



NEWSLETTER
Jan - Feb, 2019 Issue

AESATA NEWS

Message from CEO

Dear AESATA Members,

New year greetings from Nairobi. Hope you've started on a high.



I am pleased to inform you that as the interim Secretariat of AESATA, we have committed 2019 as the year to breathe life into the regional Association. This is critical for two reasons;

1. All African countries will be migrated to IATA NEWGEN ISS by end of the year. This will require a lot of information and experience sharing to ensure we are learning from each other and supporting our respective memberships appropriately.

2. It marks one year since AESATA was formally registered and the regulators will be expecting us to start filing returns of our engagements.

I would like to draw your attention to the following issues that will help us record quick successes within a short period of time:

1. In preparation for a busy year, last year we began asking you for information that will assist us in developing a website that will be critical in disseminating information as well as announcing our digital presence. I kindly request that you share with us the information about your Association.

2. We have consequently, created a WhatsApp group consisting of senior officials of respective Associations that we hope will help us communicate and coordinate us in a timely and efficient manner. Kindly do share with me your WhatsApp contact for purposes of adding you to the group. My number is +254722376224.

3. As KATA we plan to bring on board an intern/volunteer that will assist us in coordinating issues related to AESATA of course in addition to our own staff support that we had committed at the beginning. With this kind of assistance we are confident that AESATA will move a little faster.

4. Hopefully in the course of the year, we shall be inviting you for the first AGM as required by the Kenyan law. Dates will be communicated after consultation with the leadership.

Finally, I am aware that some members have raised concerns regarding the membership fee invoices we send last year. Even though, this is what was agreed at the last AESATA meeting, of importance at this point in time is building the Association and creating value proposition for your respective members. As the common African proverb says, "little by little, a little becomes a lot," I would urge you not to be deterred by the fees but commit to support and participate in the Association in whatever little way possible.

AESATA Progress



AESATA Website

We have procured website developers to work on the AESATA website which should be done by end of March 2019 including test runs. As you've noticed we have been requesting some information from your respective associations, and may request for more information as the website development is ongoing. Kindly assist where applicable.

AESATA Social Media Pages

We have created social media pages for AESATA.

- Facebook: Aesata
- Instagram: AESATA_Africa
- Twitter: AESATA

AESATA Email Address

We have set up an email address info@aesata.org for any general communication.

Upcoming Events

AESATA AGM - 7th September, 2019

Industry Events

Travel Technology Europe -
20th-21st Feb, 2019

Meetings Africa -
26th - 27th Feb, 2019

ITB Berlin -
6th - 10th March, 2019

WTM Africa -
10th - 12th April, 2019

Africa Travel Indaba -
7th - 9th April, 2019

World Travel Market London -
4th - 6th Nov, 2019

INDUSTRY NEWS

SAA reinstates flights to Blantyre

South African Airways (SAA) advises customers that the airline will resume operations between Johannesburg and Blantyre, Malawi on Saturday, 2 February 2019.

The resumption of operations follows the conclusion of audit and inspection processes at the Chileka International Airport in Blantyre relating to the condition of that airport.



SAA suspended its operations on 18 January after it emerged that the state of the airport did not fully comply with conditions set out in its operating license.

“We are pleased that we are able to reinstate flights between the two points (Johannesburg and Blantyre) following the implementation of our corrective action plan. The plan was a battery of remedial interventions aimed at curing or responding to the audit findings,” said SAA Spokesperson, Tlali Tlali.

SAA operates a three weekly service between Johannesburg and Blantyre (Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays).

South African Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA) notified SAA on Friday afternoon that the regulator is satisfied with the measures taken to respond to the situation at the airport in Blantyre.

“We are grateful to all our partners and stakeholders, including the Malawian Ministry of Transport and the municipality, for collaboration, commitment and understanding as we worked towards resolving the situation as speedily as possible.

“We appreciate the guidance of the regulator to ensure that the condition of the airport now meets our licensing conditions for SAA to operate,” said Tlali.

The following flights will operate as per schedule:

Saturday

SA172 – 2 February 2019 | Johannesburg to Blantyre

SA173 – 2 February 2019 | Blantyre to Johannesburg

“We truly apologise to our passengers and customers for the inconvenience caused by the suspension of services for the last two weeks. Safety of our passengers and crew will always remain paramount in our operations,” Tlali concluded.

All customers who had elected to rebook their flights will be assisted based on the re-accommodation policy conditions that were published at the time when the cancellation of flights was announced.

Customers who have enquiries may contact SAA on the following Call Centre numbers:

South Africa

- Johannesburg | +27 (0) 11 978 1111 or 0861 606 606

SAA will make the necessary decisions in response to demand and to clear any possible backlog as a result of the suspension of flights between Johannesburg and Blantyre.

Source: <https://insidetravel.news/saa-reinstates-flights-to-blantyre/>

Proflight temporarily suspends service between Lusaka and Harare

Proflight Zambia has temporarily suspended its service between Lusaka and Harare with effect from January 29. The airline expects to resume flights from March 1.

“We regret to announce that due to the current situation in Zimbabwe and ongoing challenges with the repatriation of funds from Zimbabwe we are temporarily suspending our Lusaka/ Harare route effective 29 January until 1 March. All passengers will be refunded in full for tickets purchased for travel during this period,” said Proflight’s Director of Government and Industry Affairs Capt. Philip Lemba.

Source: <https://insidetravel.news/proflight-temporarily-suspends-mthatha-flights/>

Ethiopian to restructure its US network

Ethiopian Airlines will re-structure its U. network, opening new destinations, adding frequencies and shifting gateways as of the summer of 2019.

The new US network is aimed at giving passengers travelling between the US and all over Africa the best possible connectivity and shortest routes, whether they are travelling for leisure, business or government work.

Accordingly, Washington DC flights will be increased from current daily to ten weekly flights. The new additional three flights will pass thru Abidjan departing from Addis Ababa in the morning and arriving in Washington D.C. in the evening. The current three weekly flights to Chicago will be increased to five weekly flights.

From the planned daily flights to New York, four will be served via Lomé to Newark and three will be via Abidjan to JFK airport. Lastly, there will be a new gateway, Houston, which will replace Los Angeles, and will be served three times per week via West Africa.

The new Houston flights will be the only connection between Houston and Africa and will facilitate the travel of the huge African community in the Houston area, and oil and other companies doing business in the continent. Flights will be served with latest technology aircraft, the Boeing 787, which offers unparalleled on-board comfort.

Regarding the route restructuring, Group CEO of Ethiopian Airlines, Tewolde GebreMariam, remarked, “The U.S. is among our most important markets owing to the presence of a large African community and growing business and tourism ties with Africa. Our new route structure with additional frequencies to multiple gateways and the opening of new route to Houston are aimed at responding to the market demand and availing best possible connectivity to over 60 African destinations.



Africa’s leading carrier, Ethiopian Airlines, has been expanding its international destinations which have now reached more than 119. Manchester, Moscow and Mogadishu are just some of the new destinations the airline launched recently.

Source: <https://insidetravel.news/ethiopian-to-restructure-its-us-network/>

Jet Airways to be available on Sabre and Travelport Only

Indian based carrier Jet Airways has announced that effective 1st April, 2019 it will only be available on Sabre and Travelport GDS's.

In a letter circulated to travel agents, Senior Vice President- Global Sales and Distribution Raj Sivakumar says, "as you are well aware we are operating in one of the world's most dynamic, rapidly evolving with fast-growing travel marketplaces, and have been continually evolving our ways of working. In line with the above, I am writing to share a strategic initiative Jet Airways has implemented in its global distribution strategy which will come into effect from 01 April 2019". On the effective date, the letter further states "Jet Airways content will be available only via Sabre and Travelport."



According to Sivakumar, this move will facilitate the airline's transition from a commodity-based model driven solely by price, to a more dynamic and merchandising – focused model designed to unlock the value of Jet Airways' products and services. All fares available on jetairways.com will also be available through the GDS's.

Source: <http://www.katakenya.org/news/492>

Kenya Airways launches flights to Rome, Geneva

Kenya Airways (KQ) will launch new routes to Rome and Geneva starting June this year as the airline seeks to expand its base and cash in more revenue in the wake of heightened competition from other players.



The national carrier is targeting travellers visiting this European countries for both leisure and business trips.

The airline will deploy its 787 Dreamliner four time a week to cover the new routes that is already dominated by their respective airlines such as the Geneva based Swissair, which flies the East African route.

Tickets will be available for sale beginning Tuesday, January 22, 2019 with an introductory price on offer until February 15 of USD 699 from Nairobi to either city.

"The addition of flights to Rome and Geneva will be welcomed by both our leisure and business customers," says KQ chief executive Sebastian Mikosz.

'Global city'

"Rome with its status of a 'global city' is also rich with history and culture making it one of the top tourist destination in the world while Geneva hosts the highest number of international organisations in the world such as the United Nations (UN), making it a global hub for diplomacy," he added.

Mr Mikosz said Geneva is a perfect complement for Nairobi, which is also Africa's hub for UN headquarters among other international agencies.

Kenya Airways has previously operated flights to Rome. With the resumption of this route and the addition of Geneva, this will bring Kenya Airways European destinations to five and 55 worldwide.

“With this route, Kenya Airways will offer excellent connections from these two cities to its 43 destinations in Africa for business, diplomatic missions, and tourism,” said the CEO. CEO Sebastian Mikosz said that the decision to adjust the route’s frequency is purely strategic

Source: <https://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/business/KQ-to-fly-to-Geneva-relaunches-Rome-flights/2560-4945698-15a4mtb/index.html>

Museveni pushes team to launch Uganda Airlines

Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni has intervened in the Uganda Airlines saga after the launch date was pushed back by a further two months.

Sources say President Museveni called for a meeting in an attempt to heal a widening rift between the airline’s interim board and the implementation team as it is stalling progress.

Initially slated to launch in April, the carrier’s start date has now been pushed to June, after key milestones such as securing an Air Operators Certificate (AOC) — which is contingent on having key post holders in place — were missed.

Five in total, the key posts, which include chief pilot, director of operations and director of maintenance, are responsible for compliance with the terms of the AOC at the airline level.

The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) cannot issue an AOC in the absence of those office holders and in turn an aircraft cannot be registered to the airline unless it holds an AOC.

The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) cannot issue an AOC in the absence of those office holders and in turn an aircraft cannot be registered to the airline unless it holds an AOC.

This has impacted aircraft delivery and, at one point, registering them under the government’s name was considered as a stopgap measure.

New slots

The EastAfrican has learnt that initial slots for training pilots at manufacturer Bombardier’s facility in Montreal, Canada, were missed and new slots are now being sought at alternative facilities in the US and Europe.

Uganda Airlines will need 36 pilots for its four Bombardier jets and training slots had been secured for September, October and November.

Talk of a revised launch date was confirmed by chief executive of Uganda Airlines Ephraim Bagenda last week.

Speaking at a press conference at the Ministry of Works and Transport on Wednesday, Mr Bagenda said the launch of commercial services had been moved from April to June.

Delivery of aircraft was scheduled to start this month, with the first handover of a CRJ 900 jet now pushed to February 23. This will be followed by others in March, July and September.

Defer delivery

Sources say that, embarrassed by the prospect of idle aircraft parked at the Entebbe International Airport, the interim board wanted to defer delivery to a later date — since they are being blamed for occasioning the delays in the project.

The move was opposed by the management team, which was concerned about the high demurrage costs if the aircraft were to be kept at the manufacturer’s facilities.

The delays are being blamed on the interim board — which is made up mostly of by civil servants — missing targets such as recruitment and training of pilots, and installing key position holders.



TRAVEL TECH

WTTC partners with IBMATA to promote biometric technology for seamless travel

Although September 2018 was the deadline for concluding recruitment, the 10-man board is being accused of laxity after interviewing only four candidates in a day.

While the management team wanted the board to only interview for the top positions, they have insisted on interviewing for all cadres of workers.

Although the interviews for all positions were completed, delays have been occasioned by the need to have pilots validated and security clearances obtained. Validation was done in Nairobi, but security vetting has not been completed for pilots and other key positions.

The delays are proving to be frustrating and, now, sources say a highly billed candidate who had been headhunted from the US for a technical position has instead been poached by the CAA.

A concerned Bombardier, which has had to seek new training slots at facilities in the USA and France for the Uganda Airlines pilots, has in recent weeks also put pressure on the implementation team, calling for weekly meetings to track the progress on the aircraft delivery matrix.

Efforts to reach interim board chair Captain Gad Gatsura were unsuccessful.

Key milestone

Separately, the implementation team achieved a key milestone when the MoU signed with Airbus for two A330-800Neos last June was converted into a firm commitment at the end of December.

“The MoU was due to expire on December 23 and we were told that if we did not make a commitment by that date, we would lose an \$800,000 deposit and there would also be cost escalation,” said a source familiar with the matter.

Delivery slots would also have been missed. The government is understood to have made top-up payments towards the purchase last month, but we could not establish the amount.

Airbus released its 2018 sales and production figures on January 9, but the Uganda Airlines order is not reflected.

Airbus declined to comment on the purchase, only saying, “We are making good progress towards concluding that transaction.”

Source: <https://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/business/Yoweri-museveni-pushes-team-to-launch-uganda-airlines/2560-4933018-4voegg/index.html>

The World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) has partnered with the International Border Management and Technologies Association (IBMATA) to promote secure and seamless international travel using new and emerging technology that also enhances border security.

WTTC represents the private sector of travel and tourism. Under its Seamless Traveler Journey vision biometrics work at every touchpoint of the passenger journey to make travelling easier while providing border services with greater security. The first series of pilots in the initiative that were announced last October have all airline security, airport, and border processes performed with the same biometric information. Travel and tourism sector stakeholders, including airlines, airports, hospitality, cruise, car rental, and tour operators will jointly test interconnect technologies in an effort to improve traveler experiences.

With this partnership both organizations have committed to making the best use of new and emerging technology and established border management principles with their respective members to deliver an improved international passenger experience globally across borders.

“Travel & Tourism employs one in ten people on the planet today and over the course of the next 20 years we will witness a doubling of the number of travellers and the creation of as many as 100 million jobs around the world,” commented Gloria Guevara, President and CEO, WTTC. “We have a responsibility to prepare for the future by transforming the traveller experience while increasing security by working together and with governments. Our relationship with IBMATA will help to promote the concept of safe and secure travel across international borders and improved passenger experience.”

“Border Agencies are dealing with more international passengers at their international borders than ever before, against a backdrop of static or declining resources,” added Tony Smith CBE, Chairman of IBMATA. “It is important that they make best use of new and emerging technology to enable them to facilitate the traveller experience for the vast majority of low risk traffic, whilst at the same time maintain safe and secure borders. Our relationship with WTTC will enable us to maximize collaboration between the travel industry, border agencies and technology providers to help us deliver this important function.”

The WTTC has also partnered with the International Air Transport Association (IATA) to adopt a common approach, exchange information and work together to harmonize the use of biometric standards and interoperability throughout the international travel sector.



In an interview with Biometric Update last year, Guevara said that the will is strong among governments and stakeholders in the travel and tourism sector to implement biometrics. “The question, is how we are going to get there?”

Source: <https://www.biometricupdate.com/201902/wttc-partners-with-ibmata-to-promote-biometric-technology-for-seamless-travel>