

If we look at airport capacity, let's focus on the two major ones – Cape Town, and Johannesburg.

ATNS is primarily concerned with airspace capacity and efficiency, which is affected by many factors out of our direct control, such as infrastructure on airport premises, which is under the direct control of ACSA. We, however, are always closely talking about initiatives from both our sides that are in support of each other and of air traffic growth and being able to cope with higher capacity demands.

Currently, much activity is underway at O.R. Tambo International to meet the demands of 2010. The one airport that the public have expressed concern about is Cape Town. It is believed that some measures will have to be implemented at Cape Town International Airport if it intends on coping with the massive influx of people in 2010.

Currently the airport receives only 30 aircraft an hour, compared to Johannesburg International Airport that manages 56 aircraft an hour.

Stuart Ratcliffe, manager of the Central Airspace Management Unit (CAMU) at the Air Traffic and Navigation Services Company (ATNS) explains that Cape Town International Airport *could* run into some capacity difficulties if some initiatives to improve capacity are not put in place. One of the most effective methods of coping with increased capacity is to decrease the time between landings of the aircraft, as well as time spent on the runway by aircraft by installing rapid exit taxiways.

The taxiways would mean aircraft could turn off the runway faster. This in turn would mean that runway occupancy time is a lot less. It could increase the capacity of the airport significantly and could help for 2010.

Gawie Bestbier, a senior manager of aerodrome safety at the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), agrees with Ratcliffe.

Deidre Hendricks, spokesperson for the ACSA says that the airspace and runway at Cape Town International Airport still has sufficient capacity to meet flight and runway demands for at least the next five years.

"If and when demand begins to create capacity constraints, both ACSA and the ATNS will consider the application of these methods within the Cape Town environment," she said.

Hendricks added that the airport would undergo many changes as part of their infrastructure specific plans for 2010.

Jacqui O' Sullivan, spokesperson for South African Airways assures that South African Airways (SAA) supports any initiative that would safely and effectively ease air traffic congestion and as a result, minimise flight delays. She also is fully aware of SAA being in very close contact with ACSA and ATNS, both of our companies which have, and continue to be, instrumental in finding solutions to conquer air traffic congestion.

Let's look now at **ATNS initiatives to accommodate 2010** with ease. Naturally airports is not ATNS' area of specialty, so any information required there would have to be directed to ACSA, and if necessary, even the airlines.

We are expecting an additional, estimated, 300 000 international passengers - plus approximately 50 thousand officials, sponsors etc. - over a 5 week period, which is an exciting number from a South African tourism perspective.

It would be difficult to comment on the challenges that would face South Africa during this time.

From an ATNS perspective, we can proudly say that we are excited about the increase in air traffic the event promises. Most certainly, our staff are already adequately equipped with state-of-the-art technology to assist in the management of the large increase in air traffic, and are also more than suitably trained to deal with all scenarios that could present themselves.

As far as changing procedures or operating practice within our airspace, ATNS will continue to do business as usual – there will just be more aircraft flying around.

We are looking into ways of dealing with the increase in aircraft within our skies. This includes, as an example, an investigation into reducing aircraft separation on final approach as well as within specific pieces of airspace, which will allow for increased airspace capacity without any degradation of safety. Other projects to accommodate the increase in traffic include;

- Improved pilot reaction times and decreased runway occupancy times;
- High capacity Standard Instrument Arrivals and Departures;
- Ensuring a fully operational Air Traffic Flow Management Unit (CAMU), that will have the ability to carry out Strategic, Pre-tactical and Tactical air traffic management through demand and capacity balancing and collaborative decision making;
- Slot allocation procedures will be put into effect at other identified airfields during the event so as to ensure demand is balanced against capacity;
- We are investigating the installation of radars at non-radar airfields; and
- Have looked into extending the hours of duty of operational staff at ATNS, whilst at the same time complying with all legal and statutory requirements as specified to us by ICAO, the International Civil Aviation Organisation.

In addition to this, we are planning to increase runway throughput capacity at the three major airports from;

56 aircraft arrival and departure movements at Johannesburg International to 72;  
30 aircraft arrival and departure movements at Cape Town International to 44;  
and 24 aircraft arrival and departure movements at Durban International to 36.

Consultation with all key role-players is very much part of this process, so as to ensure that our capacities are all aligned.

ATNS has delivered its Priority Statement to the Department of Transport with a strategy for 2010, and are confident that we will meet the needs and expectations of all our clients over this period.

ATNS is confident that it will be able to deal with air traffic volumes as presently predicted.

As far as the “now” is concerned, ATNS has put in place many things to grow the air traffic system. I attach the section from our latest annual report which highlights much of these initiatives and their progress. Please see attached.

Then finally, **training and careers.**

ATNS actively recruits individuals who have ambition to follow a career as an Air Traffic Controller.

As each pilot is primarily concerned with ensuring that he flies his, or her, aircraft to the greatest level of skill and responsibility, our air traffic controllers (ATC) provides the aviator with the necessary information and clearances needed to ensure that the flight is safely separated from all other aircraft operating within the same airspace.

Simply put, our ATC's are responsible for the maintenance of a safe and orderly flow of air traffic, thus preventing collisions between aircraft - both in the air and on the ground - as well as providing information and advice to aircraft for the safe and efficient conduct of flight.

Furthermore, our air traffic controllers co-ordinate take-offs and landings ensuring that there is a minimal time between departures and arrivals at airports around the country.

Even though we operate from the ground, our controllers are just as much a part of the cockpit as is the pilot!

As far as training to become an Air Traffic Controller is concerned, ATNS provides its own training to potential candidates.

The ATNS Training Academy (ATA) was established in 1995 in order to provide air traffic and navigation services related training. This academy presents the complete spectrum of training courses required for a career in air traffic services and engineering support. Furthermore, the ATA provides management training including Team Resource Management, leadership skills development and client relations management.

The expert training offered by the ATA provides trainees with the skill to assist in the safe transport of thousands of passengers within South African airspace. Once trained, the trainees have the opportunity to be stationed at any one of the 21 ATNS serviced aerodromes nationally where they will continue to grow their careers and be exposed to a wide array of different airport and airspace environments.

The ATA is also very proud of its internationally recognised accreditation and therefore attracts both South African and international students. Currently, the academy enrolls trainees from 30 African states.

All our ATA instructors are registered as assessors with SAQA. Endorsements from the SA Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA) and ISO are also in place.

The ATA is continually striving to increase its regional aviation training capacity. The academy maintains close links with the International Air Transport Association (IATA) and other education service providers such as Natal University of Technology, Johannesburg University of Technology and Cape Town Technikon. This is done in order to stay abreast of developments within these technical training disciplines.

The ATA prides itself in the development and facilitation of custom-made courses for their clients in order to ensure that the clients' needs are all satisfactorily met. As an example, countries have participated in the delivery of this process through simulator training on country-specific airspace.

Within the local context, the ATA trains all our own air traffic controllers, aeronautical information management specialists as well as provides the required courses for completion by qualified technical services personnel. In order to be selected for training for Air Traffic Control by ATNS, the following requirements need to be met;

- Matric with English and Mathematics
- South African citizen
- Preferably fall within the age range 18 and 25
- Be fluent in English without any speech impediment
- Be certified medically fit by an aviation practitioner.

Candidates will also be assessed on merit via ability testing, personality profiling and interviews, where the panel looks for individuals who display effective communication, teamwork abilities, strong interpersonal skills, an ability to multi-task and also work under pressure.