

Boeing – DDD: 160 young people to participate in employability in Aviation programme in Kenya



Nairobi, Kenya, 26 April 2024 – Boeing (NYSE: BA) and Digital Divide Data (DDD) have launched an aviation-focused employability programme for Kenyan youth. This initiative serves as a stepping stone for their future careers in aviation.

Kuljit Ghata-Aura, president of Boeing Middle East, Türkiye, Africa, and Central Asia, said: “The African aviation industry is booming. We forecast that Africa will need over 1,000 new aircraft and 69,000 aviation professionals to support that growth over the next 20 years. It is imperative we act now to prepare and inspire the future generation of aviation professionals in Africa. We are very proud to launch this impactful programme with our partners, DDD, to empower African youth to kickstart fulfilling careers in our industry”.

The Employability in Aviation programme in Kenya marks the first aviation-focused training programme by DDD and Boeing and builds on their long-term partnership. Boeing’s collaboration with DDD spans 16 years, during which they have provided job skills training to 1,000 young people in Kenya.

Sopheap Im, chief people officer at Digital Divide Data, said: “I am excited about the launch of the Employability in Aviation programme in Kenya. This initiative is a testament to our commitment to empowering the Kenyan youth by equipping them with the necessary skills and opportunities to succeed. We look forward to seeing the positive impact this programme will have on the lives of these young people and the Kenyan aviation industry”.

The Employability in Aviation programme launched in March 2024, and will continue through December. The programme consists of four cohorts. The first two cohorts completed their training in late April. This year, the programme will reach 160 high school graduates aged 18-24 from various regions of Kenya. 52% of participants are women, and more than 5% represent individuals with special needs.

Each cohort is undergoing intensive training in employability skills for two months. This includes customer service in the aviation industry, basic computer skills and knowledge of Google Suite and Microsoft Office, communication in the workplace, as well as general awareness of how artificial intelligence and machine learning are applied in aviation.

Graduates who excel will have an opportunity to secure internships or entry-level roles with aviation companies in Kenya or DDD as entry-level associates. DDD associates can obtain a certificate in the aviation field through the scholarship programme, paving the way to start a career in this dynamic sector. Kenya Airways is exploring opportunities to tailor training modules and provide internships or entry-level roles for the most successful graduates, enhancing the programme’s impact and relevance.

Allan Kilavuka, Managing Director and CEO of Kenya Airways, said: “We are dedicated to advancing Africa’s air transport capacity and capabilities. Through collaboration with Boeing and DDD, we’re tackling economic disparities by empowering young people to pursue careers in aviation.”

Ms. Maureen Kahonge, Senior Manager of Business Development and Communications at the African Airlines Association (AFRAA), said: “Aviation sustainability in Africa will largely depend on a holistic approach to actions undertaken by all relevant stakeholders. AFRAA commends Boeing and Digital Divide Data (DDD) for this programme and other initiatives aimed at supporting the next generation of aviation professionals in Africa. The development of skilled aviation workforce in Africa is one of the focus areas for AFRAA. We work closely with industry partners on initiatives to prepare the youth for aviation careers. We believe that the continent can train the youth and help them join the aviation industry which is key to driving Africa’s economic development.”

About Boeing

As a leading global aerospace company, Boeing develops, manufactures, and services commercial airplanes, defence products and space systems for customers in more than 150 countries. The company leverages the talents of a global supplier base to advance economic opportunity, sustainability, and community impact. Boeing’s diverse team is committed to innovating for the future,

leading with sustainability, and cultivating a culture based on the company’s core values of safety, quality, and integrity. Boeing’s history in Africa dates back 75 years. Boeing planes have formed the backbone of the continent’s commercial fleet.

More information at www.boeing.com

About Digital Divide Data (DDD):

Digital Divide Data (DDD) is a New York-based non-profit organisation founded in 2001 with the mission of using technology and digital skills to bridge the gap between underserved populations and employment opportunities that lead to a better future. DDD delivers training data services and machine learning data operations support services to Fortune 500 companies and the world’s leading innovators. Digital Divide Data transforms lives around the world by creating opportunities for education, training, and employment. DDD is on a mission to provide underserved youth with a path toward successful careers and a higher quality of life, while providing first-class tech services to organisations across the globe. Learn more about DDD at www.digitaldividedata.com

AFRAA SG intervention at the African Aviation MRO AFRICA on 23 April 2024 – Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

In his intervention at the African aviation MRO AFRICA on 23 April 2024 – Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Mr. Abdérahmane Berthé, AFRAA Secretary General, called upon African Airlines, MROs, and AATOs (African Aviation Training Organisations) to cooperate better and be ready to sustain the future growth of the African Air Transport market.

He highlighted that the number of aircraft operated on the African continent in the next 10 years is estimated to reach 1,429 units as the result of a growth rate of 2, 3% per year from 2024 to 2034.

As such, to operate more aircrafts, it will be critical to facilitate the access to aircraft financing for airlines and to develop MRO capacities across the continent.

“The two critical challenges for MRO activities growth to be addressed are: The Supply Chain challenge and, the Labour shortage challenge,” Mr. Berthé stated.

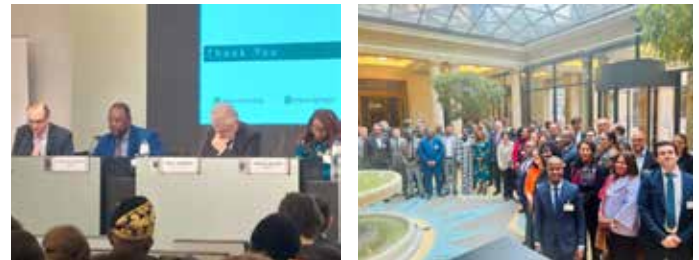
“To operate more aircraft, we need to develop human resources,” he concluded. According to Boeing global market forecast, the needs for skills in Africa from 2023 to 2042 are 22,000 engineers, 21,000 pilots, and 26,000 cabin crews.

SAATM challenges and learnings from the EU: AFRAA Secretary General Intervention at the Connecting Europe Days

AFRAA Secretary General – Mr. Abdérahmane Berthé, intervened in a panel session during the Connecting Europe Days on the Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM) on what lessons learnt from the air transport liberalisation in the EU can be useful for SAATM.

On the challenges impeding the implementation of SAATM, Mr. Berthé stated: “The air transport market in Africa is relatively small, we have seen some protectionism attitudes aiming to protect national carriers. Of course, this is a wrong approach because by nature traffic rights are reciprocal. It is therefore critical to increase the market size and facilitate its access.” To achieve this, he highlighted the following need to be addressed:

1. Affordability of air transport for African citizens: reduce cost of operations and taxes and charges;
2. African economy growth: GDP per capita (only 15% of global GDP per capita);
3. Trade and tourism development: Intra-Africa trade is below 20% compared to more than 50% in other regions. Intra-Africa tourism is very small. In Africa when we talk about tourism, we are looking to tourism from non-African regions;
4. Facilitation of air travel through visa openness is also critical. 50% of African citizens need a visa to travel within Africa;
5. Airlines' cooperation: commercial agreements and partnerships are essential to improve connectivity. AFRAA Route Network and Cargo Coordination is aimed at creating a forum for airlines to cooperate. Another success factor is airline consolidation. Over the past 18 years, the African continent has had the lowest level of market consolidation compared to the other regions in the globe. The engagement of States, airlines and all the relevant stakeholders is necessary to effectively achieve the required outcomes on airline consolidation in Africa.



This session looked into SAATM as a key to open the door for aviation to play a major role in connecting Africa, promoting its social, economic and political integration and boosting intra-Africa trade and tourism as a result.

The session gave insights into the state-of-play of the SAATM by AUC and AFCAC, and the challenges seen by other key African aviation stakeholders like AFRAA. EASA presented some key lessons learnt from the air transport liberalisation in the EU.

The event was organised by the European Commission together with the Belgian Presidency of the Council in Brussels from 2-5 April 2024.

AFRAA SG Meets ASKY CEO and stakeholders in Togo, to advance SAATM



AFRAA Secretary General, Mr. Abdérahmane Berthé, paid a courtesy visit to ASKY Airlines CEO – Mr. Esayas Woldemariam Hailu in Lomé – Togo. The discussion covered developments that have increased traction of the Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM) implementation progress,

notably the just-concluded SAATM Capacity building workshop for airlines that was organised by AFRAA in collaboration with AFCAC in Nairobi from 18-20 March 2024 and the ongoing recruitment process in Lomé of the YD/SAATM Administrative Council which was chaired by Mr. Berthé.

The Administrative Council shall be an independent body composed of 5 members from 5 African regions who shall be Legal experts. They will adopt all decisions necessary for the operation of the Dispute Settlement Mechanism and perform the operational tasks assigned to it by the Regulation. The Administrative Council shall be supported by a Secretariat that shall perform the function of Registrar as well as enforce appropriate rules and administrative procedures.

The meeting further discussed the state of the industry, developments at ASKY Airlines and forthcoming industry events including, the 12th Aviation Stakeholders Convention and the Inaugural African Aviation Safety & Operations Summit taking place from 12-15 May 2024 hosted by Ethiopian Airlines under the high patronage of the Government of Ethiopia at the Skylight Hotel in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Mr. Berthé was accompanied by Mr. Raphael Kuuchi – AFRAA Consulting Director Government, Legal & Industry Affairs.

Implementing cost-effective solution to reduce fuel costs – AFRAA Fuel Purchase Committee 2024 tender Programme on course



AFRAA Fuel Committee members converged at the AFRAA headquarters in Nairobi in March 2024 for the first round negotiation meetings for the year 2024/25 programme tender process.

Established in 2012, the AFRAA Fuel Project is the vehicle which members use to coordinate, facilitate and manage the joint purchase of fuel enabling participating airlines to reduce cost of fuel and favourable terms achieved through economies of scale. Currently there are 14 participating member airlines including:

1. Air Botswana
2. Air Burkina
3. ASKY Airlines
4. Astral Aviation
5. Camair-Co
6. Ethiopian Airlines
7. Express Air Cargo
8. Kenya Airways
9. LAM-Mozambique
10. PrecisionAir
11. RwandAir
12. South African Airways
13. TAAG-Angola Airlines
14. Uganda Airlines

The fuel programme, which runs on an annual basis, has achieved significant cost savings to the participating airlines since its establishment.

Safety first, Connectivity and Route Development, Sustainability of African airlines – AFRAA key priorities

Abdérhmane Berthé – Secretary General – AFRAA intervention at the Embraer Airline Business Seminar 2024

Mr. Abdérhmane Berthé – Secretary General – AFRAA articulated AFRAA insights in a panel discussion at the Embraer Airline Business Seminar 2024 in Cape Town – South Africa. The Seminar was held under the theme: “Accelerating Africa’s Opportunities”

Themed, “Pan-African Aviation Leadership – Beyond Borders”, the panel covered:

1. The role of various business model airlines in shaping intra-connectivity across Africa;
2. Challenges & opportunities African airlines need to navigate through;
3. Partnerships and collaborations intra-regionally and beyond Africa’s borders.

On measures to address the market challenges: cost environment, blocked funds, market access, Mr. Berthé highlighted the 3 main priorities of AFRAA for 2024 include:

- Safety first in African airlines’ operations
- Connectivity and Route Development
- Sustainability of African airlines

On airline collaboration and Consolidation in Africa which has been a trend in other continents, aimed at creating more resilient and competitive carriers, Mr. Berthé highlighted that from comparative studies that over the past 15 years, the African continent has had the lowest level of market consolidation compared to the other regions in the globe. He added that a crucial element in the success of the African airlines is consolidation and collaboration.

Some of the barriers to airline consolidation highlighted in Africa include:

- Cases of failure of Legacy merger attempts worldwide
- Aero political barriers



- Huge cross-border capital investment
- Potential need for big cost cuts and asset reallocation
- Cultural barriers

“At AFRAA, we think that the ultimate constitution of an African Airlines Alliance can benefit to airlines and passengers. Because of the current lack of cooperation amongst African airlines despite AFRAA efforts, we think that it is better to go step by step. The AFRAA Route Network and Cargo Committee addresses this. The Committee is aimed at reviewing options for network coordination and schedule harmonisation to address some of the challenges of dwindling traffic, network connectivity and schedule alignment. The Committee facilitates easier market access at minimal costs, thus generating incremental revenue, stimulating traffic growth and increasing aircraft utilisation and flights connectivity for participating airlines.” he stated.

The SAATM Capacity Building Workshop for airlines staged in Nairobi



AFRAA in collaboration in AFCAC and AUC held a SAATM Capacity Building Workshop for airlines in Nairobi from 18-20 March 2024. The Workshop was officially opened by the African Union Commission's Ag Head of Transport and Mobility – Mr. Eric Ntagengerwa.

In his intervention, AFRAA's Secretary General, Mr. Berthé thanked the AUC, the AFCAC and the UN-ECA for their efforts towards the effective enforcement of SAATM through:

- The installation of the Dispute Settlement Mechanism (DSM) secretariat in Dakar during the last quarter of 2023;
- The ongoing process of appointment of the members of the DSM Administrative Council.

"It is critical to ensure that the decisions of the future Administrative Council will be binding to all parties. Otherwise, we will still depend on the goodwill of states to implement SAATM." Mr. Berthé highlighted.

He urged stakeholders to coordinate efforts to make air travel affordable for African citizens. This is the reason for the African Aviation Industry Group (AAIG) to organise the Air Transport sustainability LAB that was hosted in Nairobi by AFRAA in June 2022. "We need to continue addressing the main challenges

which our industry is facing. Together we will be stronger." He added.

The capacity building Workshop, which is mainly on SAATM Regulatory Instruments, will be used to create awareness, and present all the regulatory text (Powers, Functions and Operations) of the Executing Agency, Consumer Protection Regulations, the Competition Regulations, the Dispute Settlement Mechanism and the revised African Civil Aviation Policy (AFCAP).

The aim was to empower operators on their rights, obligations and opportunities in a SAATM environment. The workshop also presented the Key Performance Indicators for the implementation of SAATM and encourage eligible airlines to work together to expand their intra-Africa operations.

The 3-days Workshop was held at the Kenya Civil Aviation Authority's (KCAA's), East African School of Aviation.

Workshop outcomes

1. Enhanced understanding and appreciation by the airline industry on SAATM Regulatory Instruments;
2. Enhanced understanding and appreciation by the airline industry on the Key Performance Indicators for the implementation of SAATM;

3. Shared experience by Regional Competition Authorities and Consumer Protection Associations on the Regulatory Texts of the YD/SAATM;
4. Understanding of the progress and challenges in the implementation of the YD and the approved Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for tracking the implementation of the YD and SAATM;
5. Enhanced understanding and appreciation by airline industry on the opportunities and overall benefits associated with the liberalisation of the African air transport through the YD/SAATM;
6. Promotion/Advocacy on SAATM;
7. Enhanced appreciation among Stakeholders on the need for collaboration on sustainable development of air transport in Africa through full implementation of the YD and SAATM; and

8. Enhanced awareness on the need and advantages of a harmonised YD regulatory texts environment.

Participants

- African airline CEOs, Directors, Senior Airline executives and Managers responsible for air transport regulation, industry affairs, legal, business development, marketing, network planning and operations, etc.;
- Representatives of the Regional Economic Communities (RECs);
- Regional Competition Authorities and Regional Consumer Protection Associations; and
- Representatives from key partner Institutions (AUC, ICAO, IATA, AASA, AFCFTA Secretariat).

AFRAA at the Airports Council International – ACI Africa Conference Exhibition



AFRAA exhibited at the Airports Council International – ACI Africa Conference – Alamera Hall, Air Force House in Cairo, Egypt.

The Exhibition was opened on 25 February by Mr. Mohamed Saied Mahrous – Chairman, Egyptian Holding Company for Airports and Air Navigation (EHCAAN).

AFRAA meets AFREXIMBANK



AFRAA and the African Export-Import Bank (Afreximbank) teams held a meeting on 29 February at the AFREXIMBANK headquarters in Cairo, Egypt. The purpose of the meeting was to review the implementation status of AFREXIMBANK-funded projects at AFRAA and discuss plans for 2024.

Current projects include:

- The Free Routing Airspace in Africa;
- The IOSA/ISSA Assistance Service Project aimed at enhancing safety for African airlines.

AFRAA SG intervention at ACI Africa Regional Conference in Cairo, Egypt, 26 February 2024



Mr. Abdérahmane Berthé, Secretary General of the African Airlines Association (AFRAA) participated in a panel session at the 2024 ACI AFRICA Regional conference in Cairo, Egypt on 26 February on the theme: **'Unlocking the Potential of Aviation in Africa'**.

Aviation is a core enabler of economic growth and development in Africa, connecting countries, people and goods with enhanced air connectivity, facilitating tourism and trade, and contributing to the social wellbeing and education of the communities. The panel session will examine why the aviation sector in Africa is yet to reap these benefits, being hampered by several systemic factors, including geopolitical and internal political situations, protectionism, and other restrictive policies and practices.

Mr. Berthé made emphasis on addressing the following key issues to unlock the potential of Aviation in Africa:

- Low income and low purchasing power of African citizens;
- High cost of operations / High Fares / Affordability;
- Fuel: globally, 25% average operating costs; Africa 30-40%;
- Taxes, charges and fees: higher compared to other regions;
- Market access restrictions many African states still deny traffic rights to African airlines, affecting intra-Africa connectivity;
- Ease of visa restrictions;
- – 50% of travellers need a visa before travelling;
- Release of blocked funds impacting airlines' performance.

In his intervention, Mr. Berthé further elaborated the status updates on the roadmap implementation of the first African aviation industry laboratory for the sustainability of air transport in Africa that was hosted by AFRAA in 2022.

Aviation industry stakeholders who developed the roadmap for the sustainability of the African air transport industry committed to coordinate efforts to:

1. Increase the number of fifth freedom city pairs in Africa to enhance intra-African connectivity;
2. Develop guidelines and economic regulatory framework for rationalisation of taxes, charges, and fees;
3. Achieve competitive and affordable air travel to boost trade and tourism in Africa;
4. Reduce the taxes on fuel and abolish custom duties on spare parts and aircraft in line with the relevant provisions of the ICAO Convention;
5. Streamline and automate the flight permits acquisition processes across Civil Aviation Authorities (CAAs);
6. Boost flight operation efficiency in African airspace to attain productivity gains for airlines and air navigation service providers.

Traction has been made with tangible outcomes reported on the implementation of the Free Routing Airspace in Africa ongoing trials and the increase of 5th freedom city-pars within Africa from 14.5% to 19% as at 2023.

The panel comprised of the following panelists and was moderated by Mr. Emanuel Chaves, President, ACI Africa.

1. Abdérahmane Berthé, Secretary General, African Airlines Association (AFRAA);
2. Olivier Baric, Aviation Consultant;
3. Mohamed Fala, President of El-Nakhil Tours Company;
4. Jihad Boueri, Vice President, Transformation, SITA, Middle East & Africa;
5. Mohamed Elsherbeiny, General Manager, International Offices Department – Egyptian Tourism Authority.

AFRAA Secretary General, Mr. Abdérahmane Berthé, meets with the Minister of Civil Aviation of Equatorial Guinea



Mr. Berthé met with Hon. Norberto Bartolomé Monsuy, on 15 February 2024, on the sidelines of the Future of Air Transportation Summit in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the airline industry in Central Africa and matters on air transport development at large.

AFRAA Secretary General, Mr. Abdérahmane Berthé, met with the Minister of Civil Aviation of Equatorial Guinea, Hon. Norberto Bartolomé Monsuy, on 15 February 2024, on the sidelines of the Future of Air Transportation Summit in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the airline industry in Central Africa and matters on air transport development at large.

AFRAA Signs MoU with TMAM for coordination of support for enhanced airline and airport operations in Africa



16 February 2024, Malabo – Equatorial Guinea: Airlines and airports have an interdependent relationship and a coordinated interaction is key for the air transport industry to thrive. In line with this and with the objective to develop coordinated synergies that will align efforts to enhance airport and airline operations in Africa, the African Airlines Association (AFRAA) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Terminals Malabo Airport Management (TMAM).

The MoU was signed by Mr. Abdérahmane Berthé – AFRAA Secretary General and Mr. Ahmed Al Hadabi – Group CEO of

Terminals Group at sidelines of the Future of Air Transportation Summit in Malabo – Equatorial Guinea. Under the framework of the MoU, AFRAA and TMAM will focus on the following areas of collaboration:

1. Efforts to promotion of travel and tourism within Africa;
2. Data sharing and analytics;
3. Initiatives to enhance operational efficiencies, customer service, and strategic planning;
4. Environmental sustainability;

5. Airport Infrastructure Development;
6. Training and capacity building;
7. Innovation and Technology;
8. Emergency Response and Crisis Management;
9. Special handling services;
10. Enhancement of customer service for passengers;
11. Advocacy and policy engagement.

An annual workplan shall be developed to set and track progress of activities between AFRAA and TMAM.

AFRAA highlight actions on SAATM progress at the 7th meeting of the JPAP



With the overall objective to boost intra-Africa traffic and connectivity to accelerate the implementation of SAATM, AFRAA joined key industry stakeholders at the 7th meeting of the Joint Prioritized Action Plan (JPAP) for operationalisation of the Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM). The meeting, which was organised by AFCAC, took place in Nairobi – Kenya on 9 February 2024. AFRAA shared highlight actions on SAATM progress and the 2024 plan of activities at the meeting on:

- Capacity building
- Safety
- Free Routing Airspace
- Advocacy and lobbying
- Roadmap action of the laboratory on sustainability of air transport industry

Overall, SAATM represents a strategic initiative aimed at transforming the aviation landscape in Africa, fostering greater regional integration, and unlocking the economic potential associated with improved air connectivity.

After 5 years of official launching SAATM, there is still very little commitment by some of the 38 signatory states to for the full liberalisation of aviation market on the continent including several other barriers that prevent the successful implementation of SAATM on the continent, such as lack of prioritisation of aviation by Governments, policy of protectionism, high fees and taxes, failure to facilitate/opening visas between countries, amongst several others. The purpose of the JPAP is for Africa's aviation industry stakeholders to identify and align the activities to support SAATM, namely:

- Ensuring members of the SAATM fully implement the immediate measures to effectively operationalise the Single African Air Transport Market as early as possible;
- Elaborating and executing an effective advocacy and communication strategy for more states to join the SAATM;
- Resource mobilisation and strengthening of the capacity of the African Civil Aviation Commission to effectively perform its functions as the Executing Agency of the Yamoussoukro Decision;
- Seeking technical assistance for Member States to improve the level of aviation safety and security to meet the minimum requirements of ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) and attain the global average of effective implementation level; and
- Ensuring African airlines enhance their cooperation in the operation of the Single African Air Transport Market.

Since the creation of JPAP in 2018, annual meetings are held to coordinate actions and align on tangible results that have been achieved. The 7th JPAP meeting achieved the following objectives:

1. Obtained the progress report of implementation of the 2023 SAATM Prioritized Joint Action Plan;
2. Reinforced commitment of stakeholders in supporting the development and sustainability of African Civil Aviation industry;
3. Updated 2024 SAATM Prioritized Joint Action Plan that is aligned with the Recommendations of the SAATM-PIP Airshows and the 2024 Work plan; and
4. Updated the adopted mechanism for monitoring, evaluation and reporting of the Joint Prioritized Action Plan;

Stakeholders present at the meeting included:

- Representative of the SAATM Champion
- Representative of the Chairperson of the SAATM Ministerial Working Group
- African Union Commission (AUC)
- African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC)
- Regional Economic Communities (RECs)
- African Airlines Association (AFRAA)
- United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)
- African Development Bank (AfDB)
- ICAO – HQ, WACAF, ESAF and MID Regional Offices and EURNAT
- International Air Transport Association (IATA)
- Airlines Association of Southern Africa (AASA)
- European Union/EASA
- Aircraft Manufacturers (Boeing)
- Air Navigation Services Providers
- Regional Safety Oversight Organizations (RSOOs) and Regional Aircraft Accident Incident Investigation Organizations (RAIOs).

AFRAA meets with Mr. Mohamed Daghar, the Principal Secretary of the Ministry of Roads & Transport of Kenya

AFRAA accompanied by the Kenya Association of Air Operators (KAAO Kenya), met with Mr. Mohamed Daghar, the Principal Secretary of the Ministry of Roads & Transport of Kenya, to discuss areas of close engagement for the development of the air transport sector in Kenya.

AFRAA was represented by Ms. Maureen Kahonge, Senior Manager of Business Development & Communications, and Ms. Raffaella Irie, Senior Manager of Data, Statistics & Training. Present from KAAO was the CEO, Eng. Liz Aluvanze, and Chairman, Mr. Mbuvi Ngunze.



Industry updates by AFRAA

January 2024

Somalia: Somalia has taken back control of its airspace management from Nairobi where it was airspace control was reassigned in 2018, reflecting its commitment to sovereignty and self-governance. The transition of Somalia's airspace from Class G to Class A marks a significant milestone in the country's aviation sector. The class upgrade means Somalia will now provide Air Traffic Control Services, a crucial step in enhancing safety and operational efficiency.

Zambia has adopted the use of electronic cargo manifests, a forward-looking approach aimed at modernising cargo processing and aligning with international trade standards. The move will expedite cargo handling processes, foster smoother operations, and support the objectives of the trade facilitation agreements.

A similar digitisation move in Cameroon has seen the innovative use of a 'Customs Cmr' or 'Douane Cmr' mobile app in air passenger processing. This will streamline customs procedures and embraces digital transformation in passenger handling. The result will be efficiency and convenience for both passengers and customs authorities.

Tunisia increased tourism tax for economy and business class travellers to enhance revenue generation for the tourism sector. The increase which was without consultation with industry stakeholders could negatively affect the anticipated tourist arrivals in the country.

On a positive note, Tunisia has deposited its instruments of ratification of the Montreal Protocol 2014 (MP14) with the effective date of January 2024. Tunisia has become the 47th party to MP14 which addresses jurisdictional gaps that allow unruly and disruptive passengers to avoid prosecution. AFRAA encourages all African states to ratify this protocol as a deterrent to unruly behaviour on flights and at airports.

In January 2024 a meeting was held in Cologne to address challenges related to GPS spoofing. The event emphasised the importance of pilot training highlighted ongoing commitment of the global aviation community to addressing emerging threats posed by spoofing. Balancing the adoption of newer technologies with considerations for evolving security challenges remains a critical aspect of ensuring the resilience and sustainability of the aviation sector. Collaboration and information-sharing are essential to navigating the complexities of the current aviation landscape.

March 2024

ATNS in South Africa implemented the revised Air Traffic Service Charges, effective 1 May 2024. These charges were reviewed and approved by the regulator.

A proposed \$20 per passenger fee at Kotoka International Airport (KIA) in Accra, Ghana to cover airport maintenance works and baggage belt repairs, without following due process attracted condemnation by operators and the industry. While there is a need for investment in infrastructure to meet growing demand, AFRAA advocates strict adherence by all service providers to the stipulated ICAO principles contained in DOC9082. Following intervention by the parliament of Ghana, levying of the proposed fee has been suspended.

Airplanes Africa Limited's (AAL) has achieved a commendable feat by assembling the first Skylander 600 aircraft in Tanzania. This could mark the beginning of Africa's venture into aircraft assembly and components manufacture.

Uganda has reaffirmed its commitment to signing the Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM) solemn commitment. If done, this will bring to 39 the African State that have committed to opening up their markets. Similarly, internal discussions are ongoing in Tanzania on their commitment to SAATM. If the two countries join, EAC will boast a big domestic market for air travel. Open skies will boost intra-African connectivity, drive down airfares, and stimulate air traffic and revenue growth across the continent as well as create jobs.

Sierra Leone CAA's Consumer Protection Unit has reached out to her ECOWAS partners in the Consumer Protection industry to harmonise the positions to safeguard the sub-region consumer interest in civil aviation. Striking a balance between protecting passenger rights and ensuring sustainable air services is crucial for a healthy aviation industry.

Ecuador has made positive strides with a new Tourism Law which eliminates currency repatriation tax and to reduce the 5% jet-fuel tax by 1% annually over the next 5 years. The African Continent can emulate this gradual tax reduction model of Ecuador to reduce some of the burdensome taxes that are hampering aviation development on the continent.

ICAO and the Aviation Working Group (AWG) are collaborating to enhance cross-border aircraft transferability by promoting compliance with the Cape Town Convention. This will improve efficiency and safety in the aircraft leasing and financing sector and AFRAA commends the 2 organisations for the initiative.