



Friday, 24 October 2025

MEDIA STATEMENT

ATNS making good progress to stabilise and rebuild

Air Traffic and Navigation Services (ATNS) SOC Ltd today reported significant progress in stabilising operations and rebuilding core capacity following the adoption of the Committee of Experts' recommendations earlier this year. The Minister of Transport, Barbara Creecy, appointed the Committee in December 2024.

ATNS Acting CEO Matome Moholola clarified that recent media reports that there is a huge exodus of critical skills, especially air traffic controllers at the entity, were based on last year's financial year reporting cycle, which does not capture strategic initiatives taken since December 2024.

Maintaining flight procedures

Moholola reported that progress continues in restoring and validating instrument flight procedures across the network and secondary airports supported by new design capacity and closer coordination with the South African Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA).

He said all flight procedures have been maintained at network airports, except for 1 procedure still outstanding at Chief Dawid Stuurman International Airport.

The procedure and charts have been approved by the SACAA and will be effective on 27 November 2025.

The entity also provided a status update on regional airports as follows:

- 1) The instrument approach procedure for Kruger Mpumalanga International Airport has been approved by SACAA and it is available for operational use.**
- 2) The charts and procedures at Bloemfontein and Kimberley have been approved by the SACAA and will be effective on 27 November 2025.
- 3) Instrument flight procedures for Richard's Bay, Upington and Polokwane airports are expected to be effective on 25 December 2025.

In addition, 181 enroute procedures have been maintained, of which 169 have been approved by SACAA.

Good progress has been made to bolster ATNS Flight Procedure Design capacity. A project management unit has been established and is currently being staffed by international resources. Furthermore, international flight procedure designers are expected to start on 1 December 2025. Seven ATNS flight procedure designers are at different stages of training and should be in their seats by 2026 and 2027.



Strengthening Human Capital

ATNS has ramped up the intake of air traffic services, bursary pipeline numbers and its recruitment initiatives that include the recruitment of ATCs and other critical skills locally and globally. To date, the air traffic control pool in Johannesburg and Cape Town has increased by 25 additional validated controllers since February 2025. Additional validations are currently underway in Johannesburg and Cape Town.

These measures are delivering results. At OR Tambo International (FAOR), staffing has increased to 70%. Notwithstanding this, there are challenges in certain of the air traffic pools, and work continues to close the gap, with recruitment of air traffic controllers globally continuing. At Cape Town International (FACT), staffing has increased to 82%.

Upgrading Critical Infrastructure

Major system upgrades are advancing to ensure safe and efficient airspace management.

The ATNS Board has to date approved R1 billion for system modernisation projects.

Contracts are in place or at advanced stages for the following key programmes:

- 1) National Air Traffic Management System (TopSky®)
- 2) Arrivals management (Maestro®)
- 3) New Air Traffic Flow Management System
- 4) Modernisation of CNS Systems (Communication, Navigation and Surveillance (CNS) systems, including datalinks and voice switching

Enhancing Safety and Regulatory Compliance

The Aviation Safety Office is now 78% staffed up from 28% earlier this year. Safety investigations and findings have been fully closed out.

Ensuring Accountability and Delivery

The ATNS Board and Executive Management remain committed to rebuilding operational resilience, strengthening governance and restoring confidence in South Africa's air traffic management system.

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