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**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**SOUTH AFRICA INTRODUCES NEW REGULATIONS FOR AIR CARGO SECURITY**

The South African Civil Aviation Authority, (SACAA) has developed new regulations that will govern how air cargo is handled and managed. These regulations will come into force in January 2009, and will ensure that stringent measures are applied when handling air cargo so that aviation safety and security are not compromised. The SACAA is confident that once implemented, all weaknesses and deficiencies in the current system of handling air cargo will be adequately addressed.

These regulations are in line with the requirements of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), to which South Africa is a Contracting State. In terms of ICAO requirements, as stipulated in Annexure 17, “each Contracting State shall ensure that security controls are applied to air cargo and mail, prior to their being loaded onto an aircraft engaged in passenger commercial air transport operations”. ICAO further requires each Contracting State “to ensure that operators do not accept air cargo or mail for carriage on an aircraft engaged in passenger commercial air transport operations unless the application of security controls is confirmed and accounted for by a regulated agent, or such consignments are subjected to appropriate security controls.”

Also notable in the new regulations is a requirement that all organizations involved in the handling and transportation of air cargo will have to be approved and licensed by the SACAA. The regulations also require all staff employed to handle air cargo to be subjected to background checks and receive appropriate training, this essentially means that in future, anyone who is not qualified to handle air cargo will not be permitted to do so.

South Africa has a vibrant and dynamic civil aviation industry, which has experienced tremendous growth over the past 10 years. For example, air travel in South Africa has grown by more than 10% per year over the past three years, largely due to the proliferation of low-cost airlines following the deregulation of the industry in the early Nineties and the increased volume of international traffic flowing into the country. For instance, in 1993, fewer than 12 international airlines flew into South Africa. But, today, more than 70 international airlines fly into the country on a regular basis.

The Airports Company South Africa (ACSA) is handling 16.8 million departing passengers annually and is currently experiencing an annual growth of 10.8 %. Smaller airports such as Port Elizabeth, Kimberley and Bloemfontein Airports have also recorded an average growth of about 10.4%. The current consolidated terminal capacity for smaller airports is 2 million passengers. This growth, as can be expected, has also been experienced by the air cargo sector, which has grown by 8.5% over the past decade. It is for this reason that air cargo need to be managed and regulated in an orderly and uniform fashion.

Captain Colin Jordaan, CEO of the SACAA and Commissioner for Civil Aviation says that the SACAA is very pleased that South Africa has reached the stage where the cargo security regulations can be implemented. He says that these regulations have been in the making for a number of years, largely because of the challenges posed by cargo security, but a decision had to be taken to start implementing them. Colin Jordaan says the air cargo sector has nothing to fear from these regulations.

He says, "I want to assure all organizations involved in the handling of air cargo that the introduction of these new regulations is not meant to stifle the growth of the air cargo sector, but to ensure that everything happens in an orderly fashion. We can no longer afford to let things happen haphazardly, because in the end, we will all pay a heavy prize in terms of aviation security. I therefore want the air cargo sector to view these regulations not as a stumbling block to growth but rather as a facilitator of that growth and development. Every system in aviation needs checks and balances to ensure order and discipline – and this applies equally to the management of air cargo."

In order to prepare the air cargo industry for the introduction of these regulations, the SACAA is currently conducting a series of workshops with relevant parties to outline what

is required from them to ensure full industry readiness for the January 2009 implementation date.

The SACAA will be working very closely with the industry in the implementation of these regulations, and will offer the necessary assistance to ensure full industry compliance to the requirements of the new regulations.

These regulations will be applicable to aircraft operators, air cargo handling agents, freight forwarders, courier organizations, shippers, airport operators and other relevant government agencies.

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