a qualifié comme un «éléphant dans la pièce», le fait que la société Beechcraft, récemment sous la procédure du chapitre 11, ait baissé la production de son Hawker.

C'est une opportunité que nous n'avions pas vu lorsque nous avons lancé le Legacy 450/500 selon Ernie Edwards. Il y aura beaucoup de propriétaires de Hawker qui se demanderont ce qu'ils feront de leurs avions et Ernie Edwards espère qu'ils seront nombreux à prêter allégeance à la famille des avions Legacy 450/500.

Relative newcomer Vertis Aviation already has a strong presence in some parts of Africa but, like its competitors, it is experiencing security issues that need to be addressed. **Marcelle Nethersole** *reports.*

Vertis puts the Swiss on a roll

The 28 East Group is an independent aviation company specialising in air charter, consultancy, and aircraft acquisition, sales services and fuel provision.

In January 2012 the Swiss company, led by partners Luca Madone, Jeffrey Emmenis, and Erica Da Veiga, purchased air charter company Vertis Aviation outright from private jet company Glaronia Aviation.

Since then, Vertis Aviation has offered four aircraft for charter; a Bombardier Global XRS; a Bombardier Global Express (in June), a Dassault Falcon 7X, and an Airbus Corporate Jet (ACJ).

"We focus specifically on selecting jets for charter that can provide ultra-long-range services," said Madone. "Notably the Global Express operated by German-based K5 was given extended-range twin-engine operational performance standards (ETOPS) 180 status last November. This confirmed that each of the aircraft we market can now offer extended distance performance, so enabling us to offer a broader range of global destinations to our clients."

While the company boasts clients in Europe, the Middle East, and the CIS states, Vertis also has a strong client base in Africa – in particular in Angola, the DRC, South Africa, Namibia and Nigeria.

"Business flying is actually relatively new to the African region," said Madone. "It tended to be just African governments and business companies but we are now seeing a strong growth in independent users. African customers tend to like ultra-long-range aircraft."

But Vertis is also experiencing another common problem faced by charter companies in the region – security.

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"Security is an issue and it needs to be more managed," said Madone. "You see a lot of issues in all the African countries. For example, we recently had a security issue at the airport in Abidjan, Ivory Coast.

"As a company, we find we need to watch the news in Africa very closely. We hope this situation will change the more business travel is used in the region."

The company already has plans to add a further three aircraft to its portfolio in 2013, with two due as *African Aerospace* was going to press.

The Airbus A319 Corporate Jet and the Bombardier Global XRS is scheduled to be exclusively marketed and available for charter through Vertis Aviation AG from August 1. The aircraft, which are based at Moscow's Vnukovo Airport, will strengthen the company's Russian client base. But Madone also points out there is a limit to the fleet.

He said: "I think once we have reached ten aircraft in the fleet we will draw a line. We are a new company that is growing very nicely. We're an active company and want to stay active. In order to do that, we don't want to lose control with too many aircraft. We still focus on the original concepts and values, which aim to really learn about the client's requirements and fulfil them each time. We want to stay close to our clients."

Vertis's privileged services now include on-board chefs, sommeliers and butlers.

Madone, who has completed his commercial pilot training and holds an instrument rating (IFR), and his business partners have a lot of fingers in pies at 28 East Group. In December 2012 the company launched a new company – iFuel – under its umbrella.

Left: Three of a kind: Jeffrey Emmenis, Erica da Veiga, and Luca Madone – all Partners in Vertis Aviation.

Below: Back row from left,
Luca Madone, Vertis Aviation
Rinad El-Rabaa, President, iFuel
Jeffrey Emmenis, Vertis Aviation
Front row – left to right
Erica da Veiga, Vertis Aviation
Tatiana Tektova, Owner, Open.aero

The new venture is an aviation fuel and associated services provider, which operates in partnership with fuel supplier Jet Aero Fuels and charter broker Open Aero.

"Together we offer competitively priced fuel and ground handling services. Currently we are focusing on the CIS region, where iFuel is already offering services at most of the CIS airports," said Madone.

To add to this, the company's latest technology project is to market and promote Sky Dragon – a Hong Kong-based venture between the group and financier Matthias Karl.

"As an iPad app, Sky Dragon serves as a project management tool which enables completion managers to share project progress directly with their clients," explained Madone. "Through an innovative use of app technology those working on the completion project can upload progress reports such as documents, photographs and videos enabling the aircraft owner to keep up to date, anywhere in the world, during an aircraft green completion or refurbishment project."

The Sky Dragon app is available directly from the Apple Store or it can be pre-loaded on to an iPad by completion managers.

SOMMAIRE

Vertis réglée comme une horloge Suisse

Vertis Aviation bénéficie d'une forte présence dans plusieurs régions d'Afrique, mais elle est confrontée comme les autres acteurs du marché à des problèmes de sécurité.

Vertis Aviation a été rachetée par le groupe 28 East, spécialisé dans la location et l'achat d'avions, le conseil, les services de vente et de fourniture de carburant. Il est dirigé par Luca Madone, Jeffrey Emmenis et Erica Da Veiga.

Présente en Europe, au Moyen-Orient et la CEI, Vertis Aviation est bien implantée en Afrique et possède quatre avions : un Bombardier Global XRS, un Bombardier Global Express, un Dassault Falcon 7X et un Airbus Corporate Jet (ACJ).

« Nous choisissons des avions qui peuvent fournir à nos clients des services à long rayon d'action et davantage de destinations », a déclaré Luca Madone.

Principalement destinée aux gouvernements africains et aux entreprises, l'aviation d'affaires connaît une forte croissance auprès d'utilisateurs indépendants, selon Luca Madone. La sécurité est aussi un réel problème et doit être mieux appréhendée. Nous devons suivre l'actualité de très près. Nous espérons que cette situation changera et que cela favorisera les voyages d'affaires dans la région.

Vertis Aviation prévoit d'ajouter trois autres avions pour la location dès août 2013.

« Nous avons un bon rythme de développement et ne souhaitons pas avoir trop d'avions à gérer. Nous nous concentrons sur nos fondamentaux à savoir écouter et répondre aux exigences de nos clients ", a souligné Luca Madone.

En décembre 2012, le groupe a lancé iFuel, une nouvelle société offrant des carburants à prix compétitifs. Elle fournit également des services en partenariat avec d'autres fournisseurs comme Jet Fuels Aero ou encore avec la société Open Aero.

Le dernier projet de 28 East est de promouvoir Sky Dragon. Comme une application iPad, Sky Dragon est un outil de gestion collaboratif permettant aux gestionnaires de projets aéronautiques de partager l'avancement et la finalisation de leurs projets directement avec leurs clients. L'application Sky Dragon est disponible directement sur l'Apple Store.

The Dassault Falcon business jets are recognised as the aircraft that deliver performance and quality. In June the Falcon brand was 50 years old. **Alan Peaford** *finds out just why the French aircraft manufacturer has enjoyed such long-lasting success.*

A fine vintage that gets better with age

It was four short words by the legendary aviator Charles Lindbergh that is said to have begun a chapter in business aviation that is celebrated this month.

The four words were sent in a telegram to the chairman of Pan Am, Juan Trippe, 50 years ago and simply said: "I've found your bird."

Lindbergh was acting as a technical advisor to the American aviation group and had been tasked by Trippe to guide them into the private jet market. A visit to Bordeaux to see the manufacturers of the Mirage fighter aircraft introduced them to the Mystere 20, an eight-to-twelve-seat business jet.

The Dassault family, led by founder and Mystere creator Marcel Dassault, knew that – just like today – conquering the US market was vital for the success of the project and his son, today's company figurehead Serge Dassault, set about encouraging the Americans to take a look.

"The Mystere 20 has the potential to occupy a key position in the US private aircraft market," he said.

The Pan Am order for 40 aircraft and an expectation of a further 160 was the boost the Dassault business jet needed.

But while Dassault celebrates the golden jubilee this year and looks back with pride at the growth of the reputation and the fleet, there is nothing old fashioned about the business.

The centre of the Falcon world is Merignac, close to the Gironde River and the wine capital of the world in Bordeaux. Here, alongside the Bordeaux International Airport, is the main assembly and manufacturing plant for the Falcon fleet.

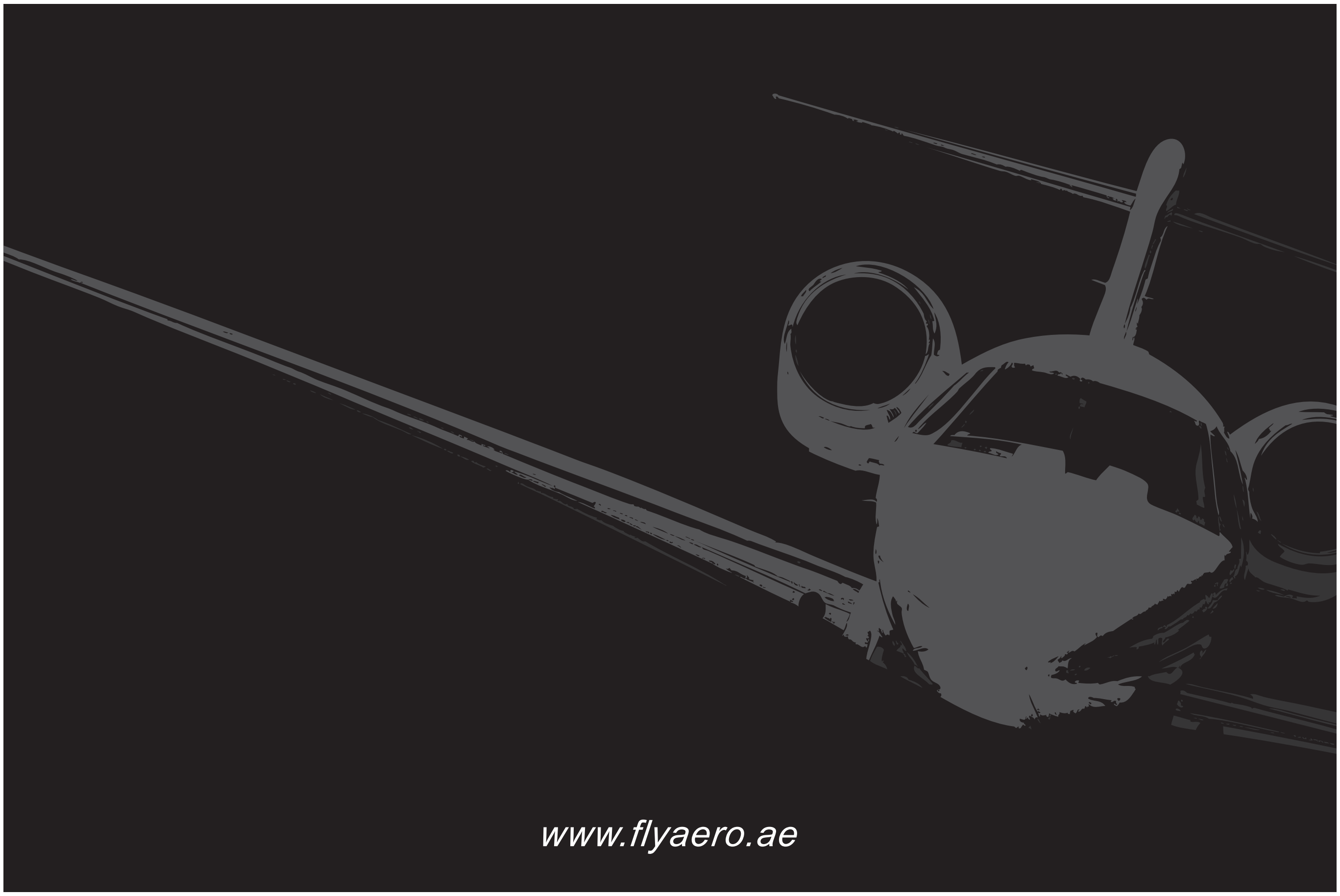
In the giant assembly hangar the green aircraft work their way around towards a large hangar door and, after test and acceptance flights from the same runway that all Dassault aircraft have made their first flights from since the days of the Ouraga, the Falcons are flown across the Atlantic to Little Rock, Arkansas for the completion and outfitting of the luxury cabins. They are then either taken by customers from Little Rock or returned to Merignac for delivery.

Today, the demand is so great that completions are also being carried out in Bordeaux.

While the US remains a major market, Africa is firmly in the French company's sights.

Key to the success of the Falcon has been the links with the military aircraft produced by Dassault.

"Technology developed for the fighters, such as the Rafale, become transferrable to the Falcons," said Jean Claude Bosc, the research, design and engineering manager for the in-service Falcon programmes.



Achuzie Ezenagu: "Sometimes owners learn the hard way."

Nigeria charting a business course

There's a hard drive on in Nigeria to build a flourishing business aviation charter company. **Liz Moscrop** *downloads the information.*

While Evergreen Apple Nigeria is doing sterling service providing the country's first private aviation terminal it, like others following in its footsteps, would be redundant without its clients. There is a slew of charter operators emerging in the country as business aviation takes hold.

This is good news for the industry. Europe is still sluggish and North America is flatter than it once was, but new hope is rising from the developing regions of Latin America, Russia and China.

Africa is right up there, too. The recent inaugural business aviation conference in Nigeria demonstrated just how vibrant the sector is in the continent.

There is a small but growing installed fleet of business aircraft in Nigeria, and local companies are emerging as serious players in a market that is set to grow.

Toucan Aviation, for example, operates six aircraft – two Cessna Citation Sovereigns, one Cessna Citation XLS, two Falcon 900EX types and a Hawker 850XP. Business, rather than leisure is the driver. MD Achuzie Ezenagu explained: "We are strictly a corporate charter firm, flying to major oil and gas companies. We operate several international flights within Africa, primarily to local oil and gas sites."

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With 56 different jurisdictions, Africa is a tough continent to conquer. Ezenagu highlighted a key difficulty for new entrants to the market. He reckons barely 10% of the locally registered fleet is professionally managed. He cautioned: "Sometimes owners learn the hard way. Often they do not fully understand what it means to own an aircraft. I have seen several people get their fingers burned. Indeed, that is how I got into aircraft management. My former boss decided to own a jet himself. At the time I was his

Continued on Page 70

special assistant and given the responsibility of managing the asset. There were lots of things we could not do ourselves. I got to know Rob Prentice (Cessna's dealer in Africa) very well, and took lots of tutorials in Wichita."

He uses his experience to help other new owners. He continued: "We can help get pilots and engineers to support the entry into service for smaller aircraft. We have already assisted with lots of deliveries for OEMs. We then offer on-going support, and assist with knowledge transfer.

"One of things that is least understood here is that aircraft management doesn't begin when you buy the aircraft. It starts three to four months before completion of the sale, with appointments of crews, regulatory oversight etc."

SkyBird Air would understand. The Murtala Mohammed Airport-based firm earned its Nigerian Air Operators Certificate (AOC) in May and now runs a charter service out of Lagos. The company recently took delivery of its third Dornier 328 jet, completing a contract worth more than $18.3 million. The operator now runs two 32-seat passenger airliner variants, plus a VIP-configured 328DBJ.

The VIP conversion is a first for Africa. It has long-range tanks, giving it a range (carrying four passengers) just shy of 2,000nm. The cabin features leather and suede seats in neutral tones with red seat belts, a full HD entertainment system, and a satcoms WiFi system.

This April the German completions and refurbishment company responsible for kitting out the aircraft, 328 Support, also took an order for another Dornier conversion to SpringChild Investments, a Lagos-based privately owned business.

Top Brass Aviation is also headquartered in Lagos. The firm is looking to establish a jet card operation. It runs two Bombardier Dash 8 Q300 Series, and a Hawker 900XP type as charter aircraft.

According to executive Ladeinde Oladunni, the company is due to take delivery of five more aircraft this year. She said: "We are exploring the possibility of loyalty card memberships with high-net-worth individuals. At the moment we are a pure charter company. As the market develops here we all have to up our games with innovative new services."

As the market develops here we all have to up our games with innovative new services.

She added that the country's infrastructure on the ground was so patchy that there was strong demand for air services to get around.

Ayo Oyewole, CEO of Triton Aviation Charter Company, which operates a Hawker 4000 and a Dassault Falcon 900, said that his firm operates charters all over Africa, as well as to India, the Middle East, and Europe.

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"They are all privately-owned aircraft. The domestic market here is strong, especially between Lagos and Abuja. This route accounts for half the flights we run. Our pilots could almost do it with their eyes closed, they do it so often. Passengers are a mixed bag. Sometimes the owners fly, but up to 40% of trips are runs to oil and gas companies."

Foreign operators have also entered the country. Since 2010 VistaJet has had two dedicated aircraft to service the west Africa region

Smoothing the operations: From left, Achuzi Ezegnaga Toucan Aviation, Simon Ogbe-Objoyi, Triton, Wynton Faure, VP sales VistaJet.

based in Lagos. The company said that demand has been particularly strong for west Africa to Europe routes, as well as intra-regional flights between Nigeria, Congo, Ghana and Ivory Coast.

Britain's Hangar 8 also has a strong presence. It added aircraft in 2011, saying at the time: "Nigeria is the gateway to western Africa given its geographical positioning, relative wealth, size and poor internal infrastructure. Our charter experience backs up our research that demand will be strong for reliable, secure, well-maintained and western-crewed aircraft and that charter rates are holding up well."

Unsurprisingly helicopter services are in demand to the rigs. Caverton Helicopters set up shop in Lagos a decade ago. It operates a shuttle service between Victoria Island and Ikeja, and primarily runs private charters to the oil-rigs. The company also offers

MRO services for helicopters and executive ground handling services for both helicopters and private jets.

It is the only certified Agusta Westland service centre in sub-Saharan Africa and operates the largest fleet of AW139s in the region. It was the first to acquire the type in the continent.

The company is set to build a new hangar "somewhere outside Lagos" according to Simon Ogbe-Objoyi, head of treasury, and it recently ferried former US president Bill Clinton during a trip to Nigeria.

It also operates two DHC6 Twin Otter twin-engine turboprops on a charter basis, as well as Bell.

Ogbe-Objoyi, would like to attract more funding in order to develop the business. He said: "There are so many hoops to jump through to get financing."

The Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority has stringent safety requirements and all aircraft must go through inspections every five months. Maintenance certificates are renewed every six months. After a recent incident, the CAA is cautious about too speedy a development of the private sector and is "pushing lots of discussions" in how to make it work. Speakers at the recent Nigerian Business Aviation Conference (NBAC) said that the authority is strongly in favour of creating safety management systems (SMS) standards after receiving positive feedback from operators. Ezenagu said that many owners are already starting to comply with SMS requirements. He said that they were "very receptive" to this.

As we increase assets on the Nigerian register, we have to have a backbone in place to make sure they remain safe.

He explained: "We have to go hand-in-hand with what the government is trying to drive here. As we increase assets on the Nigerian register, we have to have a backbone in place to make sure they remain safe. For example, the weather here is a nightmare. There are often low clouds and thunderstorms that hamper landings. We often have to divert aircraft to other airports."

He is upbeat about the future for the industry in Nigeria, however. He concluded: "It is nice to help someone, to see them do well and enjoy their aircraft."

Flying privately into Nigeria is changing for the better. EAN's 14,900sqm luxury facility, housed next to a new FBO operated by ExecuJet, is creating a comfortable environment for operators. Evergreen Apple's CEO, Segun Demuren, said: "We are very excited about the prospects for the industry here. Things are really changing."

Denel's Russian alliance opens SA helicopter facility

Russian helicopter operators across Africa have a new option for maintenance as **Robert Mbowa** *discovers.*

Oboronprom and Denel Aviation has agreed to expand their South African service centre for Mi-8/17 series helicopters.

The parties agreed at the Paris Air Show in June to significantly expand the functionality of the service centre, which opened in March 2013 at Denel Aviation's facilities in Johannesburg.

It is planned that the centre will not only provide the comprehensive maintenance services offered at its launch, but also complete overhaul and upgrade of both commercial and military helicopters of the Mi-8/17 series.

More than 8,000 Soviet/Russian-made helicopters are now operated in 110 countries worldwide. Traditionally the demand is highest in the Middle East, Africa, Asia-Pacific, Latin America, Russia, and CIS countries.

With the huge diversity of sales and a used market across Africa over recent years, it has been difficult to track the exact numbers of Russian-built helicopters – both military and civil – but is believed there could be more than 600 in Africa, mainly from the Mi-8/17 series and Ka-32s.

The Moscow company has led a sales push in the sub-Saharan region and, with a new surge of interest in the Russian technology, the need for MRO services was identified.

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Denel and Russian Helicopters have already conducted joint roadshows to market their collective capabilities and received positive feedback from operators in countries such as Kenya, Ghana, Nigeria and Uganda, who will most likely send their helicopters to South Africa for MRO services in the future, Denel said.

Russian Helicopters CEO Dmitry Petrov said: "Maintaining this fleet requires advanced service support in the region."

The new South African MRO centre was launched in Johannesburg during the BRICS summit in late March. A special opening ceremony was attended by executives from Russian Helicopters and Denel Aviation, representatives of the South African government, as well as heads of operating companies and potential clients for Russian-built helicopters.

"This is an important step in the development of our global after-sales support network for Russian rotary-wing aircraft," said Dmitry Shugaev, deputy CEO of Rostec, the industrial and defence conglomerate formerly known as Russian Technologies.

"Russian helicopters are very popular in Africa and our other core markets, so it is very important for us to be able to offer repair and maintenance services on the spot. This will help our partners in the sub-Sahara region to keep their businesses running smoothly by offering certified after-sales care for civilian helicopters when it is needed most.

"The high-quality service offered at our service centres around the world makes Russian equipment even more attractive to customers."

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Petrov added: "The launch of the MRO centre by Denel Aviation is a serious step in this process. We plan to build out a major regional centre that, in future, will be able to offer after-sales care and maintenance for all Russian-built helicopter models in the sub-Sahara region."

Russian Helicopters supplied equipment and accompanying technical documentation for the MRO centre in Johannesburg, prepared the centre for operations, and also provided training for Denel Aviation technical staff at its aircraft repair centre in Novosibirsk.

The decision to establish an MRO centre was taken as part of a partnership agreement signed by Denel Aviation and Oboronprom in September 2012 at the Africa Aerospace and Defence show near Pretoria. Under the agreement, Denel Aviation will offer maintenance services for civilian helicopters manufactured by Russian Helicopters.

Denel has plans to expand the range of after-sales support and complete overhaul services it offers, not only for civilian but also military helicopters, as well as for Russian-made components.

Mike Kgobe, CEO of Denel Aviation, said the company currently offers MRO services for Mi-8 and Mi-17 helicopters but these will in the future be extended to other helicopter models as dictated by market requirements.

During the opening event, Denel Aviation unveiled a Mi-8T operated by Advanced Aviation Logistics SA, which was the launch customer for the new MRO services.

The unveiling of AAL's Mi-8T was a highlight of the Denel opening.

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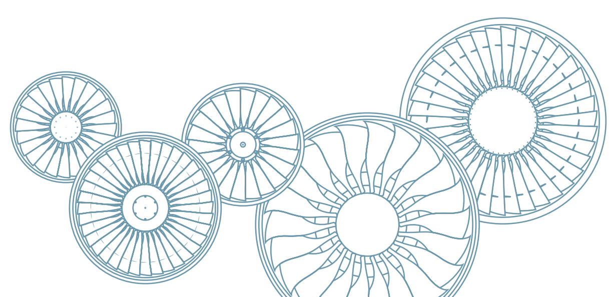

The complete

The African business aviation community may not be familiar with Canadian completions house Flying Colours yet, but it soon will be. **Kelly Green** *reports.*

Canada-based completions, refurbishment and maintenance specialist Flying Colours has seen its global customer base swell in recent years.

Located in Peterborough, Ontario, and St Louis, Missouri, Flying Colours can count customers situated all over the world, including Europe, the Middle East, Russia, Asia, and India.

The family-run business has established a niche in converting used regional jets into its Execliner VIP configuration, with 12 CRJ Execliner conversions completed to date, and seven on-going.

It also specialises in green completions, interior refurbishment, maintenance, component services, auxiliary fuel systems, exterior paint and avionics installation and upgrades.

"The idea is to be a one-stop service provider. We can do everything here. That is what the customer wants, obviously with downtime being key," explained Eric Gillespie, executive vice president of Flying Colours alongside twin brother Sean.

The brothers' father, John Gillespie, established Flying Colours in Peterborough in 1989 and remains CEO and president. In 2009, the company acquired St Louis-based JetCorp Technical Services from previous owner Jet Direct. The second location operates as a Flying Colours company under the new name JetCorp Technical Services.

"We have 310 employees between the two companies, and growing. We're kind of adding people as we go daily," said Eric Gillespie.

In October 2012, Flying Colours announced that both companies had been appointed Bombardier-authorised service facilities, covering the Learjet and Challenger business jets. "The Global we will be authorising here shortly," said Eric. "We're gearing up for that in 2013 for sure, hopefully in the next six months."

Flying Colours is also a Bombardier preferred completions centre, and has outfitted 10 Challenger 850s for Bombardier since 2008. Work on five others is currently on-going.

The company specialises in all mid-large sized business aircraft including the Global Express series, Challenger, Dassault Falcon, Embraer, Hawker and Gulfstream models. As it gears up to work on bigger aircraft, it plans to build a new hangar – its fifth – at its Peterborough Airport base.

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"The plan is to build a new hangar here in the spring. We've been talking about this for a while now," Eric Gillespie explained. "It will add more capability size-wise, and will be big enough to handle VVIP, or Boeing Business Jets (BBJs) or CSeries – that option will be available. We hope to fill it with CRJs as well and Globals, depending on what's coming in. We're still designing, but the plan would be to start breaking ground in the spring."

He added that the new hangar would be large enough to handle "a couple of BBJs, three or four CRJ 700/900s or three or four Globals".

The expansion could bring in new business for

package...

Inside story: The company provides completions for all mid-large sized business aircraft, including the Global Express series, Challenger, Dassault Falcon, Embraer, Hawker and Gulfstream models.

Flying Colours, particularly now that the Peterborough Airport runway has been extended and strengthened so it can handle the weight of larger aircraft. "We don't do any of the VVIP right now. "We've been asked to do them and a lot of our customers – especially our international customers – are buying Globals and growing into that and they want us to work on the next size up. We're gearing up towards that."

Eric Gillespie predicts that there will be a need for VIP CSeries in the future, once the new Bombardier family enters service. "We certainly want to be ready for that," he said. "We've already had customers asking about it."

The company is also expanding internationally, following the growth of its overseas customer base. China, in particular, has become a major market over the past few years and by the end of this year Flying Colours will have delivered a total of 15 Challenger 850s to the country.

"We value this market as it is where our principal growth has come from over the last three years," said John Gillespie. "It's a constantly changing landscape from a business perspective and, in order to better serve our client base, we have considered opening our own facility, as well as the option of working with a Chinese-based partner via a join venture. We anticipate having a base and capability to carry out refurbishment work in the region by the end of 2013."

Through its work with international customers, VP corporate development and interior design Kate Gillespie Ahrens has noticed patterns in the requests and trends across different regions. In Asia, vivid interiors are often asked for, with red frequently being the underlying palette colour. One completion for a Chinese customer featured a visually dramatic red interior with red leather upholstery, carpets and even cabinetry stained cherry red, while another included a midnight black interior.

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Design influence can come from any number of places and the Flying Colours team is on hand to assist and work with clients throughout the design process to create an aircraft that reflects the customer's vision and passion.

"We do see a little fashion influence, I personally like to start there," said Ahrens. "A lot of inspiration comes from cars. Or hospitality and travel can offer inspiration. It's very personal."

Ahrens said that Flying Colours offers more choice than going to an OEM and in terms of design, "the sky is the limit, pardon the pun".

Some requests see the Flying Colours design team adapting materials to ensure that they will pass the required safety certification. The company has, in the past, implemented technically challenging features, including a complete smoke extraction system to remove cigarette smoke during flight. Features such as stone flooring and wood veneer are also popular.

"With the new aircraft we're getting higher-end demands for customisation," she said. "They're looking for perfection, which I can understand. We start off with a general idea and then go from there."

As Flying Colours continues to expand its global client base, the company is keeping a close eye on Africa. "Africa is an emerging market," said Eric Gillespie. "We haven't had a lot of direct business from Africa yet but we've been talking to people recently and we have a couple of groups from Cameroon and Kenya interested in CRJ conversions and we are meeting with them in St Louis soon.

"There's been lots of interest and it's growing as things stabilise in certain parts of Africa. I think it's going to be something to keep an eye on."

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South Africa to build new twin-engine design

The unnamed twin is shortly to undergo engine runs prior to its first flight.

Australian company Jabiru Aircraft has given its team in South Africa the manufacturing responsibility for its new light twin aircraft. The Australian factory has constructed the moulds and sent them to South Africa, where all testing and approvals will be carried out by the South African Civil Aviation Authority.

Once the twin has been released for production, aircraft will be shipped to Australia for sale.

As yet unnamed, the twin is shortly to undergo engine runs prior to its first flight.

Powered by a pair of diminutive indigenously designed and built Jabiru 2200 80hp engines, the aircraft has been developed to provide both a twin option to the single-engined 400-series range and an inexpensive training platform for multi-engine pilots.

It has been constructed using a standard but modified J430 fuselage and wings. The engines are mounted on pylons in front of the cockpit area and it's been suggested that single-engined J430s can be retrofitted with two engines.

The engine arrangement has been developed to keep engineering costs down and avoid major changes to the basic composite structure. The aircraft will be flown with ground-adjustable propellers initially and a basic interior.

According to Jabiru South Africa's Len Alford, the engines will burn 11litres per hour each at 2,750rpm. Fuel capacity will be 135litres and the aircraft is expected to cruise at 120kts.

SOMMAIRE

L'Afrique du Sud se lance dans la conception d'un nouveau bimoteur

Comme a été le succès des avions Jabiru en Afrique du Sud, le célèbre fabriquant d'avions de loisirs et d'entraînements australien a confié au continent africain la fabrication de son nouveau bimoteur. L'usine australienne a ainsi fabriqué les prototypes puis les a envoyés en Afrique du Sud où seront effectués l'ensemble des essais et des certifications par les autorités de l'aviation civile sud-africaine. Une fois le bimoteur prêt pour la production, les avions seront ensuite expédiés en Australie pour la vente.

Même si ce bimoteur n'a pas encore de nom, il doit prochainement faire l'objet d'une campagne d'essais avant son premier vol prévu dans les deux prochains mois. Bénéficiant d'une puissance de 80 chevaux, ce bimoteur propulsera le Jabiru 2200. Cet avion aura deux configurations : l'une avec un moteur unique et l'autre avec un bimoteur. Il offrira ainsi des possibilités de formation peu coûteuse pour les pilotes utilisant plusieurs types de motorisation.

L'avion disposera d'un fuselage J430 et des ailes intégrant quelques modifications mineures. Les moteurs seront intégrés aux pylônes en face du poste de pilotage. La version du Jabiru 430 équipé d'un monomoteur pourra également faire l'objet d'une évolution en bimoteur. Ce réacteur a été développé pour réduire au maximum les coûts de conception et pour éviter d'importantes modifications de la structure en composite de l'avion. Le Jabiru 430 pourra voler initialement avec la possibilité de réglage au sol de ses hélices. Selon Len Alford, la consommation en carburant des moteurs sera de 11 litres par heure avec une vitesse de 2750 tours par minute pour chacun d'entre eux. Le réservoir de l'avion sera d'une capacité de 135 litres et sa vitesse de croisière pourra atteindre 120 nœuds.

THE LAND THAT KEEPS PROMISING TO TAKE OFF

Ian Sheppard *travels to Zambia and finds a nation that dreams of aviation renaissance.*

Over the years Zambia has had moments of pride in aviation but these days it is struggling to find its place.

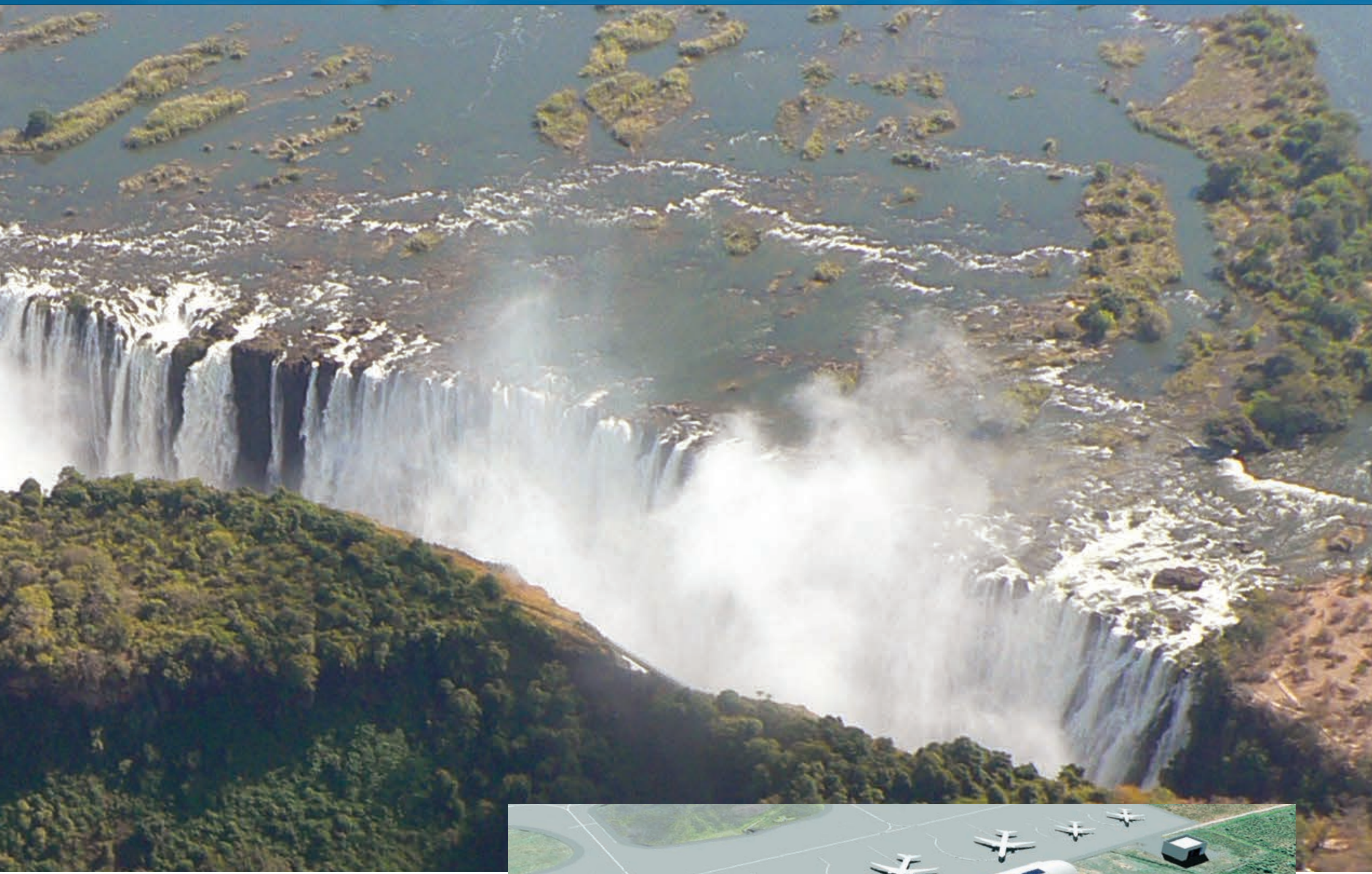
The national airline, Zambia Airways, went bust in 1994 and the land-locked country lost the initiative in aviation, particularly as Zambian Airways, which operated between 1998 and 2009 (although as Miles Air Services it had existed since 1948 serving the Copperbelt mining region), never managed to restore the former glory.

Zambezi Airways came and went earlier in 2012, only to restart in October with a couple of regional jets – hardly what the country was looking for as the lynchpin of a vital enabling industry.

Not having a strong national carrier for so long has left the country also without a strong civil aviation regulator.

Zambia's Department of Civil Aviation (DCA) has waned to the point where the country has found itself on the dreaded EU blacklist. This has been a mini-disaster for the country's operators, although with the help of an EU task force, a new dawn is in sight.

With the growth in international competitors, none of this makes it easy for a Zambian airline trying to go off its home turf.



Neighbouring Zimbabwe has been through an extremely troubled decade or so, but still Zambia failed to capitalise on the opportunity, and Air Zimbabwe has hung in there.

That Zimbabwe could be on the way back is good for the region but there are concerns for Zambia – for example at its main tourist destination where Livingstone (on the Zambian side of the Victoria Falls) competes with Victoria Falls town, in Zimbabwe.

Zambezi Airlines was once seen as the new saviour of national pride but when it succumbed, following safety concerns and the withdrawal of its operating certificate – having operated between July 2008 and February 2012 – it left another large building complex empty and rotting at Kenneth Kaunda International Airport.

Zambezi restarted limited services in June with two Bombardier CRJ200ER regional jets leased from ExecuJet in Johannesburg, flying to Johannesburg and Dar es Salaam from Lusaka, and Ndola in Zambia's booming Copperbelt mining area from Johannesburg.

It then restarted Harare flights in October from Lusaka and Johannesburg using an Embraer 145 jet leased from Solenta. However, it remains to

Continued on Page 80

Million-dollar boost for Falls airport

Millions of dollars have been spent on a badly-needed new terminal at Livingstone Airport, gateway to the famous Victoria Falls and now officially called Harry Mwanga Nkumbula International Airport.

It is served by BA Comair and SAA from Johannesburg, and Proflight from Lusaka. The Zambian side of the falls is the most spectacular but despite the new Zambian Government tidying up Livingstone and encouraging new restaurants and hotels to set up there, Victoria Falls Town in Zimbabwe has the advantage of a longer runway more suited to international jets, even if it is a longer drive to the falls.

British Airways is thought to be considering a direct service to Victoria Falls from London, while Livingstone's runway would be too short to make this viable and cannot be extended beyond its 7,500ft without massive expenditure, because it is on a hill.

While new development plans outline an all-new airport on land that has already been designated, the government is considering bringing this forward due to the threat from Victoria Falls, said acting director of civil aviation Adam Daka.

However the country is reeling from a multi-million dollar radar fiasco, where a minister allegedly cancelled a contract with Thales for a new radar system covering the country, in favour of an upgrade contract with an Italian company. Such scandals suggest a lack of the oversight required to ensure that scarce funds, often from donors such as the EU, are not squandered.

The other key airport in the country, Ndola, gateway to the Copperbelt, is also due to be replaced with tenders now issued based on forestry land which has been reserved to the west.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 79

be seen if it can sustain growth and survive this time around.

One breath of fresh air comes from Lusaka-based Proflight.

Tony Irwin, CEO, is wary of growing too fast and believes that sticking with smaller turboprop aircraft is the way forward, rather than leaping to jets – although he does admit to be working towards becoming a regional rather than purely domestic carrier, and to discussing code-shares with some of the large airlines now coming into Lusaka.

Irwin knows Zambia. A former Zambia Airways captain, his family has owned and run various businesses in the country for decades, including Zambeef.

The airline was, in effect, started by his late father Oliver, a prolific pilot and entrepreneur, who even taught Zambia's current president, Michael Sata, to fly. He was also a great friend of former president Kenneth Kaunda.

Oliver Irwin started Air Carriers of Zambia in 1978, in partnership with Laker Airways, to transport fuel from Dar es Salaam to Ndola during the Rhodesian blockade of Zambia.

Scheduled services were only started after the demise of Zambian Express in 2001, using a Piper Chieftain. In 2002 the then Proflight Commuter Services started to operate a British Aerospace Jetstream 32, and it now has three of the type plus two J41s leased from SA Airlink of South Africa.

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The airline entered into an alliance agreement with Zambezi Airlines in 2009, where Proflight focused on domestic services while Zambezi operated around the region. But with the grounding of Zambezi last year (and the returning of its two 737-500s to Gecas, after which they could be seen parked at Lasham in the UK), the agreement fell by the wayside.

Proflight is keen to grow but Irwin stresses that it will do this "organically", meaning that a move to larger turboprops such as ATRs is far more likely than a move to jets although the company has leased a Boeing 737-500 to launch its first scheduled international routing in June from Lusaka to Lilongwe.

"This is a truly historic day for Proflight and for the Zambian aviation industry. We are delighted that our two nations are now linked with a direct flight by one of our own airlines, and we look forward to providing a reliable, efficient, and friendly service to all our passengers," said Capt. Philip Lemba director of government and industry affairs who joined the Malawi High Commissioner to Zambia, David Bandawe, and the Deputy Director of the Zambian Department of Civil Aviation Harrison Banda for the maiden flight

The timing of the new route is designed to provide smooth connections to and from the Emirates flights from Lusaka to Dubai.

"We're exploring lots of options… taking great leaps killed a whole load of airlines though." However, he admits that "it's a great time for Zambia – the economy is growing quite fast".

A small sample of what's on offer

A Proflight service from Lusaka to Livingstone, near Victoria Falls, gave me a taste of a typical domestic operation in Zambia.

Passenger numbers could be better but the airline has a sensible fleet, which gives it great flexibility in right-sizing at short notice.

It was not peak time (which tends to coincide with the main international school holidays) so there were four passengers on the way down and six on the way back. The trip down to Livingstone was in a Beech 200 and on the return the next morning in a Jetstream 31, and we had a spectacular view of the Victoria Falls.

The Jetstream was used because the Cessna Caravan, which would have been on the service, had struck a large bird departing Livingstone the previous day and was waiting for a new windscreen to be fitted. The bird apparently just missed the captain's head. Taking the jump seat on the J31 was an unusual experience for me and a reminder of the days, pre-September 2001, when it was commonplace, even on the large jets, to be permitted on the flightdeck.

Proflight's speciality remains its services using smaller aircraft to remote areas, despite there being no public service obligation (PSO) routes in the country, and it also offers charters.

CEO Tony Irwin says its two Cessna Caravans, three Cessna 401/402s, its two Barons and two Britten-Norman islanders are "ideal" for these services.

Although Proflight Zambia carried only 100,000 passengers in 2011, it has the foundation to create something larger and seems ready to fulfil a key role feeding the majors that are increasingly operating to Lusaka, Harare and other Southern African hubs.

Having obtained its air operator's certificate (AOC) in October, it can now operate to Harare and can consider Johannesburg and the other regional destinations and what aircraft it might use to operate them.

Irwin says that for the regional routes, such as between Johannesburg or Harare and Lusaka, the demand should be sufficient to use larger aircraft so that the unit seat costs will be lower. He noted that low-cost carriers are generally not interested in its route network, so its hub-feeder role seems relatively safe and will only benefit from greater traffic into Lusaka. "Lusaka is turning into a hub and our role is to feed that hub," he said.

Working to get off the EU blacklist

A €3 million, three-year EU-funded project entitled "Technical Assistance Support to the Zambian Aviation Sector" is aimed at revamping Zambia's safety oversight mechanisms.

The EU's team leader, Branko Kochovski, who works for Danish consultancy NTU, said the European Development Fund programme had already helped to put in place legislation that would lead to the establishment of a new Zambian Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) by August 2013.

Zambia's status on the EU blacklist has put pressure on the country's tourism industry, with surrounding countries such as Zimbabwe and Botswana not being on the list.

Tony Irwin, CEO of Zambia's leading airline, Proflight, does not argue with the EU's decision to blacklist Zambia. "Nobody can argue that Zambia's DCA doesn't have the capacity to cope," he remarked.

Proflight is being proactive in trying to have Zambia removed from the blacklist – which effectively tars all national operators with the same brush when the local safety oversight in deficient. The airline is taking the lead from the operator's viewpoint and offering itself the "guinea pig" for new safety oversight standards.

Irwin said that the challenge for Zambia is finding the right people to run the new Civil Aviation Authority.

Due to not having a national carrier for so long, we don't have the pool of people to oversee the industry, he explained. However, the EU delegation is aiming to support the process through to where it becomes self-sustaining.

Kochovski said the beneficiaries of the EU assistance would chiefly be the Department of Civil Aviation, the National Airport Corporation (NACL) and the Zambia Air Services Training Institute (ZASTI), the very run-down training centre near Lusaka Airport.

The adventure capital of Africa? It's Livingstone, I presume.

Zambia is home to one of the seven natural wonders of the world and, as **Marcelle Nethersole** *discovered, it also features untamed wilderness, tranquil waters, vast open spaces and tonnes of adventure.*

Located in south-central Africa, Zambia is landlocked and shares its borders with eight other African countries.

Archaeologists have discovered that in the northern African Rift Valley of Zambia, the civilizing process got underway at least three million years ago.

In recent times, stone-age sites have been unearthed in many parts of the country.

The region that now makes up modern Zambia was originally inhabited by the Khoisan people but was colonised during the Bantu expansion of the 13th century.

The country has seen much upheaval and European influences over the years, including Portuguese explorers arriving in the 18th century.

Towards the end of the 19th century Cecil Rhodes obtained mining concessions and sent settlers to the area. For most of the colonial period, the country was governed by an administration appointed from London with the advice of the British South Africa Company, which Rhodes established until 1929, when the British government took over.

Zambia's former name was Northern Rhodesia, while Zimbabwe was known as Southern Rhodesia. Zambia became independent in 1964.

The country's main economic wealth creator remains copper mining. But, while Zambia's economy gets stronger, the country still struggles with poverty.

Tourism figures still aren't huge but are certainly picking up. The Zambia Tourism Board (ZTB) said around a million visitors were welcomed to the country in 2012.

ZTB is working on a project to attract visitors, which shouldn't really be too hard, given what the country offers.

Firstly, there is the breath-taking Victoria Falls, one of 17 waterfalls in Zambia, which it shares with Zimbabwe.

The name Victoria Falls was given by the Scottish explorer Dr David Livingstone. Known to locals as the "smoke that thunders" it is recognised as the largest waterfall in the world as 546 million cubic metres of water per minute plummet over the edge over a width of nearly two kilometres into a deep gorge more than 100 metres below.

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There are many ways in which to view and take in the spectacular falls.

In 1900 Cecil Rhodes commissioned The Victoria Falls Bridge – his vision was to make a railway that should cross the Zambezi River just below the falls.

The bridge offers stunning views both down the gorge on the one side and through to the falls on the other.

There is also a marked and paved walkway, where you get a great view facing the falls as well as enjoying a stroll through the lush rain forests.

Aviation enthusiasts might want to take a micro-light, fixed-wing, or helicopter flight for fabulous aerial views. And, for the daredevil, you can throw yourself off The Victoria Falls Bridge doing a bungee jump.

If you are an adventure seeker, then the city of Livingstone will appeal to you.

Named after the good doctor, this is touted as the adventure capital of Africa. Visitors can enjoy white-water rafting on some of the best rapids in the world, helicopter flights down the gorge, micro-light flights, climbing, canoeing, and all that can be rounded off by a sunset cruise on the Zambezi.

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For visitors looking for a more chilled out time, a popular pastime is fishing on Lake Kariba, and seeing the Kariba Dam. The lower Zambezi is actually one of the most popular places for Zambians (and tourists) to spend holidays.

Culture vultures can visit Shiwa Ngandu in the north, a house built by

Stewart Gore-Brown (a member of the Locke King family that established Brooklands as a racing circuit and birthplace of British aviation, in Weybridge, Surrey) and featured in the book The Africa House. It is a manor house, so it looks very unusual in Zambia!

Of course, Africa wouldn't be Africa without its wildlife.

Most travellers looking for a safari holiday in Africa tend to head to Kenya, Tanzania, South Africa and Botswana, but Zambia offers just as much and more.

It is home to lots of national parks, including the famous South Luangwa, which has a large number of game around the Luangwa river; North Luangwa; Lower Zambezi; and Zambia's oldest park, Kafue, that covers covering a huge 22,500sqkm.

Helicopter flights provide excellent views for tourists.

Visitors can see all the animals they're hoping to see in their natural habitat.

Zambia offers a range of trips to suit all safari visitors, from open vehicle to walking, canoeing, elephant-back and photographic.

Zambia's capital, Lusaka, is where most visitors arrive.

It is a sprawling city, bursting at the seams with people, high-rise buildings, shantytowns and busy markets.

While it is still clearly struggling, Lusaka is becoming fast-growing in terms of new buildings, hotels, and shopping centres. Hotels already operating in Lusaka include The Intercontinental and The Fairview, as well as game lodges, boutique accommodation and guesthouses.

There is a charm to the city and there is plenty to keep you occupied – a visit to Kalimba Reptile Park or the Lusaka National Museum. If you want to cool down you can visit the water theme park, Adventure City.

The city has plenty of shopping malls and it is definitely worth a visit to one of its vibrant markets. Lusaka has a vibrant nightlife, too, with a range of restaurants, bars and clubs.

However, Zambia still has a problem with its infrastructure from its roads to its airports.

The country has suffered since the demise of its national carrier in the early 1990s, but recent efforts have seen it come to the verge of being removed from the EU's blacklist.

Proflight has been very proactive as the domestic airline, and has now received approval to operate internationally as well. But infrastructure is still a big concern – as is training of personnel, so an EU delegation has been helping the country to move towards reviving its aviation training college.

While the airline sector in the region is still in flux, it is worth remembering that once these problems have been solved and the country's infrastructure is developed, Zambia is a gem that will offer its visitors a lifetime of wonderful memories.

Christos Sheperd says if a proposed new Zambian carrier does not attract the lucrative non-African customer it could slide further into distress.
PHOTO: MANGO AVIATION

International carriers are responding to Zambia's growing economy by adding new capacity to cater for increased tourist and business traffic, but the failure to establish a viable Zambian carrier to compete with the foreign predators has proved to be a major challenge for the southern African country. **Keith Mwanalushi** *reports.*

Like flying without wings...

«C'est comme voler sans ailes» – Page 86

An airline is a major asset for any country; airlines provide the connectivity required to stimulate business and social development. The World Bank and the International Finance Corporation's 2011 'Doing Business' report indicates that Zambia was one of the world's top 10 reformers for ease of doing business.

Following this report the global credit agency, Fitch Ratings, assigned Zambia a B+ sovereign rating in recognition of the huge economic strides the country has made in the last few years. The Zambian economy expanded more than 7% in 2010, up from 6.4% in 2009. GDP is expected to grow by 6.9% annually from 2011 to 2015, placing Zambia as one of the top 10 fastest growing economies along with six other African countries.

Despite the encouraging economic growth figures, international analysts believe Zambia is faced with an uphill battle in the quest to establish an airline that will effectively withstand the new competitive pressures coming from an influx of ultra-efficient global airlines and the more well-developed neighbouring carriers such as SAA.

Since 1995 several attempts at establishing a private sector-driven airline in Zambia have failed, starting with Zambia Express Airways (ZAMEX), Aero Zambia and, more recently, Zambezi Airlines which has been shut down for several months with its future remaining questionable.

"The Zambian economy is growing fast but it's starting from such a low base that even if it was to experience 100% real growth in output productivity this year, its GDP/capita would still only be about $3,000," observed Christos Shepherd, Mango Aviation Partners' head of business

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Zambezi 737-500s were repossessed by GECAS after the carrier temporarily shut down in November 2011. Inset: Since the liquidation of flag carrier Zambia Airways in 1995 all attempts at a new flag carrier have failed.

development and airlines, Europe Middle East and Africa.

Shepherd, whose UK-based company is an airline start-up and restructuring specialists, added: “The basic problem in Zambia, as in some other sub-Saharan countries, is that air markets are thin. Put simply, Africans don’t generally have the disposable income necessary to travel regularly. Therefore, African airlines live on the breadline; and since they don’t have adequate revenues, they respond by operating old equipment, paring back on maintenance, failing to adequately train staff and so on.”

He further noted that in the Zambian context these problems have been exacerbated by a poor regulatory environment and overzealous government interference in private airlines, which partly caused the shutdown of both Aero Zambia and Zambezi Airlines.

“In turn, these issues deter foreign passengers, historically Europeans but increasingly travellers from the Gulf and China too, who will choose to fly on their own nation’s airlines, which offer better levels of comfort, safety and reliability, and which operate newer and, frankly, more reassuring equipment.”

He then pointed to the issue of the EU ban: “Even if foreigners were not deterred by their poor quality, many African airlines are on the EU blacklist anyway, including all Zambian carriers.

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“So the likes of KLM, Emirates and Brussels Airlines can move into Africa, supported by a strong foreign customer base, while local airlines – incapable of attracting the most lucrative customers – slide further into distress.”

Shepherd believes the situation is only likely to get worse with the implementation of new rules by the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), which will affect third country operators (TCOs) – the official definition of ‘third-country aircraft’ is an aircraft that is not used or operated under the control of a competent authority of an EASA member state.

Today, more than 270 airlines are banned from crossing European airspace; 70% of the countries on the list are African, the rest are from Asia and the CIS. Currently, the majority of airlines that appear on the list don’t have the capacity to operate to European standards, but even those air carriers that already operate to the EU will soon face a new challenge with the new EASA Part TCO.

The new authorisation will harmonise and replace the existing national schemes in Europe for the technical evaluation of TCOs. Issued centrally by EASA, it will become the only mandatory technical pre-requisite for TCOs to exercise entry permits (traffic rights) that are currently issued by individual EASA member states.

Emirates recently increased capacity on services to Zambia from A330s to larger 777s. Inset: KLM now departs Amsterdam for Lusaka three times a week.

According to EASA, full implementation of the TCO programme will be conducted by the end of 2014. Airlines currently operating to Europe will sustain temporary transition rights to perform the flights until they receive new authorisation in 2013-2014 upon passing the inspection and verification process.

Zambia was placed on the EU banned list in 2009 following safety oversight deficiencies. Since then the Zambian aviation authorities are reported to have been working to rectify their non-compliance.

In November 2011, the EU pledged €3 million from its aviation sector support programme to Zambia but Sigvard Bjorck, the head of section for infrastructure at the EU in Zambia, clarified that the funds were not necessarily about removing Zambia from the list of banned airlines.

"The programme aims at making the Zambian aviation sector compliant with international standards and regulations and thus support the Zambian Government's efforts to be removed from the EU ban list," said Bjorck. "As to the time scales of the process, this is very much in the hands of the Zambian authorities and while the EU provides as much assistance as it can, ultimately it will be for the Zambian authorities to take the necessary actions to address the identified deficiencies."

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Bjorck further said that as a result of EASA's technical mission in November 2009, it helped the Zambian authorities to set out a roadmap for putting in place a safety oversight system, which would be compliant with international standards. The follow-up mission in January 2011 was able to reinforce the original roadmap and provide added impetus to the work.

In the past year an estimated 85,000 passengers travelled between Europe and Zambia.

Since the demise of flag carrier Zambia Airways in 1995, the only direct flight to Europe had been with British Airways (BA) from London Heathrow – up until recently.

Dutch carrier KLM introduced new services between Amsterdam and Lusaka from May 2012 after abandoning the Zambian market back in the 1980s.

The thrice-weekly services are operated by A330-200s configured with 30 business class seats and 213 economy passengers. It will be interesting to see if BA responds to KLM's shiny new A330s compared to the much older and the still-to-be upgraded 767-300ERs that the UK carrier uses on the Lusaka route.

The arrival of KLM puts an end to the long monopoly held by BA on the Europe sector and this will add increased choice in terms of

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connectivity options. London Heathrow is suffering from severe congestion, with no hopes in the near future of a third runway, while Amsterdam has become an increasingly popular transfer hub over the last few years. BA is popular with business travellers but the competition should, nevertheless, be good for the passenger.

For the past year Emirates has been operating a five-time weekly operation from Dubai to Lusaka and then on to Harare using A330s.

Now the service has been upgraded to 777-300s. The Middle Eastern carrier is likely to pick up a large proportion of the Europe/Asia – Zambia traffic due to its extensive network across Europe and Asia and the Far East via its growing Dubai hub.

Sources in Lusaka indicate that, internally, talks have reached an advanced stage at establishing yet another new Zambian carrier. So how does a country like Zambia establish a viable airline that can withstand the new competitive pressures in the current environment?

Shepherd believes that any African airline that wants to stop itself from falling into this vicious cycle must offer the same levels of comfort, safety and reliability that the big foreign carriers provide. "That way, they'll attract relatively high-income passengers to their intercontinental routes and this will enable them to cross-subsidise less lucrative local routes until domestic and regional markets mature."

However, he noted that attracting intercontinental traffic in large numbers is not easy: "It takes massive capitalisation, government encouragement, investment in aircraft and FBOs, crew training, and, most of all, investor patience. It takes a lot of time for an African airline to overcome the negative prejudice of European travellers, and it may also take time to come off the EU blacklist.

"No new Zambian airline is going to earn its keep simply by flying Zambians around the world. Zambia has a population of only 13 million and, of this, only about 200,000 people are really going to be able to fly with any meaningful regularity. And you can't sustain an airline with a market of just 200,000 potential customers," Shepherd added.

This means any new Zambian airline is going to need to hunt abroad for prospective passengers. In order to compete for non-African passengers, though, the airline will need to offer

SOMMAIRE

C'est comme voler sans ailes

Les compagnies aériennes observent avec intérêt la croissance économique de la Zambie. Elles augmentent leurs capacités afin de répondre aux besoins de son développement touristique et des voyages d'affaires. Il reste toutefois pour ce pays de l'Afrique Australe à mettre sur pied un transporteur national viable. Un reportage de **Keith Mwanalushi**.

Une compagnie aérienne nationale est un atout majeur pour tout pays. Elle permet d'établir la connectivité nécessaire pour stimuler les affaires et le développement social. Selon un rapport de la Banque mondiale et la société «Doing Business» de 2011, la Zambie est l'un des 10 meilleurs pays au monde à avoir su mener des réformes et faciliter les affaires. L'agence de notation Fitch Ratings a attribué au pays la note souveraine B+. L'économie zambienne a progressé de plus de 6,4% en 2009 et de 7% en 2010. Le PIB devrait croître de 6,9% par an entre 2011 et 2015, plaçant la Zambie parmi l'une des 10 premières économies ayant la croissance la plus rapide, aux côtés de six autres pays africains.

La Zambie est donc confrontée à un véritable défi pour établir une compagnie aérienne nationale qui pourra résister à la concurrence et à l'efficacité des compagnies aériennes internationales ou africaines. Plusieurs tentatives de création d'un consortium regroupant les compagnies zambiennes ont échoué depuis 1995, à commencer par la Zambie Express Airways (ZAMEX). Aero Zambie et Zambezi Airlines ont connu plusieurs mois de fermeture et leur avenir reste incertain.

« L'économie zambienne connaît une croissance rapide, mais elle est partie sur une base très faible », a observé Christos Shepherd, responsable du développement des affaires pour Mango Aviation Partners. «Le marché pour l'aviation reste mince pour la Zambie, les Africains n'ont généralement pas un revenu suffisant pour voyager régulièrement.»

Ce type de problèmes vient décourager les passagers étrangers qui choisissent de voler sur les compagnies de leur pays d'origine. Elles offrent en effet un meilleur niveau de confort, de sécurité et de fiabilité.

Selon Christos Shepherd, de nombreuses compagnies aériennes africaines figurent sur la liste noire de l'UE, y compris l'ensemble des transporteurs zambiens. Plus de 270 compagnies aériennes sont aujourd'hui interdites de traverser l'espace aérien européen. 70% des pays figurant sur cette liste sont africains, le reste se situe en Asie et en CEI.

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Cette situation risque de s'aggraver avec les nouvelles règles de l'AESA et en particulier le TCO (Third Country Operators). Les compagnies aériennes opérant depuis l'Europe y seront bientôt confrontées. Le TCO remplacera à terme les systèmes existants en Europe et sera délivré de manière centralisée par l'AESA et non plus par les différents États membres de l'AESA. Il sera mis en œuvre d'ici fin 2014. Les compagnies aériennes opérant actuellement en Europe vont bénéficier de droits temporaires jusqu'à ce qu'elles reçoivent une nouvelle autorisation à l'issue d'une inspection et une vérification.

L'UE a lancé un programme de soutien à la Zambie, en novembre 2011.

« Ce programme vise à rendre l'aviation zambienne conforme aux normes et aux réglementations internationales », a déclaré Sigvard Bjôrck, responsable de l'UE en Zambie. « L'aide a été principalement de définir une feuille de route pour la mise en place d'un système de supervision de la sécurité. »

On estime à 85 000 le nombre de passagers qui ont voyagé annuellement entre l'Europe et la Zambie depuis 1995. Le seul vol direct vers l'Europe était assuré par British Airways (BA) depuis Londres Heathrow avec un Boeing 767. La compagnie néerlandaise KLM a introduit 3 vols par semaine avec un Airbus A330 entre Amsterdam et Lusaka depuis mai 2012, après avoir abandonné le marché zambien dans les années 80. Cela a instauré plus de choix en termes de connectivité en Europe.

Emirates opère la route vers Lusaka puis Harare depuis un an. Elle opère 5 vols par semaine avec un Boeing 777. Emirates peut capter une grande partie du trafic en Zambie en raison de son vaste réseau à travers l'Europe, l'Asie et l'Extrême-Orient via son hub de Dubaï.

« Aucune compagnie aérienne zambienne ne pourra gagner de l'argent en transportant uniquement

standards of service that those passengers are used to – which means shiny new planes, arrival reliability, and a reputation for safety that some African carriers still don't currently enjoy.

Shepherd stressed that a new airline would have to be adequately capitalised and its investors committed to a long-term – possibly 10-year – experiment, while the airline builds its reputation as one that can compete on price and quality with the likes of KLM and Emirates.

"The good news is that Zambia has an excellent geographical location at the heart of southern Africa," he said. "Zambia is surrounded by countries whose aviation sectors are possibly even worse than its own: the DRC, Zimbabwe and Mozambique are among the places that come to mind.

"Poaching passengers from those countries and flying them internationally via a hub in Lusaka should not be beyond the reach of an adequately experienced commercial team. This would give any Zambian airline an important competitive advantage over the foreign megacarriers."

In order to maximise the opportunity to make Lusaka a hub, a number of issues need to be addressed. Firstly, there is a need to make adequate investment in aviation infrastructure. Lusaka Kenneth Kaunda International Airport is in desperate need of rehabilitation. The government needs to look at the available options today in airport and infrastructure financing.

A current popular option is the build-operate-transfer (BOT) model. This is a form of project financing, where a private entity receives a concession from the private or public sector to finance, design, construct, and operate a facility stated in the concession contract. This enables the project proponent to recover its investment, operating and maintenance expenses in the project.

The Zambian Government must also support the country's private airlines and negotiate bilateral air agreements with other southern African airlines. "The tricky thing is that it needs to do all that without interfering too much in the running of the beneficiaries – the private airlines," said Shepherd.

Ethiopian brought a B787 Dreamliner to Lusaka to promote international links via Addis.

From the airline's point of view, the real infrastructural investment comes with its airside operations. The big operational challenge for African airlines is one of maintenance and equipment availability. "They need ready access to a decent FBO with a strong inventory of critical spares, so that if an engine goes offline it doesn't take weeks to bring a new one from Europe or the US and destroy the flight schedule. New African airlines also need to invest in crew training, engineering and competent staff, so as to improve their chances of getting off the EU blacklist and to create a reputation for safety that will attract non-African customers."

Shepherd added that, unlike European or Gulf start-ups, who have easy access to existing infrastructure and support, African carriers must often build up their ground infrastructure from scratch.

"There isn't a Rolls-Royce factory in Zambia, as there is in Britain. There aren't 30 FBOs equipped to handle narrow-body jets in southern Africa, as there are in Western Europe. This is why African airlines are so expensive to start up."

Shepherd estimates that besides the usual need to retain nine months' operating cash, a Zambian airline would probably need upwards of $50 million. "Not just for its activities in the air but also those on the ground. If private, the airline will also need strong government support to ensure a favourable tax and regulatory environment and the creation of the ground infrastructure required to ensure safe and reliable operations."

les Zambiens. La Zambie compte une population de 13 millions d'habitants, et environ 200 000 personnes peuvent vraiment voyager de façon régulière. Une compagnie ne peut pas vivre avec un marché de seulement 200 000 clients potentiels », a ajouté Christos Shepherd.

Christos Shepherd estime que les compagnies aériennes africaines doivent offrir les mêmes niveaux de confort, de sécurité, de fiabilité et de réputation que les grands transporteurs étrangers. Elles pourront alors capter et convaincre ces passagers pour les transporter ensuite sur des routes locales ou régionales.

La Zambie bénéficie d'une excellente situation géographique au cœur de l'Afrique australe. Attirer les passagers des pays voisins ainsi que ceux des vols internationaux via un hub régional à Lusaka n'est pas hors de portée. Cela donnerait un avantage concurrentiel indéniable à une compagnie aérienne zambienne.

Pour réaliser ce hub, il est d'abord nécessaire que le gouvernement finance des investissements au niveau des infrastructures. L'aéroport de Lusaka a désespérément besoin de réhabilitation. Une solution serait le recours au « Build Operate Transfer » (BOT). Il s'agit d'un financement de projets, où une entité privée bénéficie d'une concession provenant du secteur public ou privé pour financer, concevoir, construire et exploiter une infrastructure via un contrat. Cela permet au promoteur du projet de recouvrir ses dépenses d'investissement, d'exploitation et de maintenance.

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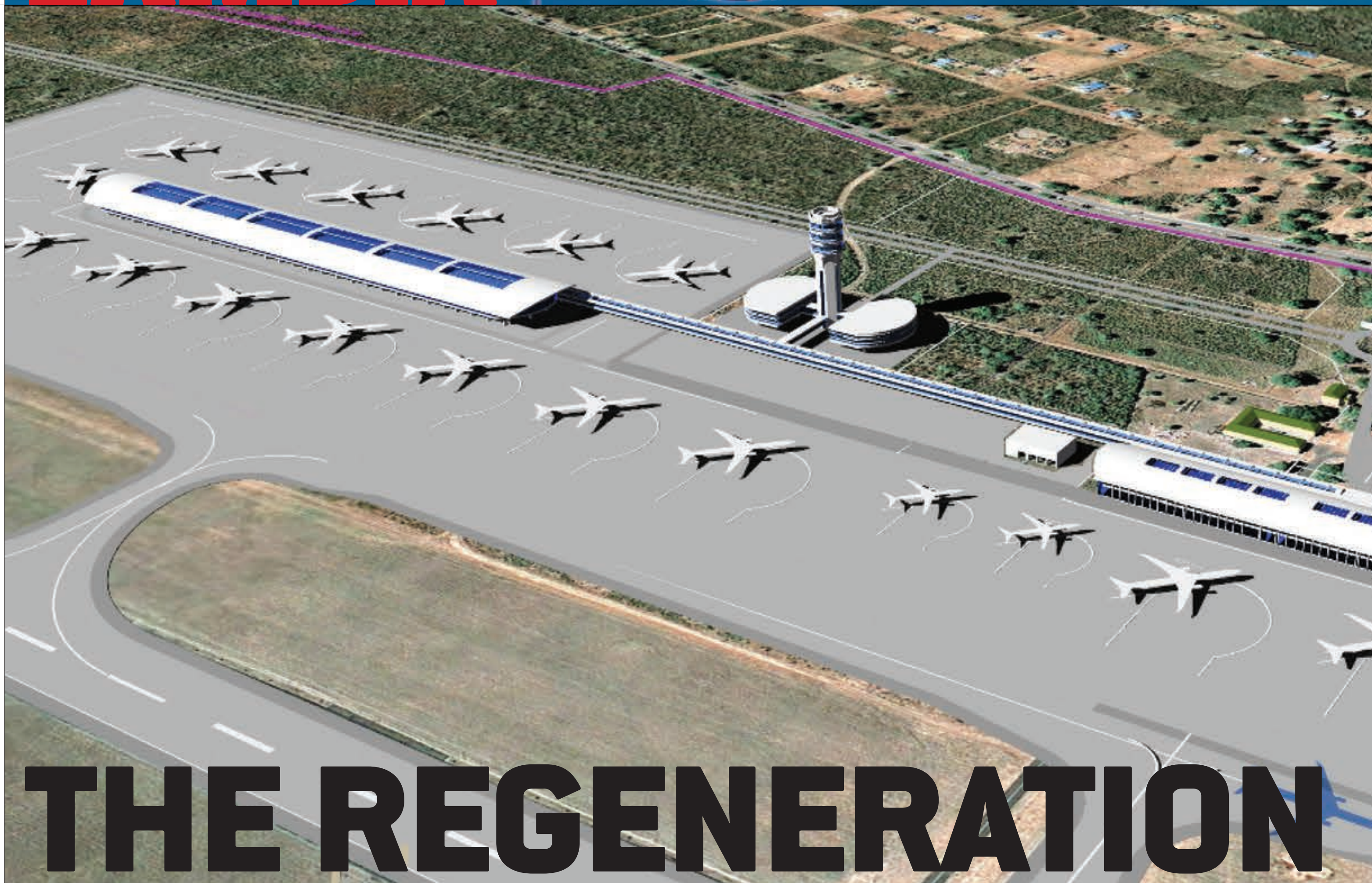
Du côté des compagnies aériennes africaines, le grand défi opérationnel concerne la maintenance et la disponibilité des avions et de leurs équipements. Elles ont un besoin urgent de « fixed-base operator » (FBO) surtout en matière de MRO. Elles doivent aussi investir dans la formation de personnels compétents afin d'améliorer leurs chances de sortir de la liste noire de l'UE et de créer une réputation de sécurité qui attirera des clients non-africains.

Christos Shepherd évoque un dernier point. Une compagnie aérienne zambienne doit avant tout bénéficier d'un soutien ferme du gouvernement pour lui assurer une fiscalité favorable, un environnement réglementaire et des infrastructures nécessaires pour assurer des opérations sûres et fiables.



THE REGENERATION

Zambia's small aviation industry faces several challenges but redeveloping and modernising its airport network and infrastructure will be the biggest of all. However, as **Keith Mwanalushi** *finds out, some progress is being made.*

As passenger numbers increase, the use of ageing airport infrastructure can distort the dynamic working balance required for modern and efficient airport operations.

Two years ago these factors were the catalyst for the most significant regeneration of Zambia's main commercial airports.

Ambitious plans were set in motion to develop a sophisticated airport system, replacing the colonial infrastructure that is now constrained and outdated. However, soon after a master plan was developed, plans seemed to have either slowed or been shelved.

The principle airports operated by Zambia's National Airports Corporation Limited (NACL) include the capital's Lusaka Kenneth Kaunda International Airport (LUN) and three other international airports: Livingstone (LVI) gateway to the Victoria Falls area; Ndola (NLA) in Zambia's copper mining heartland and Mfuwe (MFU) that provides access to the world-renowned Luangwa National Park.

A $725,000 US-funded study by the aviation consultancy group LeighFisher had identified the future requirements of Zambia's four main commercial airports a few years ago, apart from the new developments at Livingstone. It remains unknown as to whether the findings of the study will spread to other airport sites in the country.

"The master plan, as well as a feasibility study, identified the main facility needs," said Justin Powell, who handled the project along with fellow LeighFisher director Gene Lewis.

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"Lusaka is clearly the main gateway with three other airports that have very specific roles within the airport system. Certain facilities were in much greater need of development than others, so we made an initial appraisal of that – the main focus was a terminal facility development," Powell noted.

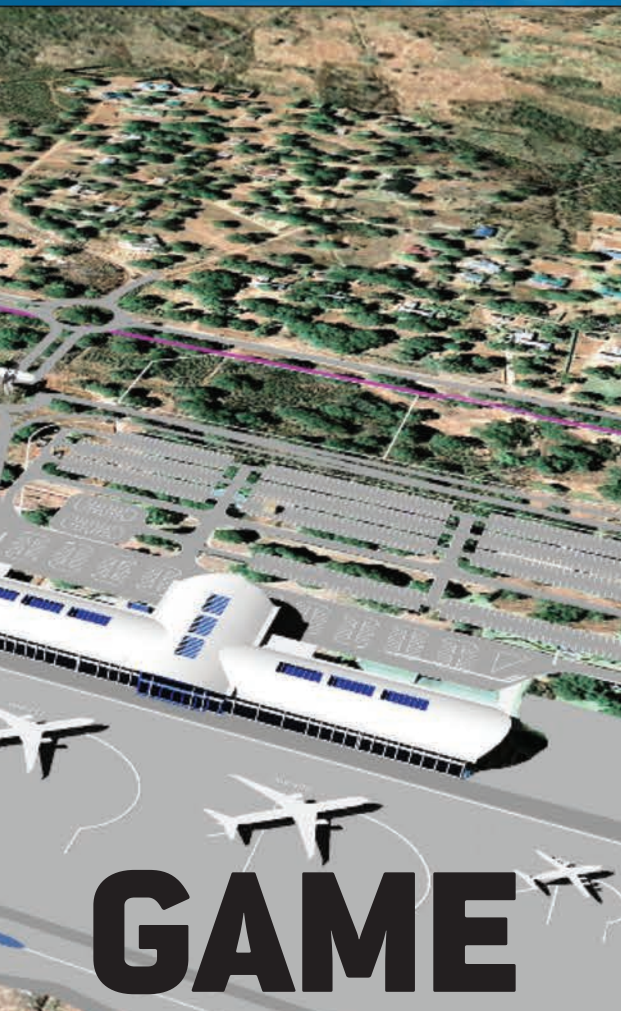
The study also scrutinised the general outlook of the Zambian economy and the traffic outlook at those airports. Powell emphasised that the master plan had a 2019 – 2029 design period, as well as a longer-term visionary.

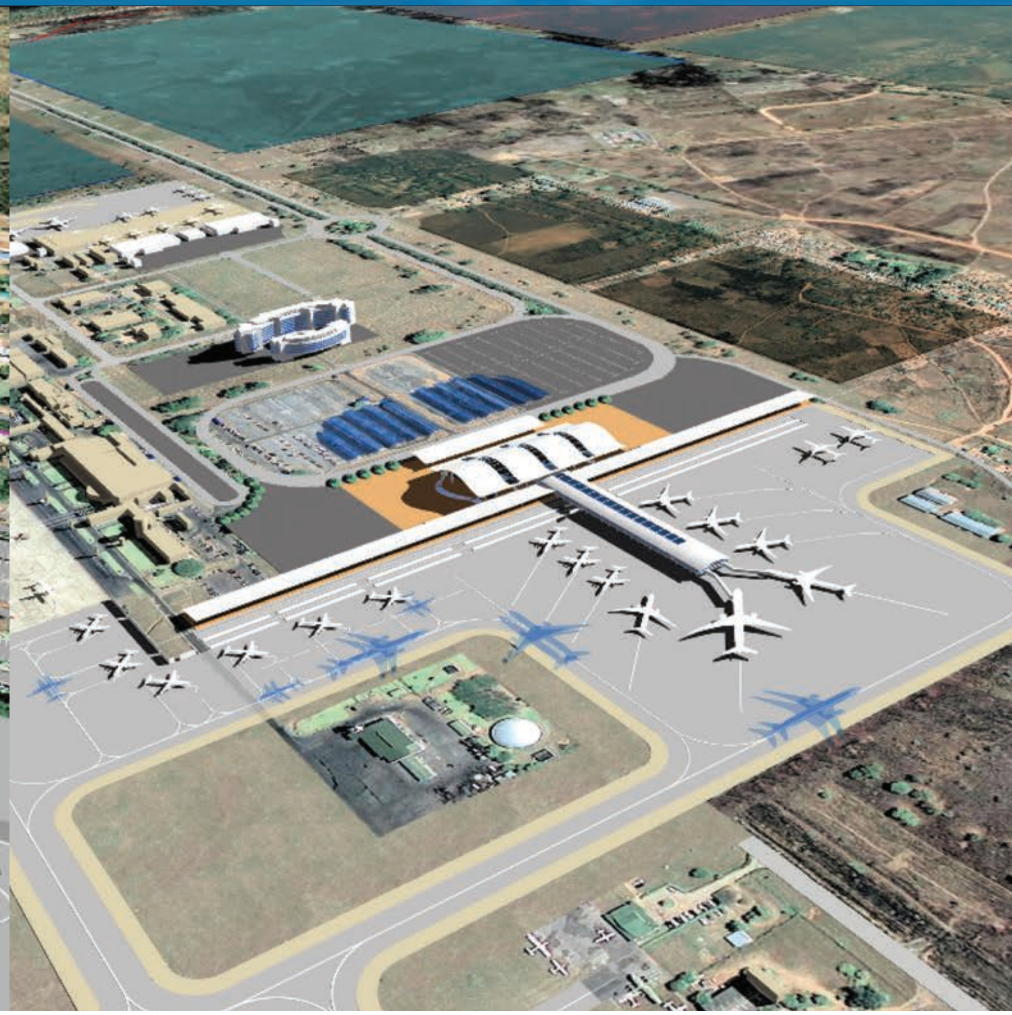
Lusaka Kenneth Kaunda clearly needs the most extensive expansion; the current terminal was built in 1967 and has seen only minor upgrades over the decades. LUN sits on nearly 2,000 hectares but just 200 hectares has been developed.

"We developed a phased plan in which the initial phase would be to build a new terminal at Lusaka. The initial terminal – just like the old terminals at Heathrow for example – were simply worn out and they did not meet modern international travel needs," explained Lewis.

He also stated that, in the context of airfield capacity, the long-term plan went beyond the 20-year horizon that could see the expansion of the airfield in order to support passenger and cargo operations. "The long-term objective would be that the airport does not become constrained," Lewis added.

LUN was designed to handle two million passengers annually. NACL figures indicate a 13.5% rise in passenger numbers in the past five





GAME

years. Even during the height of the global financial meltdown it still registered significant growth.

It is, however, imperative for the authorities to determine what role LUN would play in the regional context in order to maximise its position. Firstly, its central location – within a two-hour flight to surrounding capitals in Southern Africa – should be exploited for regional connections.

Lusaka is positioned halfway between two of Africa's largest hubs – Nairobi and Johannesburg. NACL has noted the significance of this position as Prince Chintimbwe, director of air services explained: "There are some positives and negatives that we can draw from our location between two major aviation brand airports in Africa. The negative being that it makes it increasingly difficult for us to grow as a dominant airport hub in the region because we are competing against larger and well tested hubs with excellent infrastructure and strong national airlines."

Chintimbwe then pointed out that this position could also work in favour if LUN can be successfully turned into a feeder airport for Nairobi and Johannesburg. "This can be achieved through the development and expansion of the existing infrastructure and the establishment of a strong national airline to serve the Southern African region and provide traffic to the major airlines through Lusaka."

The fact that we don't have a strong national airline has really affected the expansion and development of Lusaka airport.

The capital actually generates most of its traffic through Nairobi and Johannesburg. Chintimbwe said Nairobi sees a lot of cargo from Zambian and regional merchants returning from shopping trips to the Middle East and the Far East. Johannesburg pulls in large numbers of tourists coming into Zambia.

He added: "For us, we cannot be a Jomo Kenyatta or an Oliver Tambo overnight. We have much to learn from the two major hubs as we develop our own. While there is competition, both hubs are not killing us because we are benefitting immensely from them and it is helping increase our passenger and cargo numbers."

The absence of a viable flag carrier is a key concern since the demise of Zambia Airways in 1995. Some local analysts have pointed to the government for having no political will to get involved or supervise the establishment of a new solid airline. However, more recently, the establishment of a new Zambian carrier is once again being debated at government level.

"The fact that we don't have a strong national airline has really affected the expansion and development of Lusaka airport, since we need a strong base airline to increase revenue and to share a common national vision," said Chintimbwe.

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Local carriers have often lacked the competitive strength to compete with the likes of Kenya Airways and South African Airways. The Department of Civil Aviation (recently renamed as the Civil Aviation Authority) and the speedy exit from the European Union's list of banned countries will also boost the performance of indigenous carriers.

Livingstone is Zambia's tourist capital and home to the Victoria Falls. Unlike Lusaka, the airport at Livingstone has now been completely redeveloped and modernised to international standards. But it was not always the case as Lewis recalled: "At LVI they had some issues in which parts of the existing terminal were extremely deficient and there were public safety problems."

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He noted that local architects had already begun to undertake the initial design of the major expansion of the passenger terminal. They were beginning to start designing short-term patching up of the existing terminal, which would have been costly.

Lewis said: "In the course of our study we worked with the local architectural and engineering firms that were beginning to design this patch-up at the existing old terminal. However, it could never be a suitable terminal for a major tourist destination area in any country – so we decided to accelerate the work that was being done on a design of a new terminal at LVI and when we finished our conceptual planning for a brand new terminal, the local architectural group immediately began to design it on an accelerated basis."

Lewis indicates that the Zambian architects were able to complete the working drawings and contract drawings in less than six months. The terminal was put out to bid and construction began while the study was still going on.

"We have worked on at least 200 airports over the last 50 years and that is the fastest new terminal project that we have ever been associated with anywhere in the world. I have to give credit to the technical and decision-making capabilities of the Zambian government and the airport operators," emphasised Lewis.

The new terminal at LVI has an annual handling capacity of 700,000 passengers compared with the previous 250,000. The newly built terminal is reserved for international flights, while the old refurbished structure is now used for domestic connections.

The departure section is fitted with an automatic baggage handling system where, previously, luggage had to be manually carried by staff members. Much of the retail space in the new terminal has been sold off to tenants that include banks, duty-free shops and travel agents.

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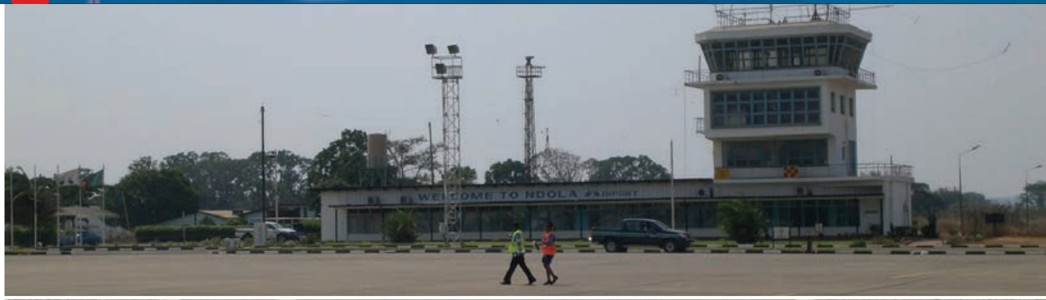
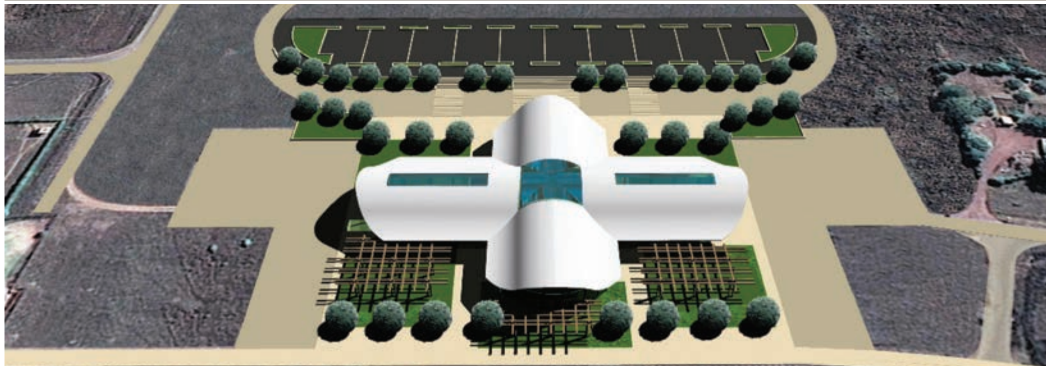
According to Chintimbwe, SITA developed passenger processing systems and biometric technology solutions at LVI and LUN. In fact, back in 2011, SITA announced a five-year agreement with the Zambian airport authorities to introduce the new technologies.

A key goal of this five-year agreement is to reduce pressure on existing infrastructure at both airports through greater automation of the check-in process and the introduction of passenger self-service check-in on the SITA 'AirportConnect Open' platform.

The technology allows for the common-use of all check-in facilities by all airlines based at the two airports.

The upgrades at Livingstone cover both check-in counters and CUSS check-in kiosks. Automation at both locations will also extend to boarding gates, arrivals and lost baggage and other areas.





Top: Ndola's current airport is in urgent need of modernising.
Below: Artist's impression of what a new airport could look like.

"The AirportConnect platform offers a wealth of capabilities and functionality that make it an ideal fully flexible common-use airport system. It will reduce handling costs and the demand for additional airport infrastructure as passenger traffic increases, while also eliminating congestion during peak periods," said Robinson Misitala, managing director, NACL.

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According to SITA, the CUSS kiosks in Zambia can also be equipped in the future with a wide variety of security devices, including integration of fingerprint readers, facial recognition software, passport readers and other devices to support a registered traveller programme.

Ndola (Simon Mwansa Kapwepwe) International Airport is the oldest airport in Zambia, originally set up in 1938 as a British military airbase. It was converted to civilian use in the 1950s but retained some military activity.

Zambia's current copper mining boom is fuelling growing passenger and mining-related cargo in the copper-belt region. A Canadian firm recently invested $1 billion in a new copper mine, while the level of Chinese investment in mining continues to rise.

During the study, Powell said the consistent theme at all the airports was that the main and immediate focus was on the terminals.

"Ndola was heavily capacity constrained," he said. "These days, what you want to do is build a box that has a flexible interior because you don't know what the design philosophy or what the needs of passengers in 30 years time will be. That's the issue right now at Lusaka and Ndola airports because they were built back in the 1950s and 60s."

Lewis added that the present Ndola terminal was built on the centreline of the parallel taxiway to the runway.

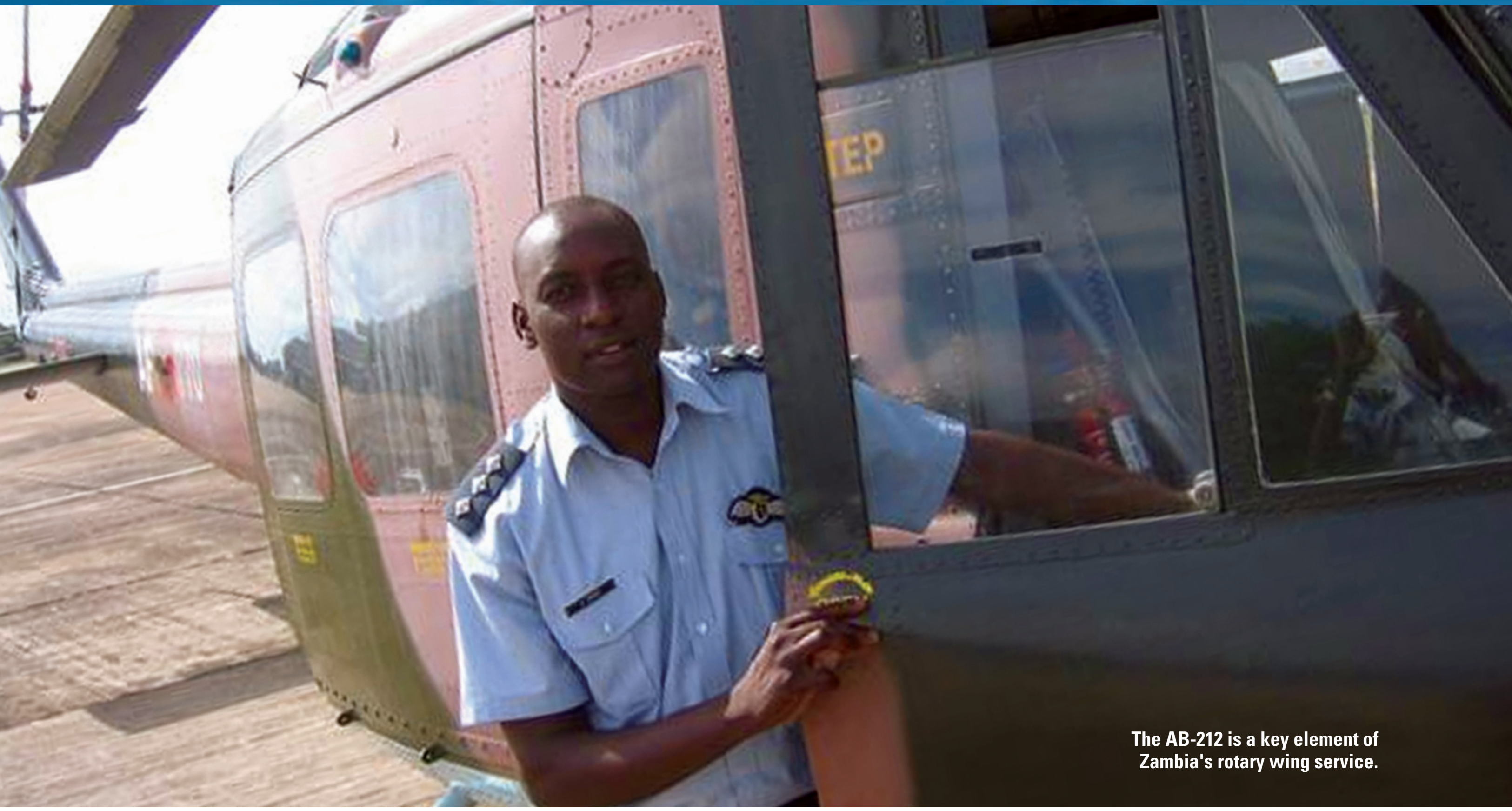
"That is not a desirable condition for a civilian airport," he said. "One of the advantages of building a terminal well away from the taxiway is that, if so required, that taxiway can be extended all the way to the end of the airfield. That is more desirable from a commercial aircraft and operational standpoint."

Chintimbwe added: "We are not only looking at passenger growth, we are also placing a strong emphasis on cargo numbers out of Ndola, because there is huge potential in cargo traffic. In fact, Ndola airport is also serving the mining operations in the Democratic Republic of Congo. That is what we are working on as we shift into the expansion mode for the airport."

LeighFisher's long-term plan recommended that commercial developments should not interfere with the aeronautical developments of these airports. "There is need for caution and to allow only the type of developments that are compatible with the continued development of the airport – discouraging things like low density residential housing near the runways," added Lewis.

Powell was optimistic that airport cities can develop around the Zambian airports: "If you believe that there will be a need for additional distribution, office park, light manufacturing in the Lusaka region for example, and the same for Ndola to support the mining industry – and if you believe these are useful economic drivers, then the airport will likely benefit from their development. Certainly for Lusaka we made allowances for an airport hotel and conference centre, particularly if we see more connecting activity."

Only time will tell if and when all these recommendations will be implemented.



The AB-212 is a key element of Zambia's rotary wing service.

Nearly half a century of mend and make do for Zambian Air Force

The Zambian Air Force has had to cope with a complicated series of challenges since the country's independence nearly 50 years ago and today it still faces an uncertain future.
Jon Lake *reports.*

The Zambian Air Force (ZAF) can trace its origins back to the Royal Rhodesian Air Force when the country, then known as Northern Rhodesia, formed part of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, also known as the Central African Federation.

The federation was dissolved in 1963 and in 1964 the British government granted independence to Northern Rhodesia (which became Zambia) and Nyasaland (which became Malawi) but refused Southern Rhodesia independence because insufficient progress towards multiracial democracy had been made in the Federation's largest and wealthiest member.

From the start, independent Zambia faced a complicated situation, largely surrounded by colonial regimes that were at war with a variety of liberation movements – several of which used Zambian territory for training or as a 'jumping off point' for military operations, and most of which received strong support from Zambia.

As a result, Zambia faced attacks from Rhodesian and Portuguese forces as they undertook hot pursuit missions against guerrilla forces, or as they attacked bases and training camps.

The liberation wars in Angola, Mozambique and Rhodesia would reach their peak in the late 1970s, while South Africa did not become a democratic state until 1994. Zambia also faced insurgent campaigns sponsored by South Africa, and later by Renamo in neighbouring Mozambique.

During the existence of the federation, a small air element, known as the Northern Rhodesian Air Wing, operated a handful of transport/liaison aircraft from Lusaka's Livingstone Airport. This became the Northern Rhodesian Air Force in March 1964.

Following the declaration of the Republic of Zambia on October 24 1964, the former Northern Rhodesian Air Force was renamed as the Zambia Air Wing. The new force was formed with UK assistance and was equipped with some aircraft inherited from the Royal Rhodesian Air Force, and some supplied by the British.

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No.1 Squadron operated a fleet of four Dakotas and two Hunting Pembroke C.Mk 1s, while No.2 Squadron, formed in 1965, as a communication and reconnaissance unit equipped with six (later nine) De Havilland DHC-2 Beavers.

A flying training school (FTS) and a technical training school (TTS) were established with RAF help and the UK supplied six DHC-1 Chipmunk trainers for pilot training, but much professional training was undertaken in the UK at RAF Biggin Hill, Cranwell, Church Fenton, and South Cerney.

Early emphasis was on the transport arm and Zambia acquired four DHC-4A Caribous in 1965, with a fifth arriving in September 1971. Meanwhile, a Hawker Siddeley HS748 series 231

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Zambia's Dornier Do 28D Skyservants proved the backbone of the country's military transport supply while below, military and civil operate side by side at Livingstone Airport.

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was added as a presidential aircraft in 1967.

The Zambia Air Wing became the Zambian Air Force in 1968. During the early 1970s, Zambia turned away from the UK (cancelling a 1969 order for Beagle Bulldog trainers), and instead established defence agreements with a number of other nations – initially with Italy and Yugoslavia.

Zambia ordered 20 Italian SIAI-Marchetti SF260MZ aerobatic trainers to replace the cancelled Bulldogs, as well as 23 Aermacchi MB326GB armed jet trainers. Italian Air Force officers helped to train Zambian pilots and ground crew at Lusaka and Livingstone, and Italy also assisted in the building of new bases at Mumbwa, 100 miles west of Lusaka, and Mbala on the Tanzanian border.

The Italian connection also saw the supply of a mix of Agusta Bell helicopters, including AB 47s, AB 205s and AB 212s. More AB 205s were subsequently acquired as recently as 2006.

At much the same time, Zambia also took delivery of a small number of (probably six to 12) Yugoslav Soko G-2A-E Galeb armed trainer/light strike aircraft and single-seat Soko J-21 Jastreb fighter-bombers. Yugoslavia also provided a pair of Douglas DC-6Bs, which briefly strengthened the air force's transport unit before being parked at Lusaka Airport for many years and then sold to a civilian operator in Namibia.

Finally, Zambia also turned to West Germany for the supply of ten Dornier Do 28D Skyservants, which were delivered in 1970 and early 1971. The transport element was further reinforced in 1976 by the addition of seven De Havilland DHC-5D Buffaloes, while the SF260s were augmented by Swedish SAAB MFI-15-200A Safaris from 1976.

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In 1975, Zambia turned eastwards for the first time, procuring Mil Mi-8 helicopters from the Soviet Union.

Following the shooting down of an Air Rhodesia Viscount shortly after take-off from Kariba by Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA) terrorists, the Royal Rhodesian Air Force mounted a number of attacks against ZIPRA and Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) training camps in Zambia.

In one of these raids, Rhodesian Hawker Hunters circled Zambian bases, threatening to shoot down any ZAF aircraft that attempted to intervene, while Canberra bombers, Hunter fighter-bombers and Alouette helicopter gunships attacked a number of targets, including Westlands Farm – ZIPRA's military headquarters.

The powerlessness of the Zambian Air Force to respond was humiliating and later in 1978 China presented Zambia with 12 Shenyang F-6 (licence-built MiG-19) fighters to form the basis of an air defence fighter force. China also supplied a pair of Shenyang FT-5 (two-seat MiG-17 advanced trainers) and 12 piston-engined Nanchang BT-6 basic trainers. Though the F-6 was an ancient design, it did promise to give Zambia a fighter that could at least meet the RRAF's ageing Hunters on equal terms!

Moreover, a second fighter squadron formed in 1980 with the delivery of 12-16 MiG-21MF 'Fishbed-J' fighters and a pair of MiG- 21UM 'Mongol-A' two-seat trainers from the Soviet Union. The USSR also supplied a small number of Yak-40 VIP/liaison aircraft.

The next wave of modernisation of Zambia's air force followed in the 1990s. Eight surviving MiG-21MFs and two MiG-21UMs were dispatched to the Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) Lahav facility at Ben Gurion IAP, to be upgraded to MiG-21-2000 standards, with a new

Top: Chinese links were secured by the Yarmin Y16 while SAIA Marchetti SF260 TP trainers are used to bring through new pilots.

Elta radar, and new avionics and weapons systems – including Python 3 air-to-air missiles.

Some aircraft did not return to Zambia, however, reportedly after Zambia's funding for the programme ran out.

Otherwise, the 1990s were marked by a strengthening of the relationship with China. Whereas early deliveries – for example of the Shenyang J-6 fighters – were made as donations, to show China's support for a state that was in the forefront of the struggle for liberation and independence, the new relationship was more commercial.

Two Yarbin Y-12II light transport aircraft were delivered early in 1994, and three more followed in 1997.

Zambia also turned to China for a replacement for its ageing Macchi MB326s and surviving Soko Galebs and Jastrebs, selecting the Hongdu Aviation Industrial Group (HAIG) K-8 jet trainer. Eight of these advanced jet trainers were delivered to Zambia, in late 1999 and early 2000.

Five more Y-12s and two Xian MA-60s were delivered during 2006. The MA-60 is a stretched and modernised version of the Y-7 which, in turn, is a Chinese derivative of the Antonov An-24.

A further batch of eight Hongdu K-8s were delivered in April 2012, the new aircraft being K-8Ps – a variant developed for the Pakistan Air Force with new avionics, a glass cockpit and Martin Baker zero-zero ejection seats. The training element was also strengthened by the addition of a new batch of turboprop-powered SIAI-Marchetti SF-260TWs.

Zambia's latest acquisition came in the form of a batch of seven Harbin Z-9 helicopters, the first four of which were delivered to the air force in June 2012. The Z-9 is a license-built version of the French Eurocopter AS365 Dauphin.

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Though the Zambian Air Force has received regular deliveries of new aircraft, its operational capability remains uncertain. In 2012 the Zambian President, Michael Sata, described the Zambian Air Force as being "presently incapable of defending the country" and unable to respond to emergencies and disasters. It needed to be re-equipped to improve its capability, he said.

The air force is reportedly crippled by a lack of spares, while funding and availability constraints mean that few of its pilots are able to log sufficient flying hours to remain properly operationally capable. ZAF commander General Erick Chimense has underlined the need for re-equipment of the air force and for more aircraft, technicians and other specialised personnel, and deplored the state of the ZAF's main bases while criticising the encroachment into military air bases by local authorities.

Those bases consist of military enclaves at Lusaka International Airport, and Livingstone's Harry Mwaanga Nkumbula International Airport (named after the leader of the Africa National Congress in Zambia) and the purpose-built military airfields at Mumbwa, 100 miles east of Lusaka, and Mbala, previously known as Abercorn, 650 miles north east of Lusaka, on the Tanzanian border.

Mumbwa has ten alert pads leading to a taxiway at the western end of the main runway, and accommodates what remains of the MiG-21 fighter force.

In 2009 then-President Rupiah Banda announced that Mbala Air Force Base would be rebuilt as an international airport, but this may not yet have happened, and a military enclave remains, though there may no longer be any operational flying from the apparently derelict airfield.

Inside the hangar of the training school.

Tunisian academy earning top marks

Kelly Green

finds out more about Tunisia's first private aviation school.

The capacity currently available in Africa is not adequate to respond to the future demands for aviation training in the continent, according to the Association of African Aviation Training Organization (AATO)'s Strategic Plan for 2013-2015.

For Tunisia's Airline Flight Academy (AFA), meeting the future demands of the African aviation industry has been top of the agenda since it opened its doors in 1998.

Today, AFA has four bases across Tunisia: the capital Tunis, Enfidha, Monastir and Tabarka, and over the past 15 years it has been training the next generation in all areas of aviation, celebrating a number of 'firsts' for Tunisia along the way.

Not only was AFA the first private aviation school to open in Tunisia, it also proudly became the first Tunisian school to be formally listed on the website of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

This year there have been further achievements for the north African training college. In April 2013, AFA became a member of AATO at the organisation's constitutive assembly in Abuja. The following month, it joined the International Association of Flight Training Professionals (IAFTP).

AFA's training courses are specially designed to meet the expectations of airlines and its continued aim is to contribute to the Tunisian endeavour to promote employment and integrate young graduates.

AFA provides training for aircraft maintenance technicians B1 and B2, dispatchers and flight attendants. It also offers courses in pilot training – commercial pilot license (CPL), airlines transport pilot license (ATPL), instrument rating (IR) and training for instructor qualification.

Cutting edge training: the school's Diamond D42.

According to the company: "The important task of training pilots requires know-how. In order to ensure for candidates a learning methodology leading to success, it is important that instructors be experienced and dedicated."

To provide this training, AFA has continued to invest in new equipment. In 2010, it became the first operator of Tecnam aircraft in Tunisia, and most recently in June 2013 it took delivery of three new single-engine models. The three Tecnam P2002 aircraft join the flight academy's fleet of 14 aircraft.

AFA works alongside its sister institution, the University College of Aviation and Technology (ESAT), located in the Tunis Carthage Airport area, which provides training for Tunisia's next generation of aeronautical engineers.

To prepare the students for working in the industry, the aeronautical engineering programme at ESAT is divided into two parts. The first is dedicated to aviation maintenance technology, preparing the student for a career in aircraft maintenance and repair as an airframe and power plant mechanic. Career opportunities include general aviation aircraft maintenance, but it is also a good companion programme for those that might be interested in corporate pilot careers or mission flying.

The second part of the programme focuses on avionics technology and prepares the student for a career working on the advanced radio, electronics, and related aircraft instrumentation systems in the aircraft industry.

Students hoping to train as pilots and engineers work together during the first two years at ESAT taking integrated preparatory classes based on maths and physics. They then split before continuing on their chosen training paths, with pilot candidates going on to complete their training at AFA.

Looking to the future, Dr Nabil Ghannay, director of quality and safety management at AFA, said that the academy hopes to be able to open its courses to train international students.


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Mohammed Husary: Supporting training in developing countries.

UAS supports itself with new backing for students

Developing future talent for the industry is essential - and one company is putting its money behind making this happen. **Alan Peaford** *reports.*

UAS, one of the world's leading international trip support providers, has been developing a grant and internship programme to help young people from developing countries get a better opportunity to work in the aviation industry.

As part of that programme, it intends to cover the cost of an IATA airport commercial management course for two Ethiopian students at the Emirates Aviation College, in Dubai.

"Africa is an important and fast-growing market," explained UAS executive president, Mohammed Husary. "One of the biggest challenges will be getting the right number of people to match the growth. We felt we could do something to help."

The programme, valued at more than $12,000 per student, will be offered to two young people from the Ethiopian Aviation Academy as a means of bridging the gap in the aviation industry between the Middle East and Africa.

"UAS is committed to the promotion of education and training programmes that allow individuals to enhance their professionalism and knowledge of the aviation industry," Husary said.

After the Ethiopian students have completed the course, they will be invited to carry out an internship at the company's headquarters in the Dubai Airport Free Zone.

"We think this will also prove valuable. We are fortunate that UAS has a great reputation and a strong customer base. By spending some time working with the company, the students will get a great opportunity to experience the way we work and gain a broader understanding of the business. The overall objective of this partnership is to promote aviation education and allow candidates to experience and develop their skills globally, as well acting as a means of learning and expanding their career in international operations," Husary said.

"They will get a real-life perspective of working in flight planning, ground operations, and flight operations," he added.

UAS, one of the founding members if the African Business Aviation Association (AfBAA), is also covering all costs for the students' flights, accommodation and transportation.

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The company already has operations in Mali and is looking at Ethiopia as a potential future operations centre.

It is also bringing two students from China to the Emirates Aviation College on a similar sponsorship programme.

In another new move, the company has established a partnership with the National Business Aviation Association (NBAA) offering an international operator's scholarship to benefit business aviation professionals engaged in international operations. The programme is administered by NBAA's international operators committee.

Husary sees benefit for his own staff in meeting of different nationalities on the support programmes.

"We believe that education is an ideal way to encourage exchange of ideas between professionals from different backgrounds while helping develop the next generation of leaders," he said.

The 14th Airport Cities World Conference and Exhibition took place at the Emperors Palace, Johannesburg – the first time the event had ever been held on the African continent. **Dan Brightman** *reports.*

Growth of the hub club

Since Dubai launched its Airport Free Zone in 1996, exploiting transport hubs as fertile locations to establish industrial and residential areas has become commonplace.

Now South Africa appears to be capitalising on its own airport development areas.

With Cape Town boasting its Airport Industrial Area, Durban its Dube Tradeport Initiative and Johannesburg its OR Tambo International Airport 'Jet Park' development, the concept of harnessing regional airports to modern industrial and office parks seems to be gathering speed.

In Johannesburg, Lanseria Airport is closely allied to the Lanseria Airport City enterprise. Bloemfontein's Bram Fischer International Airport – named after the well-known Afrikaans struggle lawyer – is another major economic expansion site.

The annual Airport Cities World Conference and Exhibition, sponsored in 2013 by Johannesburg's eastern region city of Ekurhuleni, celebrated worldwide airport business hub development. Ekurhuleni's executive mayor, Mondli Gungubele, pitched for the conference soon after the FIFA World Cup event was hosted by South Africa in 2010.

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The conference was attended by some 300 delegates from all over the world, while a separate exhibition area took care of commercial and government investment and development projects and products. These included Lanseria Airport's 'Airport City' organisation as well as Airports Company of South Africa, Bloemfontein Airport development enterprise, Beumer Group baggage handling, Aeroportos de Mozambique and many other related companies.

The conference has always been a popular networking event to share global airport trends. The event comprised a series of special 'foundation', 'advanced' and 'masterclass' sessions hosted by leading world airport figures.

Delegates at the Aero Cities event.

The 'aerotropolis' concept was the main focus and this suggests that airports are no longer merely transit points but the centre of their own economic regions. The Airport Cities refrain is that developments motivate the establishment of residential, industrial and office parks arranged in a cluster rather than traditional strip.

With the expansion of urban metropolises, access to fast means of transport is becoming difficult and the idea of using an airport as a central location has been embraced by a number of cities.

Good examples of airport hub commercial successes have been Holland's Zuidas areas and Las Colinas in Texas, USA. South Korea also joined the bandwagon with its Songdo International Business Centre. Many of these locations have drawn inspiration from Dubai's free zones.

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The aerotropolis concept is also capturing current environmental issues in reducing the time taken to make road connections and providing green lifestyle opportunities for families employed within aviation or its associated industries. The proponents of airport zone development also expect rail and other urban transport systems to grow outwards from the airport nucleus and connect to nearby city centres and housing developments, providing a labour pool for new industries.

Tourism is also expected to benefit as a number of holiday developments are attracted to near-airport locations. Typical of this is the plan to develop Ncala Airport in Mozambique. The project, overseen by ex-Lineas Aeroes Mozambique CEO, José Viegas, is expected to attract much-needed investment in the northern coastal regions of this large nation.

Nigeria is also planning airport development projects and intends implementing sites in Lagos, Abuja, Kano and Port Harcourt, where the bulk of international travel is handled. The Nigerian initiative represents the first aerotropolis to be conceived in West Africa and the government is already inviting investors to explore its residential, medical, logistics, commercial, hospitality and produce opportunities as well as modernised aviation clusters sited at the airports. Like the United Emirates examples, Nigeria is also considering the placement of special economic free trade zones.

While Aero Cities 2013 appeared to be dominated by a strong African presence, many of the speakers were from other continents. Among them was a strong representation from the USA in the form of a Dallas Fort Worth Airport team that included District 8 deputy major Tennell Atkins.

While Africa is not out of the woods insofar as economic recovery is concerned and aviation, in particular, is struggling to recover operating margins, South Africa is at least showing a lead in presenting new commercial ideas to lift the continent from its years of neglected infrastructure. Ekurhuleni's brave step forward in welcoming global aerotropolis participants will open another window to local and international investors.

Sudan and its southern neighbour, South Sudan, are pressing ahead with plans to develop new airports. Despite a treacherous aviation safety record, air transport is seen as a rare bright spot for their struggling economies.
Keith Mwanalushi *reports.*

SAFETY FIRST IN SUDAN

«La sécurité, une priorité au Soudan» – Page 100

When road transport infrastructure is limited it means journeys become lengthy or even dangerous. Air transport becomes the only real and practical option to move goods and people around.

But, without the appropriate infrastructure and oversight, air transport, too, turns into a game of chance. Such is the case with the two Sudanese countries.

Today, Sudan suffers from the worst aviation safety on record. Data from the Aviation Safety Network shows the country experienced three air crashes in 2012 and, on average, two every year.

However, local authorities claim that reforms are being made and plans to build new airports are under way.

Not surprisingly, the Chinese are involved – China is now Sudan's largest trading partner. Back in February 2011, China Harbour Engineering Co (CHEC) reported that it signed a $900 million contract to build a new international airport in the Sudanese capital Khartoum. The project aimed to build one runway capable of A380 operations, a terminal building, control tower, new parking area, connection road, air cargo terminal, MRO and other auxiliary facilities.

According to information from the Sudan Ministry of Investment, the new airport at Khartoum will operate under internationally recognised standards in adherence to ICAO specifications. In addition, there are plans to redevelop three other airports at Port Sudan, Malakal Airport, and Abu Gibieha Airport.

However, details on progress relating to these projects remain sketchy; in fact, the Khartoum project has been on the drawing board for some time.

Alexander Manakos, partner at Lufthansa Consulting, which has vast experience in challenging markets, said: "Based on our experience in airport development and airport privatisation in Africa, a key challenge is to establish a stable and safe political and economic environment in the country to form the basis for economic growth and development.

"A positive investment climate is necessary not only to develop and maintain viable airport operations but also to boost trade and the resulting movement of people and goods that create demand for air transportation."

Manakos said the availability of airport infrastructure and facilities that meet international safety and security standards are considered a basic prerequisite.

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"However, these are currently not met in several places in Africa," he added. "Another hurdle, that must be taken into account and can only be overcome by decisions on the political level, is the regulatory framework in the sense of liberalisation of air transport to allow airlines access to the national skies."

That, considering administrative hurdles, might also prevent foreign direct investments, business development and competition on the ground.

"Privatisation of airport operations can be one key step to success, as some examples in Africa are showing. However, it strongly depends on various local factors and framework conditions if the concept of airport privatisation is the right measure to develop and maintain viable airport operations in a country," he explained.

South Sudan plans to mark its emergence on to the world stage as an independent oil producer by completing a new airport terminal at the capital Juba (although the capital city is planned to be moved to a more central location in the future).

Juba International Airport (JIA) handles international and local airlines, cargo air traffic and chartered commercial flights. It is also used by the South Sudanese military and by the United Nations relief flights for the country.

The current passenger terminal was built by Sudan to serve what was then thin traffic between Khartoum and the poor south.

It consists of two small halls with manual check-in procedures without adequate baggage weight checks.

Security checks are minimal because of the frequent power outages. Luggage from arriving passengers is loaded on a long bench in the absence of a luggage carousel. Some 22 airlines serve Juba International Airport, mostly from neighbouring carriers in Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia.

In June 2012, CHEC signed a U$158 million contract for phase one of JIA with the transport ministry of South Sudan. According to CHEC, the project involves the reconstruction of the existing airport. An information minister in South Sudan is quoted as saying the investment will include various extensions, extended car parks, a new lighting system and the ability to perform 24-hour operations.

It's hoped that the new terminal will show the modern face of South Sudan to the rising number of foreign executives tapping high-risk, high-return business opportunities in the newest African state. As is the case with Khartoum, authorities remain tight lipped about how much work has been done.

Reports from Reuters indicate that the government had planned to have a new airport

South Sudan signed a $158 million contract to upgrade Juba International Airport but progress is slow. Inset: Sudan airport.

terminal ready for independence celebrations in July 2011 but works had been hampered for years by funding problems and poor planning.

In October 2012 the European Union Aviation Security Mission (EUAVSEC) deployed a team to Juba in response to South Sudan's request for EU support to strengthen security at JIA, as part of the international community's overall assistance to the country.

A EUAVSEC spokesman said a key challenge for South Sudan was to establish a fully operational transport hub for commercial and passenger purposes. Improving the airport security would not only contribute to the fight against crime and international terrorism, but would also enable the increased flow of people and goods, thus helping to boost trade and promote regional integration.

EUAVSEC aims to assist and advise South Sudan to establish the aviation security organisation at the ministry of transport and to strengthen aviation security at JIA. EUAVSEC will train and mentor security services, provide advice and assistance on aviation security, as well as support the coordination of security activities related to aviation.

The mission has a non-executive mandate, according to a statement from the EU: its aim is not to do security checks directly but to enable South Sudanese authorities to build-up adequate capacities. Areas such as control of airspace, aviation safety, land- and riverine border management falls outside the scope of the mission's mandate. The EUAVSEC is expected to be fully operational early in 2013 with approximately 60 people. The mission's mandate lasts until January 2014.

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Once these airports are developed and functional, the next challenge will be to ensure their commercial viability. "With regard to commercial and service quality performance, the most crucial factor is the implementation of safe efficient procedures and to overcome or limit bureaucracy to necessary levels," commented Manakos.

He agreed that bureaucracy and other formal or informal administrative hurdles are often observed as a key factor that hampers a smooth operational performance. "This affects the airport user's perception of service quality.

"In many locations certain services are delivered by service providers that enjoy the comfort of a monopoly position. Such monopolistic structures, by their nature, fail to provide an environment that stimulates customer orientation, efficiency and quality of service," he said.

Manakos agreed that a successful measure to overcome this lack of quality was usually the creation of competition by allowing more than one service provider to perform services like passenger handling or warehouse-handling and so on.

"When it comes to commercial performance of airports, we have observed that many in Africa are hardly utilising the potential of non-aeronautical revenues that an airport offers," Manakos added.

However, he noted that there were examples in Africa that prove the opposite.

"But, in general, airports tend to cover only a very limited portion of the value chain. They neglect commercial opportunities that result from shopping, parking, food and beverage and other services, which provide revenues to the airport and are also perceived by airport users as quality factors."

Ultimately only time will tell whether the political and economic landscape will fulfil the dreams of two nations with grand ambitions.

SOMMAIRE

La sécurité, une priorité au Soudan

Le Soudan et son voisin le Soudan du Sud mènent de grands projets visant à créer de nouveaux aéroports. Malgré un lourd passif en termes de sûreté aéronautique, le développement du transport aérien est considéré comme un secteur prometteur. Cela malgré une économie en réelle difficulté. Un reportage de **Keith Mwanalushi**.

Le Soudan du Sud a signé un contrat de 158 millions de dollars pour moderniser l'aéroport international de Juba, mais la progression des travaux reste lente.

Lorsque les infrastructures du transport routier restent limitées, les trajets sur route sont généralement longs et dangereux. Le transport aérien devient alors un moyen unique et pratique pour transporter les marchandises et les passagers. Le transport aérien peut également se transformer en un jeu de hasard sans une infrastructure aéroportuaire appropriée et une surveillance adéquate. Tel est le constat établi pour les deux pays soudanais.

Le Soudan souffre aujourd'hui d'un niveau de sécurité des plus dégradés que l'aviation n'ait jamais enregistré. Les informations de l'"Aviation Safety Network" montrent que le pays a connu trois accidents d'avion en 2012 et, en moyenne, deux chaque année.

Les autorités locales affirment cependant que les réformes et les projets de construction de nouveaux aéroports sont en cours. La Chine est impliquée dans ce développement, elle est désormais le plus important partenaire commercial du Soudan. La société China Harbour Engineering Co (CHEC) a annoncé, en février 2011, la signature d'un contrat de 900 millions d'euros pour bâtir le nouvel aéroport international de Khartoum. Ce projet vise à construire une piste capable d'accueillir l'A380, une aérogare, une tour de contrôle, une nouvelle aire de stationnement, un terminal pour le fret aérien, des routes ou encore des installations pour la MRO.

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Selon les informations du ministère soudanais de l'Investissement, le nouvel aéroport de Khartoum fonctionnera conformément aux normes internationales et en particulier celles de l'OACI. Il est également prévu de réaménager l'aéroport de Port-Soudan, de Malakal et d'Abu Gibieha. Les informations sur l'avancement de ces projets restent floues.

La CHEC a également signé avec le ministère des Transports du Le Soudan du Sud, en juin 2012, un contrat de 158 millions de dollars pour la première phase de reconstruction de l'aéroport actuel. Selon des sources ministérielles, l'investissement comprendra également l'agrandissement des parkings, un nouveau système d'éclairage et une capacité à effectuer des opérations 24 heures sur 24.

Alexander Manakos, partenaire chez Lufthansa Consulting, a déclaré: « Sur la base de notre expérience en Afrique, le défi majeur à relever est de créer un environnement politique et économique stable dans le pays pour construire une base solide de croissance. C'est nécessaire non seulement pour maintenir des opérations aéroportuaires viables mais également pour stimuler le commerce, le déplacement des biens et des personnes et par conséquent le transport aérien. »

Selon Alexander Manakos, bénéficier d'infrastructures aéroportuaires qui répondent aux normes internationales de sécurité est une première prérogative. Un autre obstacle, qui ne peut être réglé que sur le plan politique, est l'évolution du cadre réglementaire dans le sens où le pays a besoin de libéraliser son espace aérien pour permettre l'accès aux compagnies aériennes. La lourdeur administrative peut évidemment bloquer les investissements étrangers, le développement commercial et la concurrence.

Le Le Soudan du Sud prévoit d'émerger sur la scène mondiale en tant que producteur indépendant de pétrole, en construisant une nouvelle aérogare à Juba. L'aéroport international de Juba (AJI) accueille les compagnies aériennes locales et internationales, le fret et les vols commerciaux. Il est également utilisé par l'armée sud-soudanaise et par les Nations Unies pour les actions dans le pays. Le terminal de passagers actuel a été construit par le Soudan pour assurer le peu de trafic entre Khartoum et le Sud. Il est composé de deux petites salles avec des procédures d'enregistrement manuelles et du pesage des bagages. Il ne dispose pas de carrousels pour les bagages. 22 compagnies aériennes du Kenya, d'Ouganda et d'Ethiopie desservent toutefois l'AJI. Les contrôles de sécurité y sont minimes en raison des fréquentes coupures d'électricité.

Chacun espère que le nouveau terminal affichera le visage moderne du Le Soudan du Sud et permettra de développer des opportunités d'affaires. Les autorités restent discrètes sur le travail accompli. Un rapport de l'agence Reuters indique que le gouvernement avait prévu d'inaugurer cette nouvelle aérogare pour les célébrations de l'indépendance en juillet 2011, mais il semble que les travaux aient été retardés suite à des problèmes liés au financement et à une mauvaise planification.

L'agence européenne de la sécurité aérienne (EUAVSEC) a déployé en octobre 2012, une mission à Juba visant à renforcer la sécurité à la demande du Le Soudan du Sud. La mission EUAVSEC est composée de 60 personnes et durera un an. Elle s'inscrit dans le cadre du soutien de l'Union européenne et de l'assistance de la communauté internationale dans le pays. L'EUAVSEC souhaite donc établir une organisation, former les services et renforcer la sûreté aérienne à l'AJI. La mission n'est pas de faire des contrôles de sécurité mais de permettre aux autorités sud-soudanaises d'avoir les capacités suffisantes pour le faire.

Selon l'EUAVSEC, le défi majeur pour le Le Soudan du Sud sera d'établir un hub pleinement opérationnel pour les activités commerciales et le transport de passagers. L'amélioration de la sécurité dans les aéroports contribuerait non seulement à lutter contre la criminalité et le terrorisme international, mais permettrait également la circulation des personnes et des biens, contribuant ainsi à stimuler le commerce.

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Selon Alexander Manakos, Le prochain défi sera d'assurer la viabilité commerciale des aéroports avec la mise en œuvre de procédures efficaces et sécuritaires avec un minimum de bureaucratie. Dans de nombreux pays en Afrique, certains services sont assurés par des prestataires en position de monopole. Ils ne parviennent pas forcément à créer une dynamique qui assure une efficacité et une qualité de service au client. Il existe toutefois des contrexemples.

Les aéroports en Afrique ont tendance également à négliger de grandes opportunités commerciales autour des aéroports comme le shopping, les parkings, la restauration qui sont des sources de revenus. Ils sont également perçus par les usagers comme des critères de qualité.

Le temps dira si le système politique et économique de ces deux pays permettra de réaliser leurs ambitions, voire leurs rêves.

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Pressure is mounting to award international status to four additional South African Airports. **Dan Brightman** *reports.*

Calling international rescue...

In May, the South African Government Gazette announced a review of applications for international status at four airports – one of them yet to be built.

Public and commercial comment was invited prior to the review although, as *African Aerospace* went to press, it was unclear how likely it would be that any of the airports would qualify.

Rand, Grand Central and Wonderboom all had customs and immigration facilities until the late 90s, when they were withdrawn by central government, which determined that only one airport per province would have this convenience.

Gauteng Province was able to retain two ports of entry, however: one at Lanseria and the other at OR Tambo International Airport.

The military also possesses a port of entry facility at the Waterkloof Air Force Base to accommodate diplomatic traffic.

Much controversy has since arisen as the Civil Aviation Authority has restricted local general aviation activities by introducing what many commentators see as unnecessary security barriers. Lanseria has been particularly hard hit, as aircraft owners have been unable to take passengers without having to apply for special clearances to enter hanger areas.

Users at Pretoria's Wonderboom Airport, Midrand's Grand Central and Johannesburg's Rand Airport are worried similar security restrictions will hamper aircraft operations at what are still relatively easy airfields to access private aircraft.

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Since municipal airport owners have embraced a tide of 'user pay' principles to escape unwelcome maintenance and administration costs, smaller airports have become exploited by property developers. Building investment has proven more lucrative than landing and parking fees.

Airport management also see the re-allocation of customs and immigration stations as a way to increase revenues from passenger handling by encouraging larger aircraft to visit. Consequently, Gauteng's non-scheduled operators, themselves frustrated by over-regulated security at the nation's busier airports, are in widespread support of port of entry facilities.

At Wonderboom Airport those hoping for a commercial lift from any changes in cross-border facilities have already begun acquiring properties adjacent to the airport. Hangar areas are enjoying a rapid expansion phase with some saying that customs and immigration is not necessary for future growth.

Lanseria Airport is in negotiations to sell to a group of government-supported enterprises headed by Harith General Partners. Those keen to develop have outlined proposed industrial property nodes said to embrace a 30km radius with Lanseria as its centre point. While it seems the airport sale deal is subject to certain conditions, the intention is easy to see: the development of industrial areas in a wide swathe to make full use of Lanseria's existing and projected airline connections.

The application for international status has also listed Nkangala Airport. This location is an, as yet, undeveloped site close to the town of Delmas, around 60km east of Johannesburg.

Wonderboom aircraft operators are split over the airport's application to restore international flights.

Les opérateurs sont partagés sur l'application de l'aéroport Wonderboom de Pretoria pour rétablir les vols internationaux.

While Delmas has always had an airfield serving its small farming and mining community, the runways have fallen into disuse. The Nkangala development has been out of the public eye since it appealed for any objections to be made by local communities in 2011. The application for customs and immigration is evidence that the project is still under way, even though OR Tambo appears to have sufficient freight and passenger capacity for the foreseeable future.

Although there was great dismay when international status was removed from three of these four airports, cross-border operators have adapted to Lanseria and OR Tambo's location and facilities.

Investing in customs and immigration stations is an expensive process in providing free office accommodation along with entry and exit halls, among many other provisions.

However, even if this review fails, international status pressure will continue to be applied for as long as income from property development and transit facilities exceeds that of providing for business and recreational aviation.

SOMMAIRE

Le statut international des aéroports sud-africains fait débat

La pression monte pour l'octroi du statut international à quatre aéroports sud-africains supplémentaires. Une enquête de **Dan Brightman**.

Le bulletin d'informations du gouvernement sud-africain a annoncé en mai dernier, un examen des demandes pour bénéficier du statut international à quatre aéroports, l'un d'entre eux restant à construire. Des avis publics et commerciaux ont été sollicités avant cet examen.

Les aéroports de Rand, Grand Central et Wonderboom bénéficiaient de l'ensemble des installations pour les formalités de douanes et d'immigration jusqu'à la fin des années 90, quand le gouvernement central a retiré les accréditations. La province de Gauteng a toutefois réussi à conserver deux accès : l'un à Lanseria et l'autre à l'aéroport international OR Tambo. Les militaires possèdent également un centre d'accès via de la base aérienne de Waterkloof pour accueillir le trafic diplomatique.

Une vive controverse est cependant apparue depuis que les autorités de l'aviation civile ont posé des limites en introduisant de nouvelles barrières de sécurité. L'aéroport de Lanseria a été particulièrement impacté, les propriétaires d'avions se sont trouvés incapables de prendre des passagers sans pouvoir formuler les autorisations spéciales. Les opérateurs des aéroports Wonderboom de Pretoria, Grand Central, Midrand et Rand de Johannesburg sont donc inquiets d'avoir des restrictions de sécurité similaires. Elles risquent d'entraver les opérations d'avions privés.

Depuis que les propriétaires d'aéroports municipaux ont adopté le principe «utilisateur-payeur», ceux-ci sont maintenant exploités par des promoteurs immobiliers. Les aéroports ont ainsi vu la réaffectation des formalités administratives d'immigration et de douanes comme un moyen d'augmenter les recettes provenant de la manutention liée aux passagers en encourageant la venue de plus gros avions.

L'aéroport Wonderboom de Pretoria a déjà commencé à acquérir des terrains adjacents à l'aéroport. Ces zones de hangars sont en expansion rapide.

Les négociations sont en cours avec un groupe d'entreprises soutenues par le gouvernement pour la vente de l'aéroport de Lanseria. Il compte développer des activités industrielles dans un rayon de 30 kilomètres autour de Lanseria.

La demande du statut international concerne également l'aéroport d'Nkangala. Il est encore peu développé et se situe à Delmas, à 60 kilomètres à l'est de Johannesburg. Malgré des pistes tombées en désuétude, le développement d'Nkangala reste sous surveillance.

Des objections ont été soulevées suite aux décisions prises par les collectivités locales en 2011. Le projet semble toujours en cours, même si l'aéroport d'OR Tambo semble avoir une bonne activité de fret et une capacité de passagers suffisante pour assurer son avenir.

Bien qu'il y ait une grande agitation sur le statut international de quatre aéroports, les opérateurs se sont adaptés à l'emplacement et à l'utilisation de Lanseria et d'OR Tambo. Investir dans des postes de douane et d'immigration est un processus coûteux. Même si cet examen ne parvient pas à son terme, la pression autour du statut international des aéroports continuera à faire polémique aussi longtemps que les revenus immobiliers et le système de transit seront supérieurs à ceux générés par l'aviation d'affaires et de loisirs.

Investir dans des postes de douane et d'immigration est un processus coûteux.

Rady Fahmy

Marcella Nethersole *speaks to the executive director of the African Business Aviation Association (AfBAA).*

1

Explain the purpose of an organisation like AfBAA.

AfBAA's purpose is to become the sole voice of business aviation's operators and suppliers on the continent of Africa. Our role is to represent and advocate on behalf of our members on issues that will allow business aviation to become an acceptable mode of transportation. We provide our members with forums to exchange experience, and networking events that help them grow their businesses. Also, we will become a link to adopt and adapt international standards. Finally, we provide our members with qualitative and quantitative data that helps them understand and better plan for the future.

2

Business aviation seems to have a way to go in Africa, so what is the role of AfBAA in changing this?

Experts agree that the African economies will see a rise in economic growth and, consequently, a rise in business aviation.

There are many challenges that could slow this growth, such as lack of adequate infrastructure, safety and security concerns, as well as diverse operational issues. As such, AfBAA advocates to governments and civil aviation authorities the benefits of focusing on this method of transportation alongside complementary transportation means, such as commercial aviation.

AfBAA also communicates with potential users and owners the advantages that business aviation provides and encourages them to use/own business aircraft.

3

What is your background and how did you get into aviation?

My educational background is economics and I hold an MBA with a specialisation in finance and entrepreneurship. Aviation always fascinated me, so I automatically jumped when the opportunity arose to help establish and manage the association from concept to a sustainable non-for-profit organisation.

4

What are the greatest challenges you face in your job and the challenges your organisation faces?

The great distances! Africa is a large continent that cuts through many time zones! Flying there is always a challenge, but that challenge always disappears when you land in yet another beautiful African city!

5

What do you think the future is for aviation as a whole in Africa?

Very bright.

The stars are aligned for growth in aviation (commercial and business) because of rapid economic growth, entrepreneurial spirit, rich resources in remote areas, large population and wide distances to cover.

6

If you weren't involved in aviation what would you want to do?

I would have truly enjoyed working in an early-stage venture capital/private equity firm with an African focus. Knowing me, I would have perhaps invested in a start-up aviation company!

> "The stars are aligned for growth in aviation because of rapid economic growth, entrepreneurial spirit, rich resources in remote areas, large population and wide distances to cover."

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