

MEDIA RELEASE

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INDUSTRY CAPTAINS INSPIRE CONFIDENCE IN AVIATION FUTURE AT THE NATIONAL AVIATION CONFERENCE

It was an inspired lift off at the 2022 National Aviation Conference (NAC) hosted by the South African Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA), as industry captains as well as specialised experts convened on Friday, 22 April 2022, to engage in a litany of discussions and resolutions.

Carrying the theme '**Cleared for take-off**: An outlook on the future of aviation beyond COVID-19', the national and international speakers and panelists went on to realistically reflect on the global challenges that include dynamics brought by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The NAC also looked in to:

- The economic outlook on aviation and the need to rethink ways of business and work culture.
- A report on the state of aviation safety: accident and incident statistics.
- Insights on the role of human factors in aviation safety and mental health
- Risk performance-based oversight, the advocacy for policy
- Cyber security,
- The opportunities to innovate as well as the need to reinforce the importance of compliance in the industry.
- The effects of climate change in aviation.

The SACAA Director of Civil Aviation, Ms. Poppy Khoza, took to the podium to set the tone for the day by emphasising the Industry Regulators' commitment to rebuilding the sector while also commending the South African public for their continuous trust of airline operations.

“We speak of taking stock of aviation safety because there can be no meaningful recovery if we do not collectively focus our attention as well as efforts to aviation safety and security. The industry’s sustainability is equally dependent on safe aviation operations which give confidence to the flying public”, said Ms. Khoza.

“I will always appeal to all of the industry captains to do everything in their power to maintain their safety systems and implement procedures as well as maintenance manuals at all costs. We can never and will never allow economic factors to override these crucial practices.”

This view was concurred by the Department of Transport Deputy Minister, Hon. Sindisiwe Chikunga, who insisted on the equal importance of technological advancement and industry innovation that looks post this COVID-19 pandemic.

The Deputy Minister said: “It is said that whether land or air, safety should be practiced everywhere. In this case we cannot over emphasise aviation safety.

“The current trajectory, where we have devastatingly experienced the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, also calls for that agility to review and upscale our collective efforts in creating a thriving policy that must produce socio-economic opportunities for economic recovery and reconstruction. The technology advancement has landed, and we need to develop capabilities and capacity to have and use such innovative solutions.”

The insight and level of discussions responded to the overarching question of the day: ‘Is the local aviation industry ready to take off to the next level?’, with this receiving an affirmed response and assurance from all industry role players.

There is full confidence that the public remained in secure hands as South Africa continues to retain its internationally acclaimed aviation safety record and standards.

ENDS

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