

THE **Aviator**

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AFRICA

EXPANDING WINGS: Uganda Airlines Gains New Momentum



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AFCAC AND EASA

ADVANCE AVIATION DATA AGENDA AT DAKAR WORKSHOPS


AFCAC

 AFRICAN CIVIL AVIATION COMMISSION
 Transforming African Aviation

EASA
 European Aviation Safety Agency

AFCAC Headquarters in Dakar, Senegal

The African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC), in collaboration with the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), has convened the 3rd APAD Panel Meeting and 2nd Capacity-Building Workshop on Aviation Data, running from 17–20 August 2026 at AFCAC Headquarters in Dakar, Senegal.

The gathering brings together representatives from Member States, regional bodies, and international partners to strengthen aviation data collection, quality, reporting, and analysis across the continent.

The programme supports the African Programme on Aviation Data (APAD) and directly contributes to the successful implementation of the Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM).

In opening remarks, AFCAC leadership underscored that reliable, timely, and

comparable aviation data are the bedrock of effective policy formulation, investment planning, and regulatory oversight. Without robust data systems, the continent's ambitious aviation integration agenda risks being undermined by fragmented information and inconsistent reporting.

AFCAC called on Member States to strengthen regular and timely aviation data reporting, emphasizing that data-driven decision-making is essential for tracking SAATM progress, attracting investment, and ensuring the competitiveness of African airlines in the global market.

The workshop also provides a platform for peer learning and technical exchange, enabling states to share best practices and address common challenges in aviation data management.

The event reflects the deepening partnership between AFCAC and EASA,

which has provided technical expertise and capacity-building support under the broader EU-Africa aviation cooperation framework. The workshop will run through 20 August 2026, concluding with concrete recommendations for strengthening aviation data systems across the continent.

AFCAC is the African Union's Specialized Agency for all civil aviation matters on the African continent and the Executing Agency of the Yamassoukro Decision (YD) and Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM).

The European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) is an agency of the European Union established in 2002 that promotes safe and green civil aviation, drafting safety legislation, certifying aircraft and components, and standardizing rules across Europe.

IN THE NEWS

Uganda Airlines has announced the launch of scheduled direct flights to Accra, Ghana, and Kigali, Rwanda, expanding travel, trade and investment opportunities across the continent.

The introduction of the two destinations expands the airline's route network and provides passengers with more convenient travel options for business, tourism and trade.

The new services will provide passengers with more convenient travel options for business, tourism and trade while strengthening Entebbe's position as a regional hub with seamless connections across the Airlines' network.

Accra strengthens Uganda Airlines' presence in West Africa, building on the success of the Lagos route. As a strategically important business, tourism and diplomatic hub. This service

complements the airline's regional growth strategy while opening more travel opportunities through its hub at Entebbe International Airport.

Kigali links two of East Africa's fastest-growing economies. The route offers seamless travel between the region's key commercial and tourism centers, providing convenient onward connections through Entebbe to destinations across Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Europe.

Speaking on the new routes, Ato Girma Wake said: "The launch of Accra and Kigali marks another key milestone in Uganda Airlines' growth strategy.

As Africa's connectivity continues to grow, these routes will strengthen commercial and tourism links while offering our guests greater convenience and more travel choices. Beyond passenger travel, the new

Uganda Airlines

Fly the Crane to the Pearl of Africa



Expands its African Network with Flights to Accra and Kigali



routes will enhance Uganda Airlines' cargo network by providing exporters and importers with more efficient access to key markets in West and East Africa.

The services are expected to support the movement of fresh produce, manufactured goods and time-sensitive cargo.

This expansion reflects Uganda Airlines' continued investment in building a connected African network that drives economic growth.

The accra route will commence on 27th October, 2026 on a 4X weekly basis while the Kigali flights will commence on 18th November 2026 on a daily basis.



SOUTH AFRICAN AIRWAYS

Suspends Acting Group CEO Matshela Seshibe

South African Airways has placed acting group CEO Matshela Seshibe on special leave pending an internal investigation, barely four months after his appointment on May 1, 2026.

The SAA board confirmed the suspension in an August 14 statement, citing its commitment to "the highest standards of



SAA CEO Matshela Seshibe

good governance, accountability, integrity and leadership." Chief legal officer Koekie Mbeki has been appointed acting group CEO with immediate effect.

While the airline has not disclosed the reasons, reports indicate the investigation relates to Seshibe's previous tenure as CEO of subsidiary Air Chfs. An anonymous whistle-blower report allegedly flagged procurement concerns during his time there, though this has not been independently confirmed.

Seshibe acknowledged the investigation but stated that "precise allegations have not been formally put to me." The suspension follows a turbulent period for SAA.

Former group CEO John Lamola resigned in April 2026, and three board members stepped down after the Auditor-General issued a disclaimed audit opinion on SAA's 2024/25 financial accounts, citing incomplete registers and a "culture of impunity."

Seshibe's appointment had already raised questions about his lack of airline experience and a previous suspension in 2022 as CEO of Daybreak Farms over procurement allegations, though he was reportedly cleared.

Transport Minister Barbara Creecy confirmed she is monitoring the situation, ensuring operational stability at the struggling national carrier.

Ethiopian

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Group Releases Annual Performance Highlights for the FY 2025/26



The Ethiopian Airlines Group has concluded the 2025/26 fiscal year with a landmark performance, cementing its position as one of Africa's premier aviation

groups. The airline reported robust growth across its passenger and cargo divisions, showcasing its resilience and strategic agility.

Financial Strength

The Group achieved record-breaking revenue of \$9.1 billion USD, a figure that underscores its successful expansion strategy and operational efficiency.

This financial milestone

reflects strong global demand for Ethiopian's services and its ability to capitalize on key market opportunities.

Passenger Growth

Ethiopian transported a total of 20.7 million passengers over the year. This high volume is supported by impressive capacity metrics: the airline recorded 92.71 billion Available Seat Kilometers (ASK), with a substantial 72.10 billion Revenue Passenger Kilometers (RPK).

This translates to a strong passenger load factor,

indicating high efficiency in filling available seats and robust consumer confidence in the airline's network.

Cargo Operations

The cargo division also demonstrated exceptional performance, handling 897 thousand tons of freight. This achievement highlights the airline's critical role in global logistics, supporting trade routes between Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas.

Overall Outlook

These results reflect Ethiopian Airlines' unwavering commitment to excellence, modernization, and expansion. By balancing strong revenue generation with operational capacity and service quality, the Group is well-positioned for continued leadership in the global aviation industry.

Emirates has officially launched Crypto.com Pay™, enabling customers to pay for flights using the digital payment solution on emirates.com and the Emirates App.

Customers with a Crypto.com account can now select Crypto.com Pay™ at checkout, with transactions processed securely in compliance with UAE regulatory standards.

The service is currently available to eligible UAE residents for bookings priced and settled in Emirati Dirham (AED).

The launch follows a Memorandum of Understanding signed between Emirates and Crypto.com in July 2025 to explore integrating the digital payment system.

Adnan Kazim, Emirates' Deputy President and

Chief Commercial Officer, emphasized the airline's commitment to expanding customer choice.

"It also reflects the rapidly evolving preferences of a younger, digitally fluent generation who manage their money and plan their journeys primarily from their phones and they expect the airlines they fly with to keep pace," he said.

Eric Anziani, President and COO of Crypto.com, added:

"Partnering with Emirates is a milestone for Crypto.com and our Pay feature, which is renowned for its ease of use and seamless integration."

The integration is powered by Crypto.com's Dubai entity, which is the first Virtual Asset Service Provider (VASP) granted a Stored Value Facilities (SVF) licence by the Central Bank of the UAE.

Emirates and Crypto.com Give Customers a New Way to Pay for Flights

How it works:

On mobile: Customers are directed to the Crypto.com app to complete payment from their wallet before returning to the Emirates App for booking confirmation.

On desktop: Customers select Crypto.com Pay™, scan the QR code, and approve the payment in their Crypto.com app. The booking confirmation and

e-ticket are then issued.

This launch supports the Dubai Cashless Strategy under the D33 Economic Agenda, which aims to make 90% of financial transactions digital by the end of 2026. It follows Emirates' partnership with Dubai Finance to advance digital payments and Crypto.com's collaboration with Dubai Finance for government services.



Trellis School Launches Aviation Society with Industry Support



Trellis International Christian School launched its Aviation Society on Friday, August 7, 2026. The Uganda Civil Aviation Authority, alongside the Uganda Air Traffic Controllers Association, led a career guidance exercise for students.

Major airlines, including Uganda Airlines, Ethiopian Airlines, and Kenya Airways, participated in the event.

Industry experts shared very valuable insights into diverse aviation roles, ranging from piloting and engineering to air traffic control and cabin crew management.

The session aimed to inspire minds and highlight the vast opportunities within the sector. School Principal Ms. Apoo Sharon extended her gratitude to all participating organizations for their expertise.

She described the initiative as the dawn of a new era, confidently noting that this truly marks the beginning of a path leading many students toward successful aviation careers.

Her remarks underscored the school's commitment to nurturing future aviation professionals and building a strong foundation for the next generation of industry leaders.





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- Quality Management System
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KIDEPO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

Construction Works Launched

Uganda's aviation infrastructure continues to expand with the groundbreaking of Kidepo International Airport in Karenga District, a landmark project expected to transform connectivity, tourism, and economic opportunities in the Karamoja sub-region.

While presiding over the groundbreaking ceremony on June 5, 2026, President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni described the project as a testament to the progress Karamoja has made over the years.

He noted that the region, once affected by insecurity, cattle rustling, and lawlessness, is now experiencing peace and stability, creating an environment conducive to investment and development.

The construction of Kidepo International Airport by the Sharjah Chamber of Commerce and Industry, from the United Arab Emirates (UAE), marks a significant step toward opening up one of Uganda's most unique tourism destinations.

Located near Kidepo Valley National Park, the airport will greatly improve accessibility for both domestic and international tourists seeking to explore the park's rich biodiversity, breathtaking landscapes, and cultural heritage.

President Museveni commended the investors and partners from Sharjah for their confidence in Uganda's potential. Their investment reflects growing international recognition of Uganda as a destination for business, tourism, and infrastructure development.

For the aviation sector, Kidepo International Airport represents a major milestone in Uganda's journey toward building a modern, efficient air transport network that supports the country's long-term social and economic aspirations.

The project aligns with broader national efforts to improve connectivity, unlock opportunities in previously underserved regions, and bring the tangible benefits of

infrastructure closer to local communities.

The event was attended by officials from Ministry of Works and Transport, Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, and Uganda Civil Aviation Authority, leaders from Karamoja region, as well as other dignitaries from United Arab Emirates, among others.

Speaking at the event, the Authority's Ag. Director General, Ms. Olive Birungi Lumonya, informed guests that feasibility studies, environmental and social impact assessments, master plans and engineering designs had been undertaken.

"The airport has been planned as a Code 4E International airport with provision for future expansion to Code 4F standards. The design aircraft is B777-200 ER capable of handling all other Code E aircraft for all variants of B777, B747, Airbus 330,340,350, DC 10 and all other smaller aircraft," she said.



EXPANDING WINGS



***Uganda Airlines* Gains
New Momentum with
new Aircraft Purchases**



The national carrier's first-ever direct Boeing purchase at Farnborough 2026 signals a bold new chapter under veteran aviation executive Girma Wake.

At the Farnborough International Airshow on July 21, 2026, Uganda Airlines announced its first-ever direct order with Boeing, committing to eight passenger aircraft as part of a sweeping fleet modernization and network expansion strategy.

The order comprises four Boeing 737-8 MAX narrowbodies and four Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner widebodies, marking the beginning of a direct commercial partnership between Uganda Airlines and the American aircraft manufacturer.

The announcement follows a framework agreement signed at State House, Entebbe, witnessed by President Yoweri Museveni, and comes just months after a significant leadership shake-up placed veteran aviation executive Girma Wake at the helm of the struggling national carrier.

A Defining Step for Uganda's Aviation Ambitions

"This commitment with Boeing marks a defining step in Uganda Airlines' growth

journey and in our broader ambition to position Entebbe as a strategic aviation hub for the region," said Ato Girma Wake, Uganda Airlines Acting Chief Executive Officer.

The Boeing 737-8 MAX, capable of carrying 160–180 passengers in a two-class configuration with a range of up to 6,480 kilometers, will primarily serve regional routes across Africa as well as services to the Middle East and India. The larger Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner, with a range of up to 15,370 kilometers, will be deployed on high-demand long-haul routes to Europe, Asia, and the Middle East.

Wake emphasized that the acquisition would not only modernize the airline's fleet but also support Uganda's broader economic aspirations. "The aircraft will strengthen our ability to connect Uganda more efficiently to regional, continental and international markets, while supporting trade, tourism, investment and cargo development," he said.

Boeing Senior Vice President for Commercial Sales and Marketing, Brad McMullen, welcomed the new partnership. "We're pleased to welcome Uganda Airlines as a Boeing customer and support the airline's next phase of growth with the

737-8 and 787-9. These airplanes offer efficiency, range and versatility to help Uganda Airlines strengthen and expand its network," he said.

Beyond the aircraft purchase, the agreement includes pilot type-rating training, technical support, development of aircraft maintenance capabilities, and cooperation with Soroti Flying School to strengthen Uganda's aviation training capacity.

The partnership also provides for the future acquisition of one Boeing 767-300 Boeing Converted Freighter (BCF) and one Boeing 737-800 Boeing Converted Freighter, as Uganda Airlines prepares to expand into dedicated cargo operations.

According to Boeing, the two aircraft models consume 20 to 25 per cent less fuel than the aircraft they are designed to replace, helping airlines lower operating costs and improve environmental performance.

Leadership Reset: Wake Takes the Helm
The Boeing order comes against the backdrop of a decisive leadership change that has reshaped the airline's trajectory. In February 2026, President Museveni appointed Girma Wake as Consultant/

Advisor and Acting Chief Executive Officer of Uganda Airlines, citing "leadership and management weaknesses" at the national carrier.

The directive ordered the immediate stepping aside of former CEO Jenifer Bamuturaki, whose tenure, which began in July 2022, had been marked by governance concerns, persistent financial losses, unapproved staff establishments, and salary disparities. Reports by the Auditor General and investigations by state agencies had raised concerns about procurement practices and staffing structure.

Wake, who previously led Ethiopian Airlines as CEO from 2004 to 2011, is widely credited with transforming the carrier into Africa's largest airline and a competitor to major international carriers. He has also served as chairman of the boards of both Ethiopian Airlines Group and RwandAir.

Restoring Operational Reliability

When Wake took over in mid-February, he inherited significant operational challenges. Three of Uganda Airlines' six aircraft were grounded due to maintenance shortcomings. One Bombardier CRJ-900 had been out of service since November 2025, while one of two Airbus A330-800neo wide-bodies was grounded in January,

and the second was operating under severe technical limitations.

In an interview with New Vision, Wake described the situation as "a difficult time" but expressed confidence in the airline's future. "The country has enough traffic to support an airline. It has educated people who can be trained in different phases. That gives a lot of hope about the future of the airline," he said.

By August 2026, the airline had successfully returned grounded aircraft to service, with Wake expressing confidence that the national carrier is now well positioned for future growth.

What Lies Ahead

With the Boeing order securing fleet expansion and the leadership reset bringing in deep aviation expertise, Uganda Airlines appears to be entering a new phase of strategic growth. The carrier currently operates scheduled flights to 17 destinations in 13

countries from its Entebbe hub.

The addition of the Boeing 787-9 Dreamliners could allow direct long-haul connections previously requiring intermediate stops, while the 737 MAXs will strengthen regional connectivity. Wake's long-term vision includes positioning Entebbe as a strategic aviation hub for East Africa, an ambition that the new fleet and partnership with Boeing are designed to support.

"Just as importantly, this partnership brings together Uganda Airlines and Boeing in a long-term relationship focused not only on fleet growth, but also on technical excellence, training and capacity building," Wake said. "We are proud to celebrate this milestone at Farnborough as we invest in the future of our national carrier and in Uganda's economic transformation."





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AFRICA AVIATION TALENT CRISIS

Who Will Fly Africa in 2035?

As ICAO forecasts a global need for over 2 million new aviation professionals by 2030, Africa faces its own talent crisis, but new training initiatives, gender inclusion policies, and institutional partnerships offer a path forward.



When the 11th African and Indian Ocean (AFI) Aviation Week convened in Cairo in July 2026, ICAO Secretary General Juan Carlos Salazar delivered an unambiguous message: "African ownership and leadership must always be at the center of implementation." The sentiment captures the dual challenge facing African aviation, the solutions exist, but the capacity to deliver them does not.

Nowhere is this gap more acute than in human capital. Africa's aviation sector is growing faster than almost any other region, with passenger traffic projected to surge from 160 million to 469 million by 2050. Yet the continent lacks the trained professionals to operate, maintain, and regulate the aircraft that will carry these passengers. Boeing forecasts Africa will need 63,000 new aviation professionals over the next two decades, including 19,000 pilots, 24,000 cabin crew, and 20,000 technicians.

The crisis extends beyond pilots. Africa needs aircraft engineers, air traffic controllers, aviation data specialists, and cybersecurity professionals, roles often overlooked in workforce planning. Ethiopian Aviation University President Leake Tadesse warned: "Africa must invest aggressively in building a highly skilled aviation workforce to unlock its full potential."

The Training Gap

The gap between demand and supply is structural. Africa has fewer than 15,000 pilots for a population of 1.4 billion, a ratio

orders of magnitude below global averages. Training institutions are underfunded, under-resourced, and unevenly distributed.

Sénégal's International Academy of Civil Aviation Professions estimates Africa will need 29,000 pilots and 27,000 technicians by 2035 to support an additional 550 aircraft. Many African airlines remain "largely dependent on staff trained abroad," increasing operating costs and limiting self-sufficiency.

New Initiatives: OEMs Step Up

In June 2026, Airbus and Boeing launched parallel human capital development programmes. In Addis Ababa, Airbus unveiled a new Advanced Master programme in Aeronautical Management for Ethiopian Airlines, delivered in partnership with France's ENAC and ISAE-SUPAERO. In Lagos, Boeing launched an advanced engineering training program to strengthen maintenance capability for United Nigeria Airlines and ValueJet, while integrating vocational training for youth in Kenya, Nigeria, and Togo.

These investments reflect a growing recognition that Africa cannot exploit its aviation growth potential without a sufficiently robust workforce ecosystem.

Gender Summit: Addressing Inclusion

The talent crisis cannot be solved without addressing the gender gap. The Third ICAO Global Aviation Gender Summit, held in Luanda from 21–23 July 2026, brought together States, industry, and partners to advance dialogue on women's empowerment. Angola's civil aviation authority received recognition for its gender inclusion policies. Brazilian specialist Ana Benevides noted: "When we place strong and competent women in leadership positions, we are telling the next generations that women can also be leaders." Programs such as ElevateHer, the Gender Equity Charter, and targeted scholarships reflect a growing commitment to creating opportunities for women to "enter, grow, and lead within the aviation industry."

AFI Week: The Next Generation

The AFI Aviation Week closing session adopted resolutions emphasizing "investing in the Next Generation of Aviation Professionals through strategic workforce planning, modernizing skills development, embracing new technologies such as AI, and strengthening partnerships."

The first-ever AFI Donor Dialogue, bringing together over 20 partners, secured commitments to financial and technical support, including training, scholarships, and expert deployments. Ethiopian Aviation University now provides training in over 50 African countries, having trained more than 25,000 aviation professionals and kept 280,000 personnel up to date through recurrent training. This is the scale of ambition required, but it is a single institution. Africa needs dozens more.

The talent crisis is the single greatest constraint on African aviation's growth. Without trained pilots, engineers, controllers, and regulators, the continent's fleet expansion and safety aspirations will remain unrealized.

The window of opportunity is open but narrowing. OEMs are investing. Training institutions are expanding. Gender inclusion policies are gaining traction. But the scale of the challenge requires a response that matches the ambition.

Can African Airlines Survive the Cost Crisis?

Harriet James

Profit margins have collapsed to 0.2%, with carriers earning just 40 cents per passenger, and the cost pressures are only intensifying. As the IATA AGM in Rio warned, African airlines are being choked by structural inefficiencies, crippling fuel costs, and taxes that are among the highest in the world.

If you were to design a market to test the resilience of an industry, you might look to African aviation. It is growing faster than almost any other region, passenger demand is projected to expand by 10% in 2026, yet its airlines are forecast to earn a collective net profit of just \$100 million, a margin of 0.2%, and a paltry \$0.40 per passenger. By comparison, a passenger on an average global airline generates \$7.90 in profit. The gap is existential.



This was the stark reality laid bare at the 82nd IATA Annual General Meeting in Rio de Janeiro, which convened aviation leaders from 7–9 June 2026. A central question emerged: can Africa's airlines survive a cost crisis that has seen profitability collapse while demand soars?

A Profitability Crisis in Plain Sight

The latest IATA figures are sobering. In 2025, African airlines made \$300 million in net profit with a margin of 1.6%. For 2026, that profit has been slashed by two-thirds to just \$100 million, with the margin collapsing to 0.2%. The \$0.40 profit per passenger forecast for 2026 represents a dramatic fall from the \$2.10 earned in 2025.

This is happening against a demand surge.

The conflict in the Middle East has disrupted traditional Gulf hubs, creating a unique opportunity for African airlines. Rerouted traffic is driving strong passenger and cargo growth, particularly on routes linking Africa to Europe and Asia. IATA's Willie Walsh noted that Africa is "benefiting a little from the Middle East," with traffic growth of up to 10%.

However, the revenue upside is being entirely absorbed by a punishing cost environment. As IATA's Kamil Al-Awadhi explained, the financial benefits are being "capped by cost-side vulnerabilities, particularly regarding the supply and price of fuel, combined with typically lower aircraft utilization and weaker balance sheets."

The Cost Crisis

The fundamental issue is one of structural

disadvantage. African carriers are navigating "turbulent economic skies, weighed down by operational costs that far outpace global averages."

The Fuel Penalty: Aviation fuel is the single largest operating cost. In Africa, it is also the most punishing. Prices are routinely 17% higher than the global average. In some cases, the premium can be as high as 30–40%. This is driven by a lack of local refining capacity, reliance on imports, and heavy taxes.

Crippling Taxes and Charges: Beyond fuel, African airlines face a staggering array of taxes and fees. According to IATA, taxes and regulatory charges are between 12% and 15% higher than global averages, while air navigation charges are 10% higher. Nigeria has been singled out as one of the most expensive jurisdictions, where combined taxes on a Lagos–Accra return ticket can approach \$116 before the airline even sets a fare.

High Costs Across the Board:

Maintenance, insurance, and access to capital costs are all between 6% and 10% above global benchmarks. This is compounded by weak infrastructure, fragmented airspace, and limited cross-border coordination, which further inflate operating costs.

The SAATM Imperative: A Solution Within Reach

Faced with this crisis, industry leaders were unanimous in their prescription: Africa must fully implement the Single

African Air Transport Market (SAATM). "The potential is huge," said Walsh. "Yet Africa still represents only about 2% of the global aviation market. It should represent at least 6% or 7%."

Launched by the African Union in 2018, SAATM aims to liberalize the continent's skies by allowing airlines to operate freely across borders. The current fragmented network of highly restrictive bilateral agreements forces airlines to fly outside the continent to connect internally.

Walsh argued that full liberalization, modelled after Europe's "Open Skies," doesn't destroy local industries; it creates a unified market that lowers costs and gives consumers more choices. Despite the commitment of nearly 40 nations, the challenge remains moving from signature to implementation.

The Brutal Choice

The IATA AGM in Rio painted a clear picture. African aviation is at a crossroads. On one path, it has immense traffic potential, but it is being strangled by a cost crisis that has pushed per-passenger profits down to 40 cents. On the other, it faces a choice between policy reform and economic stagnation.

Without a fully implemented SAATM, without decisive action to reduce crippling taxes, and without tackling structural inefficiencies, African airlines will struggle to survive. The future of the continent's aviation industry is not just about growth, it is about reform.



FLYING AFRICAN TRADE

Can Air Cargo Unlock the AfCFTA?

Nyawade wendy Cella

Air cargo is emerging as the invisible engine of Africa's trade revolution, slashing export costs, connecting production hubs to consumer markets, and transforming the continent's role in global supply chains.

When eight Nigerian companies received AfCFTA Certificates of Origin in June 2026, the moment marked more than a bureaucratic milestone. It signaled the arrival of a new era for African trade, one where air cargo is being deliberately deployed as

a strategic tool to unlock the continent's vast economic potential. With the AfCFTA creating the world's largest free trade area, the logistics to move goods across borders has become the single most important enabler, or constraint, on continental integration.

The Price Barrier: From \$10/kg to \$2/kg
For years, the arithmetic of intra-African trade was brutally simple: high logistics costs made it cheaper to ship African goods to Europe or Asia than to neighboring countries. Exporters paid between \$3 and \$10 per kilogram to move goods to East and Southern African markets, costs that eroded competitiveness and constrained market access.

The Nigeria-East and Southern Africa Air Cargo Corridor, launched in 2025 with Uganda Airlines and expanded in 2026 with RwandAir, has fundamentally rewritten that equation. Through the partnership, cargo rates on RwandAir-operated routes to Kigali, Lusaka, Harare, Nairobi, and Johannesburg have been reduced to below \$2 per kilogram for exporters holding AfCFTA Certificates of Origin.

The impact has been immediate. In its first year of operation, the corridor recorded a 40% increase in export volumes. As Nigeria's Minister of Industry, Trade and Investment, Dr. Jumoke Oduwole, noted: "That statistic represents increased





production, jobs, export revenue and growth for Nigerian businesses, especially women-led enterprises."

The corridor benefits exporters in agribusiness, fashion and textiles, cosmetics, processed foods, and light manufacturing, sectors central to Africa's industrialization and export diversification agenda.

Corridor-Based Route Development

At the Lomé Ministerial Declaration, African ministers agreed to develop corridor-based air cargo routes aligned with AfCFTA value chains. The approach shifts focus from ad-hoc route development to structured trade lanes connecting production hubs, agricultural export zones, and manufacturing centers with key consumer markets.

Ministers committed to strengthening cooperation between airlines, airports, regulators, trade bodies, and development finance institutions, a coordinated approach intended to address constraints including limited infrastructure, weak route sustainability, and fragmented demand planning.

The declaration also highlights the importance of secondary city connectivity, recognizing that future cargo growth depends not only on major hubs but also on smaller urban centers with emerging industrial capacity.

Perishables, Pharmaceuticals, and E-Commerce
The air cargo story in Africa is not monolithic. It is a story of distinct commodity streams, each with its own infrastructure requirements and growth trajectories.

Perishables remain central to African air cargo operations, particularly exports into Europe, the Middle East, and the UK. RwandAir reported

Africa-Europe volumes increased by around 6% year-on-year in the first half of 2025, driven largely by perishables traffic.

Pharmaceuticals represent a rapidly growing segment. RwandAir noted that pharmaceuticals are becoming a larger component of inbound freight into Rwanda and neighboring markets, with critical medicines requiring temperature-controlled handling. Ethiopian Airlines, the first African airline to achieve IATA CEIV Pharma certification, continues to strengthen its position as a trusted logistics partner for the global life sciences sector.

E-commerce offers perhaps the most significant long-term growth potential. IATA forecasts intra-African e-commerce traffic to expand by 15% annually through to 2030. DHL has reinforced its position as the only integrator operating a dedicated air network across Sub-Saharan Africa, adding two dedicated Boeing 737-400 aircraft to its Lagos operations.

The Infrastructure Imperative

Despite the momentum, significant challenges remain. Shippers now demand end-to-end temperature visibility, reliable schedules, guaranteed capacity, and real-time tracking for sensitive shipments. Ethiopian Airlines is positioning its Addis Ababa hub as the continental gateway, with a cargo terminal handling 1 million metric tons annually. RwandAir views Kigali's central location as a strategic asset for cargo moving between Africa, Europe, and Asia, reinforced by the planned Bugesera International Airport.

Air cargo is no longer a niche sector. It is a strategic trade enabler, a catalyst for industrialization, and a powerful tool for translating AfCFTA commitments into tangible economic outcomes.





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Is African Aviation Ready For The Cyber Siege?

Nyawade wendy Cella

Namibia Airports Company detected a cybersecurity incident on 6 March 2026, the state-owned operator initially hoped the disruption was limited. Within days, the INC ransomware group claimed responsibility, alleging it had stolen nearly 500 gigabytes of data, including airport permit system files, parking management databases, engineering documents, and financial records.

Air Côte d'Ivoire confirmed a cyberattack on 8 February 2026 that forced business continuity plans into action, with the INC gang claiming 208 GB of data stolen. South African Airways experienced a cyberattack in May 2025 that disrupted its website, mobile app, and internal systems.

These attacks are not anomalies. Interpol reports that two-thirds of African member countries say cyber-related offences account for a medium-to-high share of all crimes. Trend Micro predicts that in 2026, ransomware will become fully AI-driven, accelerating the speed at which vulnerabilities are exploited.

The Threat Landscape

The aviation sector presents an attractive target because of its interconnectedness, its critical role in national economies, and the sensitive data it holds.

Ransomware: The Dominant Weapon. The INC ransomware gang has claimed 694 attacks in total, including five on aviation companies. The group employs a "double-extortion" technique: stealing data before encrypting systems, then demanding two ransoms. The disruption is immediate and costly.

Air Traffic Management as a Target. South African intelligence reports identify two threat actors targeting



aviation infrastructure: Golden Jackal, a sophisticated Middle Eastern cyber espionage group; and Black Basta, a Russian-linked ransomware syndicate that has caused one Johannesburg-based carrier approximately 72 hours of operational disruption and economic losses exceeding R50 million.

The East African School of Aviation

conducted a EUROCONTROL ATM Security and Cyber Security Course in May 2026, while CANSO's Luanda workshop dedicated sessions to ATM cybersecurity.

Passenger Data and Border Security. Ghana is rolling out an Advanced Passenger Information system, more than 80% complete, that will capture and screen every traveller's data in real time.

The GCAA Director-General acknowledged risks: "large data troves could be vulnerable to cyberattacks or misuse if safeguards lag behind technology adoption."

Ground Handling and Logistics. Aon warns that "phishing, social engineering and system intrusions are being used to intercept digital load data, manipulate dispatch instructions and exploit weak cyber controls within logistics platforms."

The Response

Nigeria has been urged to strengthen governance, embrace intelligence-driven security, and deepen collaboration. NCAA General Manager Mary Adigun warned

that rapid digitalization has made airports, airlines, and air navigation systems more vulnerable.

South Africa's new legislation requiring all organizations to report cyber incidents to the Information Regulator aims to enhance transparency and build national threat intelligence capability. SITA noted that South Africa is placing 62% of unemployed youth within the cybersecurity field.

Angola has been notably proactive. State Secretary Rui Carreira reaffirmed the government's commitment to training personnel and strengthening strategies to protect civil aviation. He revealed that TAAG had recently suffered a cyberattack in which administrative files were extracted.

SAHCO has become the first aviation ground handling provider in Nigeria to secure ISO/IEC 27001:2022 Information Security Management System certification. Executive Director Dr Babatunde Afolabi emphasized: "Information security is not just an IT function; it is an organizational responsibility."

The Path Forward

IATA has called for increased collaboration within the civil aviation sector, recognizing that cyber risks do not respect borders. As cyber threats evolve, African aviation faces a choice: invest in resilience or remain exposed. The tools exist, ISO standards, regulatory frameworks, training programs, and intelligence sharing.

AI Takes Flight

What Will Artificial Intelligence Change in African Aviation?

At the 82nd IATA AGM in Rio de Janeiro, artificial intelligence emerged as a central theme. For African airlines, the question is no longer whether to adopt AI, but how fast they can deploy it, and whether infrastructure and talent can keep pace.



When global aviation leaders gathered in Rio de Janeiro in June 2026 for the 82nd IATA Annual General Meeting, artificial intelligence was firmly on the agenda.

The debate centered on AI's potential to transform airline operations: predictive maintenance, revenue management, operations planning, and customer relations. For African carriers facing the highest operating costs in the world and razor-thin profitability, AI presents a compelling proposition: do more with less.

The SITA Air Transport IT Insights

2025/2026 report revealed the scale of AI investment globally. Airlines and airports are investing a record \$50.8 billion in technology, with 63% of airlines now using AI in operations control. 79% of airlines named generative AI as their top investment priority for the next 12 months.

Yet African aviation faces a critical paradox. While 83% of African airlines prioritize data-driven decision-making, the data remains siloed, undermining the full value of AI investments. As SITA CEO David Lavorel noted: "The technology is there. The data infrastructure to connect it often is not."

Passenger Experience: ValueJet Leads the Way

The most visible AI deployment in African aviation has been in passenger experience. In January 2026, Nigerian carrier ValueJet launched VIKI, an AI-powered digital concierge, the first airline in Africa to deploy such technology at scale.

VIKI is a multilingual, text- and voice-enabled assistant available via WhatsApp and Telegram, enabling passengers to book

flights, check in online, modify reservations, and receive real-time updates through conversational interaction. The system addresses critical pain points in Nigeria's aviation market: speed, convenience, and accessibility.

ValueJet Managing Director Omololu Majekodunmi framed the innovation as a strategic imperative: "VIKI is more than a digital tool, she's a symbol of our ambition to build smarter, safer, and more seamless experiences for travellers across Africa."

At the IATA AGM, Raven launched the Customer Growth Index, designed to measure airlines' digital experience, including "AI findability", the ability of AI assistants to discover and recommend an airline's offerings. Edward Croft Baker captured the shift: "Discovery is moving from search results to AI answers. If an assistant cannot read and recommend you, you are invisible at the very moment a traveler is choosing."

The Data Integration Barrier

While AI adoption is accelerating, African airlines face a structural constraint: data integration. SITA's report found that 49% of airlines identify data integration and consistency as the primary barrier to achieving their technology goals. Without seamless data flow between airlines, ground handlers, and airport authorities, AI investments cannot deliver promised efficiencies.

The financial constraint is equally acute. 37% of African aviation leaders cite financing as a major barrier to IT projects, compared to just 14% globally. Because capital is more expensive and many systems are legacy-heavy, African operators often

spend more on basic modernization, leaving less for high-value predictive analytics.

SITA's Selim Bouri delivered a stark warning: while "literally 100% of the airlines" in Africa are increasing technology spending, only 40% of African and Middle Eastern airports are planning to do so. "This is below the rest of the world, and that is a concern," he said.

The Talent Imperative

At the AFCAC Convention in Lomé, ITAérea Aeronautical Business School delivered a powerful message: "Technology without talent is just expensive equipment." The barrier to AI adoption in Africa, the panel argued, is rarely the technology itself, it is the human capital to absorb, implement, and sustain it. "States import systems, sign contracts, the hardware arrives, and then the technology sits underutilized, because the people operating it weren't trained for it."

The recommendation was unambiguous: mandate that every aviation authority has at least one certified specialist in cybersecurity, AI and data systems, and advanced air mobility by 2030.

AI is transforming African aviation, but unevenly. Passenger-facing AI is advancing rapidly. Back-office AI is constrained by data integration gaps, financing barriers, and talent shortages.

SITA's Bouri offered a clear prescription: "Technology has to go first. Putting technology first can be done within the year and bring immediate effect in terms of savings, integration and optimization."



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DIGITAL BORDERS, SHARED CHALLENGES

African Aviation's API/ PNR Moment



AFI Aviation Week 2026 highlighted the importance of passenger data systems for border security and travel facilitation. Across the continent, governments are advancing digitization, but aviation bodies warn that fragmented implementation could raise costs and disrupt connectivity.

When AFRAA, AASA, and IATA issued a joint statement on 30 July 2026, the message was carefully calibrated: support the implementation of Advance Passenger Information (API) and Passenger Name Record (PNR) systems, but align them with ICAO standards and fund them correctly. The timing reflected deliberations at the 11th AFI Aviation Week in Cairo, where API and PNR implementation featured prominently alongside air navigation modernization and aviation security. The Digital Toolkit

API and PNR systems serve complementary functions. API data, passport numbers, nationality, date of birth, is collected at check-in and transmitted to border authorities before departure. PNR data, itinerary, booking references, baggage information, provides a richer picture of travel patterns and associations.

Combined, these data streams give governments real-time visibility into who is entering their territory. Angola's Passenger Information Monitoring and Management

IATA's Kamil Alawadhi

a consistent approach, with governments and industry working together, improves security outcomes, makes travel more seamless, safeguards personal data, and avoids unnecessary costs and complexity.

Centre, inaugurated at the Dr. António Agostinho Neto International Airport in December 2025, exemplifies this model. State Secretary Rui Carreira described it as a "historic milestone" that enables "preventive and coordinated action" and "more effective management of migratory flows."

SITA, which provides the technical platform, positions the initiative as a continental benchmark, noting that Angola is "aligning itself with international airport security standards" and "positioning itself at the forefront of border digitization in Africa." Security Urgency

The United Nations has been instrumental in advancing API/PNR cooperation across Africa. The Eastern Africa Regional Working Group, established in April 2025, brings together nine countries to strengthen detection of terrorists and serious criminals using passenger data.

The second meeting, held in Kigali in March 2026, facilitated visits to Rwanda's Passenger Information Unit and produced discussions on "emerging risks related to terrorist travel."

The framework was clear: API/PNR is not merely a technical upgrade, but a counter-terrorism tool that requires regional coordination, inter-agency cooperation, and compliance with data protection norms.

The Risk of Fragmentation

Despite the security benefits, African governments are implementing API/PNR systems on divergent legal and operational paths.

As IATA's Kamil Alawadhi warned, "a consistent approach, with governments and industry working together, improves security outcomes, makes travel more seamless, safeguards personal data, and avoids unnecessary costs and complexity."

The industry bodies have outlined five principles for responsible implementation: legality (clear frameworks aligned with ICAO standards), proportionality (collecting only necessary data), purpose (restricting use to legitimate reasons), consistency (following harmonized global formats), and security (storing and transferring data safely).

The Funding Question



The most contentious issue is who pays. ICAO's Policies on Charges for Airports and Air Navigation Services (Doc 9082) makes clear that border security is a government responsibility, not a cost to be transferred to airlines or passengers.

Yet several African governments are imposing API/PNR charges on airlines. Tanzania's USD 45 one-way API-PNR charge is the highest globally, while Angola, D.R. Congo, Nigeria, Ghana, and Kenya also exceed global norms. AFRAA, AASA, and IATA argue that these fees "increase the cost of travel, undermine connectivity, and weaken the economic benefits that aviation

generates through tourism, trade, and investment."

The Path Forward

The industry's position is clear: API and PNR systems are essential tools for border security, but they must be implemented consistently, funded correctly, and protected against mission creep.

AFRAA, AASA, and IATA remain committed to working with governments, regional institutions, and international partners to support successful implementation "that enhance security while enabling safe, efficient, and affordable air transport."



From Accident Data to Prevention



AFRICA'S NEW SAFETY AGENDA

Gatwiri Edna

As ICAO convened experts in Dakar to roll out ECCAIRS 2, African aviation is shifting from reactive accident investigation to predictive safety management, but significant gaps remain.

Aviation safety experts gathered in Dakar on 10–11 August 2026 for an ICAO-organized meeting on Accident and Incident Data Reporting. The gathering brought together

experts from civil aviation authorities, investigation bureaus, and airlines to address a persistent challenge: how to turn safety data into actionable prevention. The timing was deliberate. With the transition from ECCAIRS 1 to the new ECCAIRS 2 online platform, ICAO is modernizing the global system through which states report accidents and incidents.

Centralized via the ADREP system, these safety data are critical for ICAO's safety initiatives and standards and for states to support their investigation practices and prevention measures.

The State of African Aviation Safety
Africa's safety record has improved, but the gap with global benchmarks remains stark. In 2025, African airlines recorded seven accidents, down from 11 in 2024, with the all-accident rate falling from 12.13 to 7.86 per million sectors. This represents progress, but Africa's accident rate remains the highest of any region, far exceeding the global average of 1.32.

The most common causes remain runway excursions and what IATA categorizes as "other end state", accidents where precise categorization cannot be determined, often

due to insufficient information.

71% of accidents involving African-based operators involved turboprop aircraft, underscoring the particular vulnerability of regional operations.

Fatalities tell a starker story. Africa's fatality risk increased from zero in 2024 to 2.19 per million flights in 2025, accounting for 25 onboard fatalities.

The Data Imperative

Behind these statistics lies a deeper structural problem: Africa's safety data is incomplete. Between 2019 and 2023, only 19% of accident reports were finalized in Africa, compared with a global average of 63%. As IATA Director General Willie Walsh noted, accident investigation reports that are delayed, incomplete, or unpublished withhold valuable safety insights.

This "data gap" has two consequences. First, it prevents the industry from learning from incidents. Second, it undermines efforts to transition from reactive to predictive safety management, a goal that requires robust, timely, and comprehensive occurrence data.

IATA's response has been the Collaborative Aviation Safety Improvement Program (CASIP), launched in 2023 under the Focus Africa initiative. The program's goal is specific: reduce the accident and serious incident rate through measurable, targeted improvements. CASIP has rolled out monthly safety workshops across Africa, covering Safety Management Systems,

ground operations risk management, runway safety, and GNSS radio frequency interference awareness.

Technology as a Force Multiplier

The Dakar meeting's focus on ECCAIRS 2 reflects a broader recognition that technology is central to safety improvement. Tanzania has pioneered the use of machine learning in aviation safety, developing a system that automates safety hazard reporting and risk assessment using five years of data from the Tanzania Civil Aviation Authority.

The results have been impressive: 90% accuracy in safety hazard assessment, enhanced safety decision-making, and expedited hazard response through automated notifications. Machine learning models, including Random Forest, Support Vector Machines, and Neural Networks, have proven effective in identifying patterns in historical aviation data to predict incidents.

Nigeria has taken similar steps. In March 2026, the NCAA and the Nigerian Safety Investigation Bureau inaugurated the SMS Pro system, a centralized safety data management platform. Director General Capt. Chris Najomo described it as a critical tool for strengthening Nigeria's safety oversight, supporting real-time safety data collection, occurrence management, and trend analysis.

The Compliance Gap

Despite these innovations, the fundamental challenge remains regulatory compliance. Average effective implementation of ICAO

Standards across 46 Sub-Saharan African states stands at just 60.34%, compared with a global average of 69.46% and a target of 75%.

The gap is not technical, it is institutional. Under-reporting due to fear of blame, lack of feedback, insufficient safety culture, and absence of real-time hazard classification tools all contribute to reactive rather than proactive safety management.

The Dakar meeting's focus on ECCAIRS 2 represents a critical step. For African aviation to close the safety gap, three priorities stand out: full implementation of ICAO SARPS, timely publication of accident reports, and leveraging global safety audits such as IOSA, ISSA, and ISAGO.

Europe's EASA has emerged as a key partner, highlighting its joint efforts with ICAO to promote safety reporting through access to the ECCAIRS 2 platform, turning data into actionable safety intelligence. IATA's Kamil Al-Awadhi noted there is more work to do.

The accident rate, 7.86 per million sectors, is an improvement, but it is several times the global average. CASIP's momentum, ECCAIRS 2's rollout, and national initiatives like Tanzania's machine learning system and Nigeria's SMS Pro all point in the right direction.

The task now is to accelerate implementation, scale what works, and ensure that Africa's aviation safety agenda moves decisively from accident reporting to accident prevention.



From Lomé To The Skies

Can Africa Finally Deliver a Single Air Transport Market?



SAATM

The Lomé Declaration has injected renewed political momentum into Africa's long-stalled open skies agenda. But after decades of declarations and slow progress, the question remains: can ministers finally translate commitments into connectivity?

African ministers responsible for transport, tourism, trade and finance gathered in Lomé, Togo, in June 2026, with unambiguous message. AFCAC Secretary-General Adefunke Adeyemi described the occasion as "historic." Togo's President Faure Gnassingbé declared that "the single African sky must move from political commitment to operational reality."

The result was the Lomé Ministerial Declaration and Implementation Matrix, a renewed push to implement the Yamoussoukro Decision and the Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM). Yet the declaration comes against a backdrop of frustration.

Only 38 of 55 African Union member states have signed the SAATM commitment, and of these, just 26 have signed the Memorandum of Implementation. The gap between signature and action remains wide.

The Lomé Declaration: What It Actually Means

The Lomé Declaration is structured as a seven-priority implementation matrix covering: accelerating SAATM implementation; reducing costs and expanding connectivity; seamless mobility, facilitation and infrastructure;



sustainability, innovation and human capital; safety, security and regulatory capacity; strengthening AFCAC; and alignment with the African Union's 2027 theme.

A major outcome is the AFCAC Solidarity Commitment 2026–2028, a resource mobilization initiative designed to strengthen AFCAC's capacity to support member states and accelerate SAATM implementation through direct financial resourcing, technical assistance, and capacity-building.

Ministers also endorsed a Continental Harmonized Policy Framework on Aviation Taxes, Charges and Fees, tackling one of African aviation's most persistent challenges. In West Africa, taxes historically accounted for up to 70% of ticket prices. The declaration commits governments to rationalize excessive charges and improve transparency.

The declaration commits to air cargo corridor development aligned with AfCFTA value chains, recognizing that aviation is a critical enabler of trade and industrialization. Ministers also committed to improving visa openness, passenger facilitation, and digital travel systems, addressing the reality that nearly 75% of Africans still require a visa to travel within the continent.

What Happens Next?

The declaration tasks AFCAC, working with the African Union Commission, AfCFTA Secretariat, and member states, with coordinating follow-up and preparing a post-Lomé implementation roadmap detailing priority actions, timelines, resource needs and reporting arrangements.

AFCAC has launched a Pilot

Implementation Project (PIP) involving 18 proactive states—including Nigeria, Ethiopia, and Kenya, to demonstrate the tangible benefits of a liberalized market. The PIP Airshow in Harare in July 2026 brought together key stakeholders to advance the liberalization agenda.

However, as former Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo warned: "Africa cannot continue to rely on declarations without translating them into action."

Countries Moving Fastest

Progress is uneven, but

measurable. According to AFCAC, 124 new intra-African routes have been launched, including 22 Fifth Freedom routes. Fifth Freedom traffic capacity has increased from 14.5% in 2018 to 23% in 2025.

Togo serves as SAATM Champion State and has abolished visas for African citizens. Rwanda has long been a leader in visa liberalization. Ethiopia, Kenya, and Nigeria are among the 18 PIP states actively working to demonstrate the benefits of liberalization.

Zimbabwe hosted the SAATM PIP Airshow in July 2026. Angola defended African air integration, pointing to the Lobito Corridor as a regional benchmark. Ghana has endorsed the Lomé Declaration.

The African Union has declared 2027 the year of "Leveraging the Full Potential of SAATM and New Technologies for Continental Integration."

What's at Stake

The economic case is compelling. IATA estimates that opening air transport markets among just 12 key African countries could create 155,000 jobs and generate \$1.3 billion in annual GDP. A fully operational SAATM could lower average airfares by 26%.

Currently, African airlines earn just \$1.30 per passenger compared to the global

average of nearly \$8.00. African carriers face fuel prices roughly 17% higher than the global average, while airport charges are inflated by 12–15%.

The Lomé Declaration has cleared the runway. The question now is whether African governments have the political will to take off. As AFRAA's Maureen Kahonge noted, "declarations alone will not transform African aviation. We need to move beyond rhetoric to action."

AFCAC Secretary General Adefunke Adeyemi



FUEL PRICE SURGE:

More Aircraft at Risk of Grounding, Analysts Warn

Robert Ssembajjwe

This Season, Jet fuel has always been airlines' biggest wild card. This winter, it could also be the reason more planes never leave the gate. Aviation analyst John Strickland of JLS Consulting warned during a World Aviation Festival webinar on 16 July that high fuel costs will make weaker routes uneconomic, forcing European and US carriers to remove more frequencies and ground more aircraft than usual in the coming months.

"No matter how much airlines reduced prices to stimulate demand, they still wouldn't be covering the cost of the higher price of fuel. And I think we'll see more planes on the ground as a result," Strickland said.

Why fuel costs are spiking again Jet fuel, or Jet A-1, tracks closely with crude oil.

When Brent climbs, airline costs jump almost immediately. Three pressures are colliding right now: Crude remains elevated. OPEC+ production cuts, geopolitical risk premiums, and rebounding demand have kept oil above \$80-\$90 per barrel for most of 2026.

Refining bottlenecks; Refineries closed during the pandemic haven't all reopened. Those operating are prioritizing diesel and gasoline, pushing jet fuel crack spreads well above pre-2020 levels.

A stronger dollar; Most fuel is bought in

USD. For carriers outside the US, that makes every gallon more expensive even if crude is flat. The impact is huge.

IATA forecasts that fuel costs will rise by nearly 40% to \$350 billion in 2026, with fuel accounting for 31.4% of total operating expenses, up from the historical 25-30%. For low-cost carriers with thin margins, that jump is existential. What airlines are doing about it; Airlines have limited options when fuel gets this expensive.

Labor, airport fees, and aircraft leases are mostly fixed; So, they're leaning on four tactics:

1. Cut marginal routes and frequencies; Strickland expects this winter to see a "higher level of cancellations" than normal. Airlines typically trim schedules in winter due to weaker demand. But with fuel high, even routes that would have run with cheap fares are now at risk.

Transatlantic leisure routes, midweek services, and secondary city links added post-pandemic are most vulnerable. Regional jets, which burn more fuel per seat, are also in the firing line. "I don't see airlines suddenly cutting prices left, right, and centre in order to stimulate demand," Strickland said.

2. Ground older, thirstier aircraft; The 737 Classics, older A320s, and some widebodies cost too much to fly at \$3.50+ per gallon. Several carriers have already announced accelerated retirements, prioritizing newer, 15-20%



more efficient 737 MAX, A320neo, and 787 aircraft.

3. Push fares higher; Base fares are already up 10-15% since 2024. With IATA projecting another 40% rise in fuel spend, expect more increases. The risk: price out leisure travelers and fly emptier planes, which makes the fuel problem worse.

4. Hedge and add surcharges; Big carriers hedge 30-60% of fuel a year ahead, which has so far prevented a full supply breakdown. Strickland noted many airlines found alternative fuel sources or used hedging to shield themselves short-term. Smaller carriers can't. Many are also bringing back fuel surcharges that disappeared after 2020.

The impact on travelers this winter. If you're flying between November and February, here's what to expect: Fewer flight choices. Airlines will consolidate to fill planes. Two daily flights may become one.

Higher ticket prices; Domestic round trips could be \$20-\$80 more. International flights could jump \$100-\$300 depending on distance. Budget airlines will feel it

most.

Fuller planes; Load factors are already above 85% in many markets. With capacity cut, middle seats are back. Less recovery slack; Tight margins mean fewer spare aircraft. One delay can cascade. Cargo won't escape either. Air freight rates track fuel surcharges, so anything shipped by air, electronics, pharma, fresh produce, gets more expensive.

Regional differences; The pain isn't shared equally. US carriers have newer fleets and a large domestic market to fall back on, but long-haul is exposed. European airlines face fuel costs plus high taxes and emissions fees, making intra-EU short-haul especially costly.

Asian carriers have strong demand but are still paying off pandemic debt. Africa and Latin America are hit hardest. Imported fuel, weak currencies, and small markets mean some routes may be suspended entirely, risking isolation for cities with only one or two carriers. Is relief coming? Not this winter. Oil analysts expect prices to stay elevated through end-2026 unless demand collapses in a recession.

New refinery capacity isn't due until 2027. The long-term answers are efficiency and alternatives. Sustainable Aviation Fuel, or SAF, is being scaled up but is still 2-4x the price of conventional jet and supply is tiny.

New aircraft deliveries help, but manufacturing backlogs mean they're slow to arrive. In the meantime, carriers are chasing small wins: single-engine taxiing, lighter cabins, and optimized routing. Helpful, but not enough to offset a 40% fuel bill jump.

The bottom-line; Strickland's warning is blunt: this winter, economics will decide which planes fly. Airlines have learned since the pandemic that flying half-empty planes to chase market share destroys value.

For travelers, it means planning earlier, being flexible on dates and routes, and expecting higher fares. For the industry, it's a season of discipline. Fuel is the one cost airlines can't control. In winter 2026, it will be the cost that decides which routes survive and which aircraft stay grounded.

Credit: John Strickland





Five Issues Keeping Africa's Regulators Awake

From sustainable financing and environmental compliance to SAATM implementation, GNSS interference, and workforce shortages, Cairo's landmark gathering exposed the structural fractures shaping African aviation's next decade. When the 11th African and Indian Ocean (AFI) Aviation Week convened in Cairo from 27 to 31 July 2026, it marked more than a routine regulatory gathering.

For the first time, Egypt hosted this flagship ICAO event, drawing ministers, civil aviation authority directors, and industry leaders from across the continent. With ICAO rolling out its new Strategic Plan for 2025-2050, Africa's voice in shaping global aviation policy has never been more critical. What emerged from five days of technical sessions, donor dialogues, and high-level

strategy meetings was a continent-wide consensus on five pressing challenges. Issue 1: Sustainable Financing and Institutional Sustainability.

Behind every safety oversight failure lies a more fundamental problem: money. African civil aviation authorities operate on budgets that bear no relation to the scale of their mandate. A dedicated session. "Financing

Core Aviation Capabilities in Africa" was devoted entirely to the funding question.

Egypt's presentation of its hybrid financing model, combining government allocations, cost-recovery mechanisms, and protected earmarking drew particular attention. Dr. Mohamed Salah, Deputy Head of the Egyptian Civil Aviation Authority, underscored: "The greatest challenge facing civil aviation authorities is not technical expertise alone, but embedding institutional governance as the bedrock for sustainable development."

With over 20 partners including ICAO, EASA, the African Development Bank, and the East African Development Bank participating in the first AFI Donor Dialogue, commitments to financial and technical support were secured. But the gap between commitment and disbursement remains a familiar challenge. Issue 2: Environmental Sustainability and the SAF Challenge

The environmental sustainability agenda dominated the third day, reflecting growing international pressure on aviation to decarbonize. Discussions focused on CORSIA and African states' readiness to meet its monitoring, reporting, and verification requirements.

The challenges are formidable: limited SAF production capacity, prohibitive costs, and inadequate infrastructure. Dr. Karim Jamil, Advisor to the Head of the Egyptian Civil Aviation Authority, presented Egypt's regulatory framework as a balancing act aligning environmental compliance with institutional capacity building and sustainable growth.

The consensus was clear: Africa's path to sustainable aviation requires flexible solutions that respect the continent's developmental reality. Speakers called for international partnerships, targeted investment, and technology transfer to accelerate SAF adoption without stifling aviation growth.

Issue 3: SAATM Implementation, From Commitment to Delivery

The Single African Air Transport Market has been a policy priority for years, but implementation remains stubbornly slow. Delegates pressed for accelerated delivery. The official outcomes explicitly called for



accelerating SAATM.

implementation to "unlock greater market access and intra-African air connectivity." The challenge is not lack of frameworks, but lack of enforcement and political will. The African Union's designation of 2027 as the SAATM theme year was noted as an opportunity to build momentum, but the gap between ratification and operationalization remains wide. Issue 4: GNSS Interference and Air Navigation Resilience.

Amidst growing global navigation satellite system (GNSS) interference from geopolitical conflicts, African regulators are confronting a new threat to air safety. The issue received focused attention, with calls to address GNSS interference, strengthen search and rescue capabilities, and improve cybersecurity.

Egypt presented its experience in modernizing air navigation infrastructure, including satellite-based augmentation systems. But for many states, the investment gap is prohibitive. The resolutions reflected an urgent need for regional coordination on air navigation resilience, a technical challenge rapidly becoming a strategic priority.

Issue 5: Human Resources and the Next Generation

Africa's aviation growth projections are meaningless without people to operate, maintain, and regulate it. Boeing forecasts the continent will need 74,000 new pilots, technicians, and cabin crew over the next two decades, and regulators are equally

stretched.

Egypt, the UK, France, and the UAE jointly hosted a capacity-building workshop, presenting a model of technical assistance and knowledge transfer. The Egyptian presentation showcased a comprehensive methodology: identifying needs, designing tailored programs, implementing training, and measuring results.

AFI Week resolutions emphasized strategic workforce planning, modernizing skills development, embracing new technologies like AI, and strengthening partnerships between governments, industry, academia, and training institutions. Human capital is no longer a "soft" issue, it is the structural constraint that will determine whether African aviation can grow sustainably.

The Road Ahead

As ICAO Secretary General Juan Carlos Salazar told delegates: "African ownership and leadership must always be at the center of implementation." The sentiment captures the dual challenge: the solutions exist, but the capacity to deliver them does not.

The AFI Aviation Week closing session adopted a comprehensive roadmap covering safety, security, air navigation, sustainability, digital transformation, and human resources. But as one delegate noted, "Africa has no shortage of strategies, policies and frameworks. The priority now is ensuring that implementation delivers measurable outcomes."



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Review



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The conference, officially opened by Botswana's Vice President Ndaba Gaolathe, brought together airlines, airports, tourism authorities, investors, and policymakers to address a central challenge: how to translate Africa's growing travel demand into sustainable connectivity.

The Connectivity Paradox: Demand Grows, Gaps Widen
The conference's most significant revelation came from Embraer's newly released "Connecting Africa 2026" report.

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The report's core finding is unambiguous: "The findings confirm that Africa's connectivity gap is not narrowing. The challenge is not a lack of demand, but rather the need for the right aircraft and network strategies to sustainably unlock intra-African connectivity".

Right-Sizing African Aviation

The report's emphasis on matching aircraft to market reality emerged as a key theme. Many unserved routes fall within the 10-70 PDEW range, a segment where larger narrowbody jets are often uneconomic but regional jets and smaller narrowbodies can thrive.

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as a game-changer, with Airlink planning to launch nonstop Cape Town–Zanzibar flights in October 2026 using its new fleet of this aircraft.

Financing Growth and Cultivating Talent
A major addition for 2026 was the AviaDev Finance & Leasing Forum, a dedicated half-day platform connecting airlines with lessors, financiers, and development finance institutions to bridge the financing gap critical for fleet growth.

The conference also invested in the future through the AviaDev Africa 2026 Ambassadors program, supported by the Dare to Dream Initiative. Two young Batswana were selected to serve as youth ambassadors, gaining invaluable industry exposure.

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Botswana: Host with Ambition
Hosting AviaDev Africa 2026 was a strategic statement by Botswana. Vice President Gaolathe underscored that air connectivity would be central to the

country's economic diversification under the Botswana Economic Transformation Plan and its participation in the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

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As Africa pursues greater regional integration, AviaDev's role in connecting people, markets, and ideas has never been more critical. The 2026 edition demonstrated that the debate is no longer about whether Africa's skies will open, but how fast, and whether the industry can match its ambition with execution.





Southern Africa's General Aviation Trade Show

AERO South Africa returned to Lanseria International Airport for its sixth edition, from 10-12 June 2026. The message from organizers and exhibitors was clear: this was a business-to-business trade show designed for serious industry engagement, not a public air show.

The approach appears to be working. The three-day event secured 2,955 trade visitors and delegates, a figure that reflects the quality of connections rather than the size of the crowd.

Organised by Messe Frankfurt South Africa in partnership with Fairnamic GmbH, AERO South Africa has established itself as the premier general aviation business event on the South African aviation calendar.

The 2026 edition was supported by 65 corporate exhibitors and 28 static aircraft displays from 31 countries, with exhibitor numbers up from the previous year despite the challenging economic environment and the lingering effects of the twelve-year rule on the local aviation sector.

A Business Platform, not a Public Spectacle
The organizers have deliberately positioned AERO South Africa as a trade-focused event. Visitors registered free of charge, but entry was restricted to industry professionals, and children under 15 were not permitted. This emphasis on business-to-business engagement was reflected in the 335 business matchmaking meetings logged



during the event, connecting exhibitors, buyers, operators, and investors around potential partnerships and business opportunities.

Feedback from exhibitors was overwhelmingly positive. Pilot's Post reported that exhibitors were "happy with having made the investment to exhibit," with enquiries coming from "interested parties that will result in qualified leads and not from 'tyre kickers' that one finds at similar events". Several International companies participated, adding to the show's growing international recognition.

Technology, Safety, and Industry Innovation

The 2026 program featured a range of industry-focused activities. Pratt & Whitney Canada hosted its first Customer Connect event in South Africa, providing operators, owners, and maintenance organizations with access to the company's leadership and technical specialists.

Garmin held its Connex Conference, while a Safety Symposium powered by PilotInsure addressed practical safety

issues in the Southern African operating environment.

A highlight of the event was the first-ever drone demonstration at a South African aviation trade show. SSASS Holdings successfully flew the DJI FlyCart 30 cargo drone at Lanseria, equipped with uAvionix ADS-B technology and operating under full CAA approval with air traffic control coordination. The demonstration marked a milestone in the safe integration of drones into controlled airspace.

Investing in the Next Generation

The Girls Fly Africa youth development initiative, sponsored by the Gauteng Growth and Development Agency, brought two young learners from George to Johannesburg for their first aviation experience.

Ambesiwe Ndongeni (15) and Luminathi Bekwa (13), accompanied by educator Aviwe Ncinci and STEM mentor Memory Dizha, attended the exhibition and participated in engineering challenges, including a spaghetti-and-marshmallow tower competition in which the George team placed second.

Refilwe Ledwaba, South Africa's first black woman helicopter pilot and founder of Girls Fly Africa, continues to create pathways for young women in aviation. Luminathi's reflection captured the program's impact: "I've made a promise that I will work hard to achieve my goals and dreams, and maybe one day I will become a woman like Refilwe Ledwaba".

A Steady Ascent

The 2026 edition was the sixth iteration of

AERO South Africa and the second time hosted at Lanseria International Airport. The show's continued growth and increasing international participation suggest that the organizers' bet on quality over quantity has paid off. Exhibitors covered the full general aviation value chain, from aircraft manufacturers and dealers to MRO providers, avionics suppliers, training institutions, finance providers, insurers, and airports.

As the event concluded, the organizers expressed gratitude to all participants, noting that the success of AERO South Africa is measured not by the number of people who arrive, but by "the value of the connections they make". The next edition of Aero South Africa will be held from June 9–11, 2027, at Lanseria International Airport.



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DECADES OVERDUE

The Bombers Still Flying Combat Missions

Few nations maintain an operational fleet of strategic bomber aircraft. Today, only the United States, Russia, and China possess this capability. The United Kingdom was once a member of this exclusive group, but it relinquished its place following the retirement of its last V-bomber in the mid-1980s.

In a remarkable quirk of aerospace history, all three remaining strategic strike forces continue to rely on Cold War-era aircraft, designs that by most standards would be considered relics. The United States operates both the oldest and the newest bombers on the list, while China's bomber squadrons are composed entirely of airframes derived from a 1950s-vintage design.

Boeing B-52 Stratofortress
40+ years beyond original lifespan

The B-52 Stratofortress, in service since 1955, remains iconic. The 76-strong USAF fleet will be upgraded to the J-standard with Rolls-Royce F130 engines under a ~\$15 billion program.

The B-52 was expected to be phased out in the 1960s-70s but is now projected to fly into the 2050s, potentially reaching 100 years of service. The current fleet averages 64 years old. Combined modernization efforts, including re-engining, are estimated to cost \$48.6 billion.

Xi'an H-6 Badger

30+ years beyond original lifespan

The Xi'an H-6, a licensed copy of the Tu-16 Badger, first flew in 1952. China's first domestic example flew in 1968, with production continuing into the



1990s. Around 200-231 H-6s are active across variants, including the H-6K and H-6N, far longer than intended.

The indigenous H-20 stealth bomber has been in development for years but lacks a confirmed production date. While China has built stealth fighters, developing a high-thrust, low-observable engine suitable for an intercontinental flying wing remains a significant roadblock to H-20 production.

Tupolev Tu-95 Bear

20+ years beyond original lifespan

The Tu-95 Bear, first flown in 1952 and entering service in 1956, remains a workhorse for conventional strike, nuclear deterrence, and maritime patrol.

Frequently intercepted by NATO fighters near Alaska and the Arctic, the Bear was expected to be replaced by supersonic bombers in the late 1980s. However, Russia chose to modernize existing airframes instead. Losses to combat, neglect, and scrapping have reduced the estimated combat-capable fleet to around three dozen.

Tupolev Tu-22 Backfire

10+ years beyond original lifespan

The Tu-22M3, first flown in 1969, ceased production in 1993 with no successor. Russia had about 50 airworthy before the 2022 Ukraine invasion. Ukrainian drone raids on Olenya, Belaya, and Dyagilevo airbases in June 2025 destroyed up to 12 aircraft. Total Tu-22M3 losses since the invasion may reach 24.

Rockwell B-1B Lancer

10+ years beyond original lifespan

The B-1B Lancer, a supersonic swing-wing bomber championed by Reagan, entered service in 1986. Although planned for retirement with the B-21 Raider's arrival, two B-1s were pulled from the Boneyard, driven by the USAF's "divest to invest" plan, which reduced its inventory below 5,000 airframes.

The Pentagon is proposing \$1.7 billion to upgrade the B-1B and B-2 fleets to fly through the mid-2030s. Despite losing its nuclear role post-Cold War, the B-1 remains highly effective in close air support due to its payload and loitering capability. Losses during Operation Epic Fury will take years and billions

to replace.

Tupolev Tu-160 Blackjack
5+ years beyond original lifespan

The Tu-160 Blackjack, a supersonic swing-wing bomber and successor to the Bear, first flew in 1981 and entered service in 1987.

Production was cut short by the Cold War's end but restarted in 2015. A 2018 contract covers only ten new aircraft, with two delivered in 2025. Russia has upgraded ten Soviet-built airframes to Tu-160M standard, with 17 older jets awaiting conversion.

Russia has avoided risking these bombers in Ukraine; they launch Kh-101/555 cruise missiles from deep within Russian airspace, safely beyond Ukrainian air defenses. Despite ongoing modernization, the design remains a Cold War relic vulnerable to modern integrated air defenses.

Northrop Grumman B-2 Spirit
5+ years beyond original lifespan

The B-2 Spirit, a flying-wing stealth bomber and realization of Jack Northrop's dream, entered service as the first fifth-generation aircraft. Planned production of 132 was cut to 21 post-Cold War.

The Pentagon is funding a \$1.35 billion upgrade to extend its service life to 2040. The B-21 Raider will replace the B-1 and B-2 over 13 years, with the first combat-ready B-21 expected at Ellsworth AFB in 2027. A \$4.5 billion package has expanded B-21 production capacity by 25%. The B-2's final flight date remains uncertain.

Credit: Luke Diaz



FARNBOROUGH INTERNATIONAL

AIRSHOW

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Met Production
Reality



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6 Ways Pilots Get Confused In The Clouds And How to Prevent It

Nyawade Wendy Cella

Your eyes are your primary sensory input when you're flying. You look outside, you see which way the sky is pointing, and you adjust your airplane. But all of that can fall apart when you're in the clouds.

That's because the sensory input of your eyes and ears start to disagree in the clouds. Your ears have three fluid-filled canals that help you determine which way is up, and they start taking over, for better or worse, when you can't see beyond your propeller.

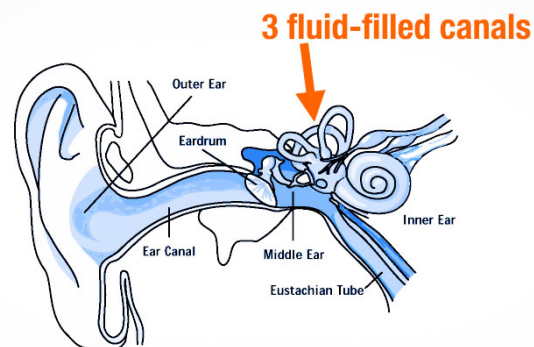
So what's the problem with your ears telling you which way is up? They aren't as instant, or accurate, as your eyes. Because of friction between the fluid and the canals, it can take 15-20 seconds for your ears to reach equilibrium when you turn, climb or descend. That actually works out pretty well when you start maneuvering your plane in the clouds, but the benefit doesn't last long.

For example, if you enter a constant-rate turn to the left, the friction of fluid sloshing around in your ear canals tells your brain that you're turning left. The problem is, if you stay in that constant rate turn long enough, the fluid eventually stops moving. When that happens, your brain thinks the turn has stopped, and that's not a good thing, because you're still in the turn.

The Different Types of Vestibular Illusions
There are six main types of vestibular (ear) illusions you can get in the clouds, and they're all related to the fact your eyes can't see the horizon, and your ears are telling you the

▲ 5-10% of all general aviation accidents result from spatial disorientation, and of those accidents, 90% of them are fatal.

Inner Ear



wrong thing. Here's each illusion, and how to prevent them:

1) "The Leans"

The Leans happen when you enter a banked turn too slowly. For example, if you don't roll quickly enough into a left turn, the fluid in your ears won't start moving, and your brain thinks you're still straight-and-level.

If you correct your wings back to level flight abruptly, your ears and brain think they're banking in the opposite direction (to the right). This makes you feel like

you need to roll the airplane back to the left, or lean your body in that direction to be 'upright'. If you find yourself pressed against your flight instructor in the clouds, chances are you have the leans.

How to prevent it:

The best way to prevent the leans is to avoid super-slow turns in the clouds. You should never over-control your plane, but make sure you are authoritative with your control inputs.

2) Coriolis Illusion

Coriolis illusion happens when you're

in a constant turn long enough for the fluid in your ears to stop moving. As we mentioned before, when the fluid in your ears stops moving, your brain thinks it is 'straight-and-level'.

At this point, if you move your head too quickly, such as looking at something in the cockpit, you can start the fluid in your ears moving in an entirely different axis. This makes you feel like the airplane is maneuvering in a way that it isn't, and if you aren't careful, you can put your plane in a dangerous attitude.

How to prevent it:

Never move your head quickly, and if you feel like you're getting disoriented, focus on your instrument scan pattern and bring the airplane to straight-and-level flight.

3) Graveyard Spiral

Like the name suggests, graveyard spirals aren't good. If you stay in a turn long enough, the fluid in your ears stops moving. As you return to level flight, you feel like you've turned in the opposite direction, and you return back to the original turn.

Because airplanes lose altitude in a turn unless you add back pressure, the airplane starts descending. Because you think you're in a wings-level descent, you pull back on the yoke. But what really happens is you tighten the spiraling turn, and lose even more altitude.

How to prevent it:

Maintain a strong scan pattern, and don't fixate on any one instrument.

4) Somatogravic Illusion

When you accelerate quickly, the 'otolith' organs in your ears think you are pitching nose-up. This makes you want to push the nose of your plane forward, and you enter a nose-low dive attitude. The opposite is true of rapid deceleration. As you slow, you feel like you're pitching forward, and you tend to pitch up into a nose-high stall attitude.

How to prevent it:

Avoid rapid acceleration and deceleration in the clouds.

5) Inversion Illusion

If you pitch down too quickly from a climb to straight-and-level, you can get the illusion that you're tumbling backwards. The real danger with this is that it makes you want to push the aircraft even more nose-low, which puts you into a dive attitude. Even worse, the more you push forward, the more intense the illusion can become.

How to prevent it:

Slow, steady control inputs are the key when you're transitioning from a climb to straight-and-level flight.

6) Elevator Illusion

One of the most challenging things about flying in the clouds, especially in the summer, is that there's usually some turbulence as well.

Elevator illusion happens when you catch an updraft, and your plane is abruptly accelerated vertically. Even though your plane is most likely in straight-and-level flight, you feel like you need to push the

nose forward, entering a dive attitude.

How to prevent it:

Maintain a strong instrument scan pattern in turbulence, and if the updrafts and downdrafts become so strong that you are unable to maintain altitude, fly the attitude indicator, keeping your wings straight and level.

Staying Safe in The Clouds

Vestibular illusions can be incredibly powerful, and it's surprising how hard it is to overcome them in flight.

One of the best ways to overcome the illusions is to trust your instruments, and keep your instrument scan pattern moving at all times.

Practice helps a lot as well. Grab an instrument instructor on the next cloudy day, and go flying. Get an IFR block of airspace and practice some maneuvers in the clouds: climbs, descents, and turns. Get a feel for what the illusions are like, and then focus on overcoming them with a strong instrument scan pattern. Even if you aren't an

Somatogravic Illusion



Rapid forward acceleration makes you feel like you're pitching up, compelling you to lower the aircraft's nose.

Elevator Illusion



Hitting an updraft in turbulence can make you feel like you need to push the nose forward.

Inversion Illusion



Pitching down too quickly can make you feel like you're tumbling backwards.

RUNWAY OVERRUNS EXPLAINED

What happens when a passenger aircraft runs out of runway?

A runway overrun occurs when an aircraft leaves the paved section of runway, either during take-off or landing. It is a type of runway excursion, the broader term used for an aircraft unintentionally leaving the designated runway surface.

Excursions can also involve an aircraft veering off the side of a runway, rather than continuing beyond the end.

For commercial pilots, few moments are more critical than the final seconds of the take-off roll. At high speed, with runway rapidly disappearing beneath the aircraft, there comes a point when stopping is no longer the safest option.

A Vietnam Airlines Boeing 787-9 suffered a tail strike after it appeared to overrun the end of the runway at Munich Airport before getting airborne.

The aircraft took off at 13.57 local time from runway 26L and landed on runway 26R a short time later.

The event was investigated by the Federal Office for Air Accident Investigation (BFU). German investigators said tire tracks had been discovered at the end of the runway, which may have been from the aircraft.

The incident prompted renewed interest in the risk of runway excursions and the fine margins around which an aircraft successfully gets airborne.

Take-off overruns come with a particular risk because the aircraft is likely to be travelling at high speed. The calculation of the speed at which you must continue the take-off, rather than reject the take-off, is made specifically to take into account a runway overrun. The consequences depend on what is situated beyond the runway. An aircraft that overruns may suffer substantial structural damage, while obstacles, uneven terrain, roads or buildings can increase the risk to those on board and on the ground.



There is also the potential for a fire following damage to engines, fuel tanks or other aircraft systems.

Runway overruns are relatively uncommon, but they are among the most serious forms of runway excursion because of the high speeds involved and the potentially limited space available in which to stop.

What to be done to lower the risk of a serious accident

Some airports that lack space at the end of the runway for a traditional safety area have installed an engineered materials arresting system, or EMAS.

An EMAS is located at the far end of a runway, and is constructed of a specialist material to absorb the kinetic energy of the aircraft.

Modern aircraft also have systems on board to prevent this from happening.

Airbus introduced its Runway Overrun Prevention System (ROPS) on the A380 in 2009 and has since progressively rolled out and enhanced the technology across the A320 family, A330 and A350.

Runway Overrun Warning (ROW) functions during the final approach, continuously calculating the aircraft's expected landing distance and comparing it with the runway available. Below 400ft, it can alert pilots to an overrun risk, allowing them to continue the approach or go around.

After touchdown, Runway Overrun Protection (ROP) monitors the aircraft's speed, deceleration and remaining runway, calculating whether sufficient stopping distance remains. If an overrun becomes likely, it instructs the crew to use maximum braking and reverse thrust.

In line with ICAO recommendations, from 2026 aircraft are required to be delivered to be equipped with a Runway Overrun Awareness and Alerting System (ROAAS).

Causes of overrun

A take-off overrun can occur when an aircraft fails to accelerate sufficiently to get airborne, and the crew subsequently has insufficient runway remaining to stop safely. There are several ways this can happen.

An engine failure or other serious malfunction during the take-off roll can leave the aircraft unable to achieve its expected performance.



Whether the crew should reject the take-off or continue depends heavily on the aircraft's speed at the time of the failure.

Aircraft performance is calculated before every departure, taking into account factors including weight, runway length and slope, elevation, temperature, wind and runway condition.

Errors in those calculations, an incorrect aircraft weight or a misset thrust setting can reduce the margin available for stopping.

High temperatures are particularly important because warm air is less dense, reducing the amount of lift and engine thrust available.

A heavily loaded aircraft may therefore require more runway to accelerate and take off.

Unaccounted for tailwind increases the aircraft's groundspeed for a given airspeed, reducing the distance available for stopping.

A wet, contaminated or slippery runway can further increase braking distances. Technical problems with the aircraft's braking system, thrust reversers or other components used during a rejected take-off can also affect

stopping performance.

When the aircraft reaches the calculated V1 speed, the pilots are no longer able to reject the take-off and be guaranteed enough stopping distance on the runway. The result is that after reaching V1, the take-off must be continued and the aircraft taken into the air, regardless of the critical nature of any emergency or system failure.

As part of the performance calculation, V1 is determined for each departure using factors including aircraft weight, runway length and condition, wind, temperature, runway slope and elevation, and obstacles beyond the runway.

For passengers, a take-off may feel routine. For pilots however, the final seconds before an aircraft becomes airborne are among the most carefully managed moments of any flight. From performance calculations and V1 speeds to runway safety systems, multiple layers of protection are designed to ensure an aircraft reaching the end of the runway remains a rare event.

Emergency Autoland reshaping GA market

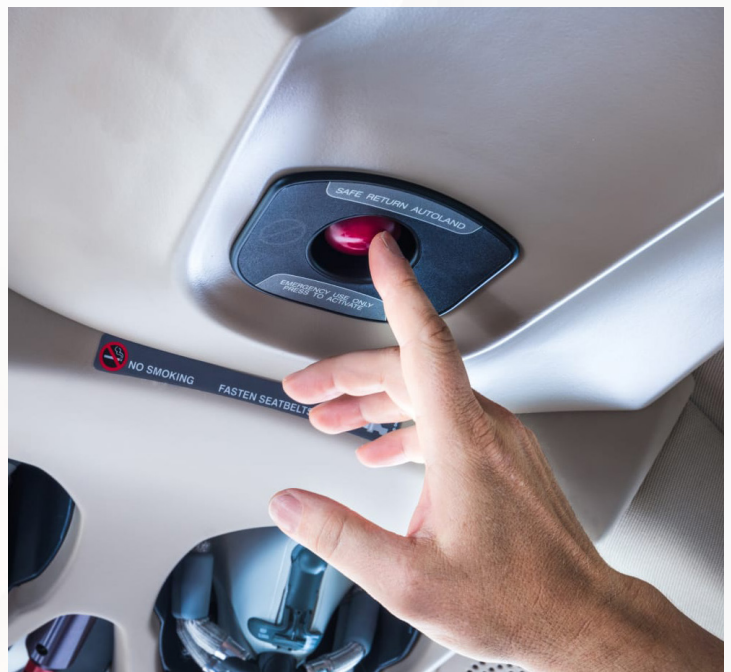


Garmin's Emergency Autoland, the system that can fly an incapacitated pilot's airplane to a runway and land it without human input, is now installed on more than 2,000 airplanes—a fleet equipage that did not exist six years ago.

In that time, the technology has moved from a single high-end turboprop to piston singles and single- and twin-engine jets, become near-standard equipment across owner-flown turbines, and—in December 2025—proved itself in its first real-world emergency.

The ability to land an aircraft autonomously when no capable pilot is available is essentially synonymous with Garmin's Autonomi architecture. Autoland was first certified by the FAA on the Piper M600/ SLS in 2020, the first aircraft of any kind approved to land itself if the pilot becomes incapacitated.

Piper brands it "HALO;" within months, the same Garmin system reached the Daher TBM 940 (HomeSafe) and the





Cirrus Vision Jet.

The achievement earned the 2020 Robert J. Collier Trophy, aviation's premier award for technical accomplishment. Mechanically, a single guarded button—pressable by any occupant—hands the aircraft to the avionics, which selects the nearest suitable airport using onboard terrain and obstacle databases and satellite delivered weather, flies a GPS approach, times the flare, brakes to a stop, and shuts down the engine.

The system squawks 7700, broadcasts automated voice messages on local and emergency frequencies, and briefs passengers through the cockpit displays.

It can also trigger itself if the pilot stops responding to repeated prompts. Autoland requires Garmin's high-end integrated flight decks—the G3000/G5000 family—and is available on the G1000 NXi retrofit for King Airs.

Autoland's early footprint was concentrated where the user-facing risk is highest: owner-flown, single-pilot turbine airplanes. The M600, TBM, and Vision Jet are frequently flown by non-professional owners, where a medical event leaves passengers with no fallback.

Making the system standard equipment

on these models reframed it from an exotic option into a baseline expectation for the segment, and the capability now influences residual values and brand safety credentials.

The platform list expanded to include the Piper M700 Fury, Daher TBM 960, and Epic E1000 AX. In reporting aircraft deliveries for 2025, Daher recorded 51 TBM 960s handed over, which it noted include the HomeSafe Emergency Autoland system and flight envelope protection along with other features.

The TBM 980, unveiled in January, also features "advanced weather detection, icing protection, flight envelope monitoring, and the emergency descent mode, along with the game-changing HomeSafe Emergency autoland functionality," Daher announced.

A shift came in 2025, when Garmin and Cirrus introduced Safe Return on the SR Series G7+, making the SR20 and SR22 singles the first piston-powered airplanes to carry Emergency Autoland. Until then, the technology lived exclusively on pressurized turboprops and jets costing several million dollars.

Bringing it to a high-volume piston platform exposed a far larger population of owner pilots and their families to the

capability.

It has now been certified in twin-engine turboprops with the King Air, and twin-engine jets with the HondaJet. The most demand is in Part 23 single-pilot, but there is demand for other markets and categories as well.

For five years, Autoland's value was validated only in testing. That changed on Dec. 20, 2025, when a Beechcraft King Air B200 operated by Buffalo River Aviation suffered a rapid loss of cabin pressurization during a repositioning flight after departing Aspen, Colorado.

The Garmin emergency systems engaged automatically once cabin altitude exceeded safe levels and landed the twin turboprop at Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport near Denver—the first real-world emergency use of the technology.

The two pilots aboard had donned oxygen masks and remained conscious but, citing instrument conditions, mountainous terrain, and active icing, elected to let the system complete the flight.

Several vectors point to continued expansion. The HondaJet Elite II received FAA certification for Emergency Autoland in February 2026, becoming the first twin-engine jet—and first twin-turbine very light jet—approved for the system, with the Beechcraft Denali also in line and Garmin's technology slated for Textron Aviation's next-generation Citation CJ3 and CJ4 light jets.

Retrofits of legacy fleets may be the single biggest growth lever, since the inservice fleet dwarfs annual new deliveries.

Garmin Autoland is available for retrofit installation on the King Air 200 and the King Air 300 series. The retrofit certification in the King Air was a large lift, but it adds incredible capability for airplanes that can sometimes be decades old.

Competition is also emerging. In March, El Segundo-based Skyryse announced plans to bring a universal emergency autoland capability to both airplanes and, for the first time, helicopters, delivered through its aircraft-agnostic SkyOS flight control software.

GOODBYE MOBILE LOUNGES:

Washington Dulles International Airport is here to stay



Washington Dulles International Airport (IAD) is set for a sweeping \$22.5 billion modernization that will eliminate its iconic mobile lounges, replace aging concourses, and fundamentally change how passengers move through one of the Washington region's busiest airports.

The project will introduce a new U-shaped passenger train, a central pedestrian tunnel, additional moving walkways, new terminal facilities, and a 32,000-space parking garage closer to the main terminal.

The transformation comes as Dulles handles approximately 29 million passengers annually and serves as a major international hub for United Airlines. The project is expected to be financed through airport-generated revenue, municipal bonds, and contributions from airlines rather than direct federal funding.

United and other carriers

operating at the airport have agreed to participate in financing the redevelopment, reflecting the commercial importance of improving Dulles' capacity and passenger experience.

The most visible change will be the retirement of Dulles' mobile lounges, or people-movers. The unusual bus-like vehicles have transported passengers between the main terminal and aircraft facilities for decades. The system was conceived as an extension of the terminal itself, allowing travelers to board directly from elevated vehicles before dedicated midfield concourses and automated transportation systems became the preferred solution at major airports.

Dulles has already reduced its reliance on the lounges through the AeroTrain system, which opened in 2010 and connects the main terminal with several concourses. The new redevelopment is intended to remove that remaining

dependency.

The airport transformation plan centers on making the airport easier to navigate without requiring passengers to board a mobile vehicle. A new U-shaped passenger train will provide transportation across the expanded terminal complex, while a central pedestrian tunnel and additional moving walkways will give travelers more direct alternatives between facilities. The changes address one of Dulles' longstanding passenger complaints: the distance between the main terminal and its midfield concourses.

President Donald Trump emphasized the goal to make IAD a world-class destination during the announcement, while officials noted that the redevelopment is intended to create a more efficient passenger experience. Trump stated, the project also includes new concourses and major terminal renovations.

The existing Saarinen-designed main terminal will remain, preserving the building that has become one of the most recognizable structures in American airport architecture. The focus instead is on replacing or rebuilding facilities surrounding it.

The redevelopment has significant implications for United, which operates Dulles as one of its seven domestic hubs. United has been expanding its Washington

operation and has an interest in improving the airport's ability to handle additional passengers and flights. The airline's participation in financing the project reflects the expectation that better infrastructure can support future growth.

Airport officials said airlines and the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority will fund the modernization through airport-generated resources and airline contributions. The project does not currently require federal funding, although officials have not ruled out potential passenger or taxpayer costs for certain elements of the broader redevelopment. Importantly, the plan does not include additional runways.

Its emphasis is on terminal capacity, passenger traffic, and replacing infrastructure that is inadequate for an airport handling tens of millions of travelers.

For passengers, the most noticeable change will be the end of an airport experience that has remained unusual long after similar systems disappeared elsewhere.

For United, the larger prize is a modernized hub capable of supporting future network growth. If construction begins as planned in 2027, Dulles will enter one of the most consequential redevelopment periods in its history, replacing its most distinctive transportation feature.

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AFRICA

8-10 DECEMBER 2026
DWC, Dubai Airshow Site



**SAUDI ARABIA'S
BUSINESS JET SECTOR
SEES RECORD GROWTH**

Inside Aviation's Most Exclusive Cabins

Waithaka Eddah

Modern first class has evolved from open seats into private suites with doors, walls, and lie-flat beds, offering apartment-like privacy. Some airlines even provide separate seating areas and onboard showers. The focus has shifted from champagne and service to personal space and amenities, offering an intimate, comfortable experience at 35,000 feet.

SWISS International Airlines - The Dark Horse

Aircraft Offered:

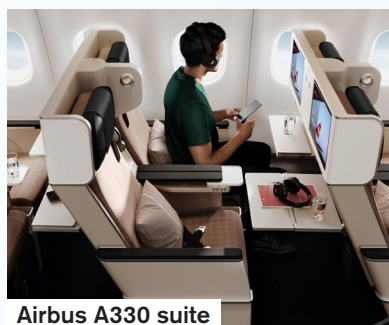
1. Airbus A350 (First Grand Suite)
2. Airbus A330
3. Airbus A340
4. Boeing 777 (First Grand Suite)

SWISS first class offers privacy, personalization, and exclusivity with eight fully enclosed suites on long-haul flights. A key feature is flexible à la carte dining, similar to Norwegian Cruise Line's Freestyle Dining.

SWISS is unveiling a new "First Grand Suite" in 2026, featuring configurable office, bedroom, and dining room designs, aiming to compete directly with Air France's La Première product.



Airbus A30 suite



Airbus A330 suite



Boeing 777 suite



Airbus A350 (First Grand Suite)

Japan Airlines A350 First Class

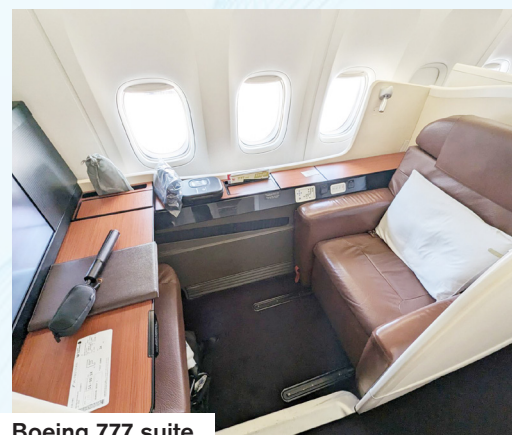
Japan Airlines offers possibly the most high-tech product in this market segment. Japan Airlines offers a technology-focused first-class suite for premium travelers, featuring full enclosure and lie-flat seating.

The newer A350 suite is more spacious, while the 777-300ER "JAL Suite" remains smaller, with no plans for upgrades.

Aircraft Offered: Airbus A350 and Boeing 777 (JAL Suite)

The A350 seat includes the following features, per Japan Airlines:

- Headrest mounted speakers
- 43 inch 4K personal screen (largest in the industry)
- Smart digital tools: control tablet + communication panel outside the door
- Wireless smartphone charger



Boeing 777 suite

Lufthansa Allegris - A Flying Living Room

Lufthansa has engineered a dark-toned sanctuary for first class passengers

Aircraft Offered: A350

Lufthansa's Allegris first class offers a private room with four walls, a dining table for two, and tablet-controlled seat, lighting, and do-not-disturb settings. Designed as a premium experience, it suits couples traveling together, though solo travelers may find better value in Allegris Business class.



Emirates - The Household Name

Emirates has one of the most recognizable products globally. Aircraft Offered: A380 and 777-300ER.

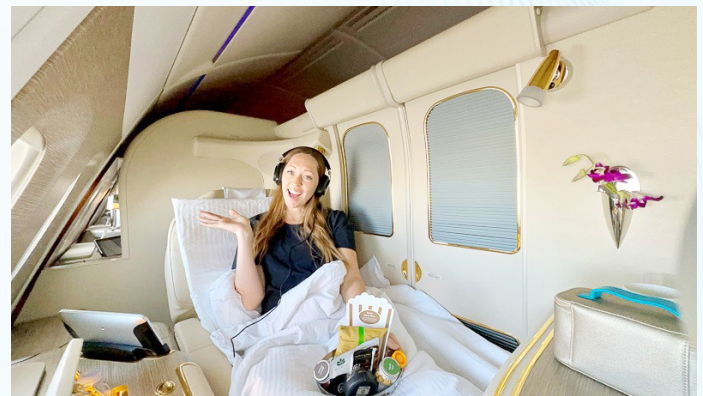
Emirates First Class offers private jet-style luxury with fully enclosed suites on the Boeing 777 featuring closing doors, customizable lighting, and virtual windows. The A380 adds an Onboard Shower Spa and Lounge. Both aircraft provide curated dining, personal minibars, and lie-flat seats, delivering a signature blend of privacy, comfort, and indulgence.

Air France - La Première

Literally translated as 'The First,' Air France offers total seclusion with thick curtains

Aircraft Offered: Boeing 777-300ER

Air France's La Première offers total seclusion, from private check-in and a dedicated security lane to a chauffeur-driven transfer to the 777. Onboard, floor-to-ceiling curtains create an elegant, sound-dampened enclosure, accommodating up to two passengers per cabin.



Singapore Airlines Suites - A Double Bed Apartment

Singapore Airlines gives passengers the most seclusion, reliably. Aircraft Offered A380

Singapore Airlines First Class Suites on the A380 offer a refined hotel-like experience with a separate armchair, full-size bed, and sliding door. Two adjacent suites can connect into a double bedroom. Known for discreet, anticipatory service and elegant, calm luxury, Singapore Suites deliver exceptional consistency across multiple routes, balancing privacy and space without theatrical presentation.

Etihad's The Residence - A True Residence

A living room, bedroom, shower, and even a dedicated butler. Aircraft Offered: A380

Etihad's The Residence is a three-room private suite on the A380, featuring a living room, separate bedroom with a full-size bed, and a private shower room. A dedicated Savoy-trained butler provides personalized service. The Residence offers total seclusion for solo travelers or couples, making it one of aviation's most luxurious and iconic products.



GBU-75

JDAM Long Range *Cleared for Production*

The U.S. Air Force awarded Boeing a procurement contract for GBU-75 JDAM Long Range kits, clearing the initial production for the U.S. Navy.

Boeing has announced that it has been awarded a \$75 million Undefined Contract Action (UCA) to acquire the BSU-111/B Payload Delivery Unit (PDU) for the GBU-75 Joint Direct Attack Munition Long Range (JDAM LR). The weapon was first tested by the U.S. Navy in April 2026.

The UCA now clears the production of the new weapon, developed with a nearly \$100 million internal investment by Boeing, for the U.S. Navy. The BSU-111/B PDU includes a wing kit and a compact turbojet engine, allowing the weapon to travel over 300 nautical miles with a 500-pound class (226-kilogram) payload.

As noted in the opening, while the weapons will go to the Navy, the UCA was awarded by the Air Force. In fact, the JDAM program is jointly managed by the Air Force and Navy, with the Air Force being the lead

service and thus also managing acquisitions.

"This first production contract is a major milestone for the JDAM LR program, demonstrating our ability to deliver long-range precision-strike capability at a significantly lower cost," said Bob Ciesla, vice president of Boeing Precision Engagement Systems.

"Scaling production of the GBU-75 will provide the fleet with an affordable, sustainable solution designed to eliminate long-range land and sea-based threats to U.S. and international forces and enable them to safely and effectively operate in a contested battlespace."

Compared to previous JDAM variants, the new GBU-75 will provide the ability to strike targets at standoff ranges, and out of the range of adversary air defenses. The weapon can also outperform weapons such as the AGM-84H/K SLAM-ER, AGM-154 JSOW and the baseline AGM-158 JASSM, but at a fraction of the cost.

"JDAM LR gives operators an affordable, mass-producible option for striking targets from beyond the effective range of enemy defenses," said Ciesla. The Navy previously described the JDAM LR as a game-changer.

The JDAM-LR

The JDAM Long Range was initially known as Powered JDAM (PJDAM), with reports about the weapon's development going as far back as 2010. The weapon has surfaced again in 2020 as a possible low-cost stand-off weapon.

The Navy explained in a short video on social media that the addition of a small turbojet engine transforms the standard JDAM in a low-cost, high-precision cruise missile. In a recent product card, Boeing confirmed the engine as the TDI J85 by Kratos Defense already announced for the PJDAM.

A Navy F/A-18 carries the new Joint Direct Attack Munition (JDAM) Long Range (LR) variant during a test event in early April off



the coast of California.

The company says that the weapon could be able to reach a 300+ NM range, or 700+ NM if the Mk-82 500 lb bomb is replaced by a "low-cost decoy fuel tank." Quickstrike and Maritime Strike variants are also shown during wind tunnel testing.

Compared to the JDAM Extended Range (ER), the new weapon uses a different body which includes the standard JDAM tail kit, the ER's wing kit and the turbojet engine. The warhead is also partially enclosed in the new body, with approximately half of it protruding in the front.

The JDAM-LR uses the existing aircraft interface and In-Weapon Launch Acceptable Region (LAR) of the standard JDAM, allowing for a quicker integration. This would allow for the aircraft which were already cleared to employ the standard JDAM to use also the new variant.

The new weapon has been designated as GBU-75, according to a statement by Boeing. The company has also explained that the tests were conducted on Apr. 1 and 3.

The first test demonstrated safe separation, engine start, cruise and guidance through terminal flight and impact in water, within meters of its planned target, after a 34-minute flight. The second test saw a similar flight profile, this time successfully incorporating altitude changes and weapon maneuvering.



Joint Direct Attack Munition Long Range



Joint Direct Attack Munition Long Range (JDAM LR) provides affordable mass with reach for multiple missions

- Delivers decisive combat power from outside anti-access/area-denial (A2/AD) systems' effective ranges
- Incorporates modular, compact air-breathing propulsion technology
- Provisioned for optional modular capability enhancements for increased lethality utilizing open system architecture interfaces
- Capable of rapid integration on both legacy and next-generation platforms
- Maintains JDAM precision and impact condition control

Long-Range, Precision-Guided Munition

- Payload: Up to 500 lb
 - All MK-82 form factor payloads
 - Low-cost decoy fuel tank
- Range: 300+NM with 500 lb warhead or 700+NM with low-cost decoy fuel tank
- Optional enhancements (onboard 1.5 kW generator): seekers, data link, other mission avionics
- Compatible on all existing JDAM-integrated aircraft, using existing JDAM aircraft interface and In-Weapon LAR
- Game-changing improvements in precision strike
 - Affordable long-range PGM augments shortages in expensive standoff missiles
 - Enables 4th-gen platforms to contribute deep magazines to A2/AD theaters



TODAY IN *Aviation* HISTORY

THE MAKHONINE MAK-10

The Makhonine Mak-10 made aviation history with its innovative telescopic wings, designed to change span during flight for improved performance.

First flown in 1931, the unique French prototype remains one of aviation's most ambitious experimental aircraft.

On this day in aviation history, 95 years ago (August 11, 1931), the Makhonine Mak-10 took flight for the first time.

This one-of-a-kind experimental French aircraft was built to test variable wing area, specifically telescopic wings. Designer Ivan Makhonine wanted to examine the practicality of a wing that could change shape between phases

of flight, offering the aircraft maximum performance at every interval. The method that Makhonine opted to use was that of a decrease in wing area – by span reduction at high speeds.

The Makhonine Mak-10's telescopic wings increased in span for take-off by 26 feet 3 inches, which was 60 percent of the aircraft's high-speed wing configuration.

The Mak-10's outer panels retracted into the center wing panels. Aside from the variable-geometry wing, the Mak-10 was a conventional aircraft of low-wing monoplane type. The pilots sat in open tandem cockpits, while the rear cockpit was typically faired over.

The fixed landing gear also featured fairings for parasite drag reduction. Originally, the Mak-10 was equipped with twin 644-horsepower W-12 Lorraine 12Eb engines.

Four years after the aircraft's first flight, the Lorraine powerplants were swapped out for 800-horsepower Gnome-Rhône 14K Mistral Major 14-cylinder radial engines.

The 14Ks gave the Makhonine a boost in performance, with a maximum airspeed of 240 mph. Following the engine swap, the Mak-10 was redesignated as the Mak-101. The original Mak-10 had a wingspan of 69 feet extended and 42 feet, 8 inches when retracted. The aircraft's gross



KARL THOM

How An Enlisted Soldier Became An Elite Fighter Legend



Karl Thom rose from reconnaissance pilot to become the leading ace of Jasta 21, scoring 27 aerial victories despite being wounded several times. Decorated with Germany's highest military honors, he later returned to military service in WWII before disappearing under mysterious circumstances in 1945.

During WWI, there was an ace who, despite being from Prussia, was put into a Saxon fighter unit. Karl Thom, born on May 19, 1893, in West Prussia, began his military service by joining Hussar Regiment Number 5 in 1911.

When WWI started, he was serving with Mounted Rifle Regiment Number 10 and was wounded for the first time in November 1914. After recovering, Thom joined the Air Service. His first job was to fly a two-seater reconnaissance plane for FFA 216.

He patrolled near the Vosges until he was injured in a crash in May 1916. Once he recovered, Karl Thom was assigned to FFA 48. He was captured there when he was forced to land. He received the Iron Cross First Class for his escape. Thom then returned to duty for a short time

with FFA 234 before transferring again.

In May 1917, Karl Thom was transferred to a Saxon fighter unit called Jagdstaffel 21, despite being a Prussian. He flew an Albatros D.V in this unit. He scored his first victory on August 22. After scoring three victories in September, on the 18th of that month, he shot down three aircraft in a single day, becoming an ace.

He scored five more victories in September, bringing his score to 12. On October 11, Thom was awarded the Military Merit Cross, the highest bravery award for enlisted men in Prussia and Germany. Karl Thom had also been awarded the Member's class of the Royal House Order of Hohenzollern. His 13th victory came on October 29, followed by another on December 1.

On December 23, Thom was wounded in action when he was shot in the leg. He recovered by mid-1918, and upon returning to Jasta 21, he began flying a Fokker D.VII. In June, Thom shot down five enemy aircraft, followed by six more victories in July.

Some unconfirmed reports credit him with shooting down Quentin Roosevelt, the youngest son of President Theodore Roosevelt, on Bastille Day, July 14, 1918. Karl Thom ended his career with one victory on August 1 and another on August

4. With 27 confirmed victories, he became the top ace for Jasta 21.

On August 11, Karl Thom was badly hurt in the hip and taken to the hospital. While still in the hospital on November 1, he was awarded the Pour le Mérite, Germany's highest award for commissioned officers. He rejoined Jasta 21 on November 6.

Three days later, he crashed and suffered multiple fractures. Just two days after that, the Armistice ended WWI. After WWI, Karl Thom helped return surrendered German airplanes to Allied forces in Coblenz. He returned to the Luftwaffe to serve in WWII.

From July to September 1944, he was in charge of Fliegerhorst-Kommandantur A (o) 4/I, and then he led Fliegerhorst-Kommandantur E (v) 217/I until October 1944. But his death is unclear. Karl Thom disappeared under unclear circumstances on March 3, 1945, in Pillau, East Prussia.

Some records say he died from his wounds in a hospital in Pillau around March 3, 1945. Pillau was home to the Russian Baltic Fleet, so he might have been wounded in battle, captured, and then died from his injuries. In the Aces series, Karl Thom was a brave and talented ace who served his country in both World Wars, despite being injured.



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als.co.ke Fleet: 2x Dash-8, Buffalo DHC-5,
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Kisumu airport - Kisumu

Pilot line: +254 057 202 4499 or 202 5658
Fax: +254 057 202 1035

Eldoret International Airport - Eldoret

Pilot line: +254 053-2062966, 0722403444
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Wajir Airport - Wajir

Pilot line: +254 046 421 024
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Lokichogio Airport
Lokichogio
Pilot line: +254 054 32292, 0723 560 981,
0734 594 038

Mua Hills Radar Station - Mua Hills

Tel: +254 354 245 620
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82 80, Cel : (+225) 67 01 65 04 / (+225)
08 43 71 78

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14 85, MOB: (+223) 70 95 4433
Email: Sales.bamako@rwandair.com

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Centre ville Immeuble city center
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UPGRADING ENTEBBE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT FOR A BETTER PASSENGER EXPERIENCE

Entebbe International Airport's modified terminal building was opened to the public in January 2024 and all facilities are operational and running smoothly.

The imminent commission of a new 20,000 sqm terminal connecting to the current terminal will enhance terminal capacity to at least 3.5 million passengers per year.

The existing and ongoing upgrades being implemented are part of a 20-year National Aviation Master Plan aimed at catering to the growing traffic at Entebbe Airport and enhancing the passenger experience.

