

**THE 10th SADC VSAT II SUPERVISORY BOARD MEETING  
ZAMBEZI SUN - LIVINGSTONE, ZAMBIA  
24th & 25th MARCH 2014**

**1. Opening and Welcome**

The outgoing Chairperson, Mr. Iswarduth Pokhun of Mauritius Department of Civil Aviation opened the 10th SADC VSAT Supervisory Board meeting and thanked all SADC VSAT II member States for their attendance. He further acknowledged the VSAT project upgrade is of paramount importance in addressing the interconnectivity and seamless integration of ATM/CNS systems in the SADC region.

The chairperson handed over to Mr Frank Chinambu of Zambia National Airports Corporation Limited to welcome all delegates to Livingstone, Zambia as the host country.

**2. Election of the SADC Supervisory Board Chairperson**

Mr. Iswarduth Pokhun of Mauritius Department of Civil Aviation handed over the Chairmanship to Mr. Candido Sequeira of Aeroportos de Mozambique EP as next in line on the 10<sup>th</sup> Supervisory Board meeting. However, for technical assistance Mr Candido Sequeira requested to be assisted by Mr Tobias Gunzel of Namibia.

**3. Secretariat**

Mr. Dumisani Sangweni of ATNS, South Africa served as secretariat for the board meeting.

**4. Attendance**

The 10th SADC VSAT II Supervisory Board meeting was attended by the following member states and institutions;

**States;**

- ✓ Angola
- ✓ Botswana
- ✓ Lesotho
- ✓ Mauritius
- ✓ Mozambique
- ✓ Namibia
- ✓ Rwanda
- ✓ South Africa
- ✓ Swaziland
- ✓ Tanzania
- ✓ Zambia
- ✓ Zimbabwe

**Service providers;**

- ✓ IATA
- ✓ ATNS

A list of delegates who attended the SADC VSAT II Supervisory Board meeting is attached as Annexure A.

**5. Apologies**

The following member States and institutions did not attend the meeting;

- Burundi (Apology received)
- DRC (Apology received)
- Malawi (Apology received)
- ICAO (Apology received)

**6. Adoption of Agenda**

The agenda items were amended as follows;

- The review of APIRG /19 conclusions of relevance to SADC VSAT II was taken out as ICAO was not present in the meeting for presentation.

- The Interconnection and Interoperability of SADC VSAT II with Neighboring networks merged with the Operation, Maintenance and Performance of the network.
- The Outcome of World Radio Conference (WRC) 15 was amended to read as Proposal on WRC 15.
- The following items were added to the agenda;
  - Presentation on Addendum to Bilateral agreement.
  - Presentation on AMHS Trials progress report.
  - Missing Flight Plans
  - Flight Plan 2012 update.

The agenda together with list of working papers is attached to the minutes as Annexure B and Annexure C respectively.

## **7. Matters Arising**

### **7.1 Operation, Maintenance and performance of the Network (WP/1)**

The point of note was that the successful maintenance of the system was achieved through the continuous commitment and assistance of the relevant States. The ongoing training of engineers on the VSAT system and equipment proved to be successful in raising the skills level of the participating technical and engineering members in the SADC region. As a result the interaction of ATNS staff and the States engineers yielded positive returns in ensuring minimized corrective maintenance trips and thus offering cost advantages to the network.

Whilst the meeting noted good progress related to the customs clearance and releasing of equipment and spares, some isolated instances were reported where it is still a lengthy process. These States require the

involvement of a local shipping agent for the clearance of equipment and thus resulting in increased costs and further causing delays in releasing the equipments and spares.

ATNS also reported an increase in the occurrences reported to Fault Reporting Centre (FRC) which were a result of RFT, IDU and MEMOTEC failures. The meeting raised concerns that the trend for failures for the following units have increased;

- RFT
- RF switches
- UPS
- Multiplexer and IDU resets

ATNS continues to improve availability through contracting with Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEM) in efforts to increase capacity, decrease turnaround time and ensuring the availability of identified spares.

The SADC VSAT II Network performance for the period April 2013 - January 2014 was as follows:

- AFTN availability: 99.82%
- ATS/DS availability: 99.77%
- Network availability: 99.89%

Statistics on level 1 to 4, as required by ICAO, were presented and discussed. The capturing of level 1 to 3 is being done by the service provider and template will be distributed for the accurate capturing of level 4 statistics by States. Annexure D.

States are urged to report all SADC network faults to the ATNS FRC on + 2711 9286477 or frc@atns.co.za and to copy to the Satellite Manager ruip@atns.co.za.

The network availability statistics can be obtained from ATNS website: [www.atns.co.za](http://www.atns.co.za). The access password will be sent to member States by 31 March 2014.

### **Action 7/1**

- a) ATNS to distribute level 4 templates to the States by 31 March 2014.
- b) States to submit level 4 statistics to ATNS on a monthly basis before the 10<sup>th</sup> of the following month for submission to ICAO.
- c) ATNS to distribute a list of items used in the relevant State in order for those States to approach their authorities to seek approval and facilitate the clearance and releasing of equipments and spares through customs by 30 April 2014.
- d) The States to supply ATNS with the relevant procedures in respect of shipping and clearance in the respective States by 31 July 2014.
- e) ATNS to send the access password to the States by 31 March 2014.

### **7.2 Update on the status of the upgrade of the network (WP/2)**

The brief on the SADC VSAT II upgrade reiterated the critical objective and intention of ensuring long term sustainability of the network for effective provision of air traffic management (ATM) services and enabling interconnectivity with neighboring NAFISAT and AFISNET networks.

The APRIG 19 meeting held in Dakar commended the extension of the SADC VSAT II network as a significant achievement and milestone.

The original upgrade that was presented at the 9<sup>th</sup> SADC VSAT II supervisory board meeting was based on the IDU 7000. In view of the developments by NDSATCOM it was proposed that the new upgrade be based on the SkyWan 5G modem, thus enabling the capability of operating IP based applications more efficiently in future. The acquisition process for the upgrade has commenced with the anticipated award of contract to begin in July 2014 and scheduled for completion in May 2015.

### **Decision 7/1:**

The subsequent use of the SkyWan 5G modem was approved by the board on condition that the expenditure will not exceed the approved budget.

### **Action 7/2:**

ATNS and Swaziland Civil Aviation Authority (SWACAA) to commence discussions regarding the relocation of the VSAT terminal to the new King Mswati III International Airport, during the upgrade of the network.

### **7.3 Proposal on WRC 15 as relevant to Registration of Earth Stations (WP/3)**

The critical element of this working paper was the registration of the VSAT earth stations and frequencies with the relevant States Authorities as a critical component in providing safety of life services in the region.

Furthermore, ATNS highlighted that the C-Band frequencies are used by satellite- 6 GHz (5.850 - 6.425 GHz) for transmissions to the satellite (uplink) and 4 GHz (3.625 - 4.2 GHz) for transmission from the satellite to the receiving earth station (downlink). The responsibility resides with the member States, the preliminary investigation indicated that very low services have been registered by the States and thus registration is critical.

It was emphasized that the registration of the earth station and frequencies with the national authorities is important in view of the forthcoming WRC 15 in order to be able to protect the spectrum in the 4 GHz (3.625 - 4.2 GHz) C-band for VSAT and fixed satellite use.

### **Action 7/3**

- a) The states to ensure that the VSAT earth stations and frequencies used are registered by 30 June 2014.
- b) The States to facilitate with their States Authorities to lobby for the protection of the spectrum at the WRC 15 conference.

#### **7.4 Financial Statements 2013/14 (budget 2014/15)**

The financial statements for fiscal year 2013/14 were presented to reflect performance of the network in economic terms. The board acknowledged the performance as satisfactory.

The board approved the fiscal year 2014/15 budget which reflects a slight boost in the revenue due to the expected increase in the FIR crossings of 2.5%. The aggregate expenditure showed a 9.9% increase as a result of provisions for the upgrade of the SADC VSAT II network. Additional foreign exchange gains were also realized.

The tariff coefficient remained constant at \$9.60 per FIR crossing.

#### **Decision 7/2**

The board approved the budget for FY 2014/15 as presented.

#### **7.5 Addendum to Bilateral Agreement (Presentation)**

ATNS mentioned that the current SADC VSAT II network main agreement expires on 31 March 2014 which would imply that either an extension of the main agreement by means of an addendum or a new bilateral agreement is warranted. The board adopted the former option by citing the ease of finalization and reduced turnaround times as the critical elements in ensuring the sustainability and continuity of the network is protected and not compromised.

In this back drop, ATNS presented a roadmap which entailed the following;

- Addendum of extension
- Letter to be attached to the addendum and would highlight;
  - The reasons for seeking extension
  - Period of extension
  - Reference to the new bilateral agreement

- Consequences of not signing the addendum

#### **Actions 7/4**

- a) ATNS to send the addendums to the States by 31 March 2014.
- b) States to sign the addendums by 31 July 2014.
- c) ATNS to send new bilateral agreements by 31 July 2014.
- d) States to sign the new bilateral agreements by the 11<sup>th</sup> SADC VSAT II Supervisory Board meeting taking place in March 2015.

#### **7.6 AMHS Trials Progress Report (Presentation)**

The 2013 trials utilizing the IDU 7000 platform between server and client environment showed the ability to download messages, files and attachments. The observations indicated that the test were successful to an extent that the priority level on the TCP/IP services would be managed as such that the application proved to be comparable to normal Ethernet speed.

The next phase of trials will take place between Johannesburg operational system and test and evaluation system on IDU 7000 platform thereafter the tests would be conducted with respective States.

#### **Conclusion 7/1**

- a) In the light that Zambia is IP ready and have AMHS system in place, they agreed to conduct AMHS trials with JHB.
- b) Audit of States AMHS readiness during the site survey of the SADC VSAT II upgrade.
- c) Other States may contact ATNS directly for testing.

#### **7.7 Missing flight plans (IP)**

ATNS presented an information paper outlining some challenges on missing flight plans. While the focus of the paper was from a South African content and context the challenges were widespread and relevant for the States. The



issue was flagged as critical on the premise that the statistics are showing an exacerbated situation.

### **Action 7/5**

- a) The board is making a request to ICAO through the ICAO representative to establish and formalize a task force in order to investigate with particular emphasis on the missing flight plans.
- b) The States to also report the issue to AFCAC for added assistance.

### **7.8 FPL 2012 update**

ATNS provided feedback report on the results of the implementation of FPL2012 upgrades relevant to SADC VSAT II States. It was reported that according to tests conducted at FAOR in June 2013 to Dec 2013, an average of almost 99.70% of all Flight Plans originating from SADC VSAT II States are in FPL2012 format.

### **Conclusion 7/2**

The issue has been finalized and will not be required to be presented in the upcoming board meetings.

### **8. Any other business**

There was no other business that the meeting raised.

### **9. Approval of record of meeting**

The records of the meeting were approved.

### **10. Date and venue of next meeting**

The 11th SADC VSAT II Supervisory Board meeting will take place in March 2015. The following States tentatively accepted hosting the next board

meeting pending approvals from respective Authorities and are such reflected in order of priority;

- a) Namibia
- b) Botswana
- c) Tanzania

#### **11. Closure of meeting**

The chairman adjourned the 10<sup>th</sup> SADC VSAT II Supervisory Board meeting at 11h: 45.