



MEDIA STATEMENT

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Director of Civil Aviation scoops Public Service Leader of the Year Award

Ms Poppy Khoza recognised for her contribution to transformation in aviation

Johannesburg

For immediate release

The Director of Civil Aviation, Ms Poppy Khoza, scooped the Top Empowered Public Service Leader of the Year Award at the 15th annual Oliver Empowerment Awards ceremony on Thursday night. The ceremony was hosted by TopCo Media and its media partners, and was held at Emperor's Palace in Kempton Park, east of Johannesburg.

The Oliver Empowerment Awards recognise and celebrate individuals, companies and entities that are at the forefront of business transformation in South Africa.

Ms Khoza, who was appointed as the head of the South African Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA) in December 2013, has prioritised transformation in the aviation sector during her term. She made history by being the first black woman to be appointed to the position of Director of Civil Aviation, and has set out to open the doors of opportunity for others, especially black women. She also made history in 2015 when she was elected as the first female chairperson of the International Civil Aviation Organisation's Aviation Security Panel. She was re-elected to a second term as chairperson of the Panel on 14 March 2016 at the start of the 27th Aviation Security Panel meeting held at the agency's headquarters in Montreal, Canada.

It is my goal to not only contribute to transformation in aviation, she says, but, to contribute to the greater transformation of the South African business landscape as well.

During her tenure, the SACAA has continued with its quest to bring knowledge about careers in aviation to rural schools so that learners can know and take advantage of the many opportunities available in the aviation sector. In the last two years the SACAA has spent close to R5.5 million towards the training of young South Africans eager to pursue different careers in aviation. The majority of the bursary recipients are young women from economically depressed households based in rural areas.

The SACAA's contribution to skills development and transformation has started to yield positive results. In November last year, the SACAA welcomed the first all-black flight calibration crew into the industry, which was a landmark moment in civil aviation.

The aviation sector has been slow to transform, primarily due to the historic skills gap created by excluding black people from acquiring specialised skills, says Khoza. This is the gap that the SACAA seeks to address through its transformation and corporate social investment programmes.

The Oliver Award, she says, is testimony to the SACAA's deep commitment to excellence, good governance and sustainability.

I am both humbled and pleased to have been recognised for the important contribution that the SACAA is making to transformation in both the aviation sector and the economy as a whole.

Our brand promise is to keep South Africans safe in the sky, and it is a promise we aim to fulfil through both excellence and meaningful empowerment.

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Word Count (excluding headings): 444

About the SACAA:

The South African Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA) is a self-funded agency of the Department of Transport tasked with promoting and maintaining a safe, secure, and sustainable civil aviation environment by regulating and overseeing the industry in line with international standards. We perform oversight of various aspects of civil aviation, including, but not limited to aviation security, aviation personnel licensing, aviation infrastructure, and air safety operations.

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