

Chartering new territories through aviation

The Air Traffic Navigation Services (ATNS) plays a critical role in innovation, aviation, safety and economic growth, not only to South Africa, but also to the continent as a whole.



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According to the International Air Transport Association (IATA), Africa will be one of the fastest-growing aviation regions over the next 20 years, with annual expansion averaging nearly 5%. This ultimately means that, if nurtured, incredible economic opportunities await the continent's 54 nations.

Statistics show that, currently, the aviation industry already supports some 6.9 million jobs and \$80 billion (about R1.2 trillion at R15.67/\$) of the economic activity on the African continent comes from transporting approximately 70 million passengers annually.



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Lee Mwititi 31 Jan 2018



Potential to be a catalyst for growth

The aviation industry has the potential to be a catalyst for much greater growth in the African economy. The world is looking to the fourth industrial revolution and South Africa can't avoid or escape it.

As an organisation heavily embedded in innovation, engineering and information technology, ATNS is focused on developing and creating a local independent economy for the aviation industry.

The South African Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and ATNS SOC Ltd signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on 9 May 2017 to collaborate on a national multi-static passive radar facility. The organisations will join forces to establish a technology base that will be utilised to establish solutions in partnership with local industry.

The CSIR has a research and development programme aimed at developing a national multi-static passive radar capability and will be collaborating with ATNS to characterise the performance of the system.



African aviation development conference heads to Cape Town

29 Jan 2018



Passive radar, also known as passive coherent location or commensal radar, is a class of radar that makes use of third-party transmitters, for example, public broadcasting services such as FM radio, to illuminate a platform of interest and accordingly locate and track the platform by processing the reflected signals of the platform.

This technology has several advantages such as cost-effectiveness; no radio frequency spectrum license or transmission required; target and tracking of non-cooperative aircraft or naval platforms; and it is suitable for both small and large airfields for improved airspace safety, and areas with congested spectrum.

Third African Symposium on Human Factors and Aviation Safety (ASHFAS 2017) was held at the Birchwood Hotel and Conference Centre in September 2017. The symposium focused on safety factors from the informal economy workers in rural Eastern Cape, to the bustling runways of OR Tambo International Airport.

ATNS as an organisation has always prided itself on having a pro-active culture – especially when it comes to safety. Through the application of human factors and ergonomics principles, incompatibilities within work systems can be better understood. ATNS, in partnership with the Ergonomics Society of South Africa, University of the Witwatersrand, Rhodes University, and the University of Pretoria, additionally hosted the Thirteenth Ergonomics Society of South Africa Conference and the First Ergo Africa Conference during this period.

Continued emphasis innovation through collaboration

It is pertinent to ATNS's mandate that it continues to place an emphasis on innovation through collaboration. ATNS and the CSIR want to foster relationships that enhance technological innovation and excellence within the air traffic management sector. ATNS will be providing guidance and leadership for the development of solutions that are suited for the civil aviation environments that will ultimately further promote safety in the African airspace.

The AVI Afrique Summit, held in October 2017 was all about enhancing aviation sustainability of the African market within the global space. It was held under the theme "In Africa. For Africa. By Africa." The summit also had a core focus on the participation of the small medium and micro enterprises (SMME) in the aviation market and see this sector as a considerable contributor to economic development and growth. Collaboration between the major original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) and SMMEs in African countries was also explored in order to understand how this could contribute to the development of local products/technologies that meet Africa's environmental challenges.

As such, the summit seeks to explore infrastructure development and participation of the small medium and micro

enterprises (SMME) in the aviation market to contribute to economic development and growth.



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Chinedu Eze 25 Jan 2018



Additionally, the AVI Awards created a platform that brought in great ideas and assisted innovators in turning their innovations into commercially viable products or services. ATNS is at the 'ideation stage' and want to create a pipeline of relevant aviation-related innovation ideas that seek to address the challenges faced by the aviation industry and also look at improving on existing aviation technologies, services and products.

As the sole provider of air traffic management, communication, surveillance, navigation, and training, ATNS manages 10% of the world's airspace and is focused on providing a safe airspace and orderly, expeditious and efficient management of air traffic management services.

2017 was a year of creating strategic partnerships and building inter-African relationships for the strengthening of the local aviation industry. It is, but a small step to realising the full potential that this continent can achieve and ATNS will continue to foster and nurture collaboration and innovation through 2018.

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