

# Public and private sector collaboration key to unlocking air travel benefits

The main message emerging from the Aviation Industry Growth Conference is that the key to unlocking the full socio-economic benefits linked to air transport lies in continued investment in infrastructure coupled with meaningful public and private sector collaboration.



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## A vital industry

Delivering her keynote address at the conference, the Deputy Minister of Transport, Sindisiwe Chikunga, MP, said that air transport plays a major role in world economic activity and opens up world markets to business, adding that many industrial and commercial activities rely almost entirely on air transport for their existence.

“The aviation industry is vital to international trade, investment, and tourism, as well as domestic transport, sports and recreation. Therefore, an efficient, reliable and sustainable aviation industry should be promoted while maintaining control over international and domestic air transport services within a well-defined regulatory framework,” said Chikunga.

## Encouraging private sector investment to meet capital requirements

She also told delegates that the government is committed to the achievement of socioeconomic goals and that there is a policy aimed at providing, enhancing and guaranteeing private sector investments in areas that were, exclusively, state sectors.

“Our ability to meet the commitment to positive socioeconomic transformation must be accompanied in this sector by, among others, infrastructure development, maintenance and strategic expansion of the current network. This is vital given the rate of deterioration of existing transport infrastructure and inadequate capital investment because current investment levels remain out of sync with the maintenance and expansion requirements demanded by the growth strategies we have designed,” said Chikunga.

She also revealed that as a corollary to this undertaking, the Department of Transport has completed a Transport Specific Chapter into the Private Sector Participation Framework aimed at creating space for the private sector to invest and thus help build additional capacity within the aviation industry.

## **Public and private partnerships must be forged**

In her opening remarks, the head of the South African Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA), Poppy Khoza, appealed to delegates “to search for every avenue where we can increase our mutual cooperation that would boost and improve the economic outlook for the aviation industry going forward”.

“In order to realise economic and aviation prosperity, meaningful public and private partnerships must be forged. There is also a need to understand opportunities that exist in the aviation space, both nationally and on the continent, and leverage these to grow aviation businesses. Making use of technology, as well as investing in and deploying innovation through research and development is also critical. The same applies to saving the environment, as sustainable growth is dependent on our ability to protect the environment,” Khoza said.

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