



COMMERCIAL AVIATION NEWS

JAN/FEB 2009

EDITORIAL

May we take this opportunity to wish all our readers a healthy and prosperous 2009.

2008 has come to an end, and now we must try to remember to date our paperwork 2009. The general consensus is that the older one gets, the faster the months fly by, and looking at the silver heads at our recent Annual General Meeting, this would seem to apply to the majority of those present.

This is also a time to reflect on events, achievements and issues that were concluded during the past year, and some that were not finalised, and we would like to pay tribute to the sterling and dedicated work done by the executive committees of the Affiliates. The Exco's are the "engine rooms" or "rock-face" of the Association, where matters that affect the smooth operation of the respective bodies are tackled in an effort to arrive at equitable solutions.

These Exco's often had to meet with the barest minimum of a quorum, but this did not deter those present from aggressively addressing the full agendas prepared by the CAASA Secretariat. There were always several items under "Matters arising from the previous Minutes", which were largely issues that had been carried over because more information was required to formulate action, or a solution to the item which could not be finalised at the time.

Reports and feedback on meetings held between the Exco and the CAA, and other industry bodies, were also on the agenda, and wherever possible a CAA representative was invited to attend these meetings to assist in providing essential information. There were always new items that had arisen between meetings and these were added to the agenda under "general". Such items are far far too many to name here, but suffice it to say that many of them were successfully concluded to the benefit of aviation as a whole; however, there remain some to be carried over to the New year.

Mention must be made of the assistance rendered by Kim Gorringer, the CEO, who had to carry out the proposals and investigations raised at the meetings. There was never a dull moment for Kim, who was always present at the Exco meetings, and the Affiliates owe him a big vote of gratitude.

So, what of the future?

We hope to see the Exco's continue with the good work they have delivered in the past, and make even more progress in serving their Affiliates. To achieve this we need to see more members becoming involved, and a drive to have more non-members committing themselves to CAASA and the Exco's is on the cards for this New Year.

Well done, the Executive Committees of the respective Affiliates.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS – NOVEMBER 2008

With the exception of AMOSA, once again the Affiliate Annual General Meetings were not as well attended as they should have been. The CAASA AGM had an exceptional good turn out and it was pleasing to see some new faces present, and for the first time it was decided to bestow awards on people they deem to have made the most contribution to the Association, as follows:

- First Category: Life-long Service and personal contribution over many years, was awarded to Tom Chalmers, Cor Beek and Carl Reck
- Second Category: CAASA President's Trophy awarded to the most effective Affiliate in 2008, was awarded to: AMOSA
- Third Category: CAASA Merit Award: Commendation Certificates was presented to: Maj Gen (Ret) Fred du Toit and Martin Lockwood (retirees from the Board)
- Fourth Category: Appreciation Certificate for assistance to CAASA during 2008 – awarded to World AirNews, African Pilot, Lanseria International Airport and SA Flyer



Above from left: Kim Gorringe, Tom Chalmers, Cor Beek, Carl Reck and Dolf Janse van Rensburg (AMOSA)

ELECTION OF AFFILIATE PRESIDENTS:

The following were elected as Presidents of the respective organisations for the coming year:

AAA-SA	Airport and Aerodromes Association	:	Mr Rowan Torr
AATOSA	Aviation Training Association	:	Mr John English
AMOSA	Aviation Maintenance Association	:	Mr Keith Simpson
ASAAT	Aerospace Traders Association	:	Mr Jeff Earle
BAASA	Business Association	:	Mr Rob Garbett
HASA	Helicopter Association	:	Ms Lynette Loosen

CAASA NEWSLETTER – CIRCULATION

We are responding to complaints received from members in which they say they do not receive copies of our monthly Newsletter.

In order to solve this problem we seek your co-operation to ensure that we can reach as many – if not all – of those who wish to receive the Newsletter. Since there are various ways of tackling this problem, let's see if we can formulate a plan of action! Naturally the most effective way would be if we could visit all of your establishments to sit down with heads of departments to discuss this issue. However, we unfortunately do not have the resources and manpower to achieve this.

We therefore suggest an alternative, which is to appeal for your support by having members of your staff approached to establish who would want to be on René's direct mailing list, or could a circulation list be compiled within your company to have the Newsletter circulated internally. However, we would not want to see long distribution lists whereby the last person on the list only gets to see the Newsletter weeks later, due to delays in its circulation.

Would it be possible to have someone in your organisation receive an issue and be responsible for making copies, or to arrange a speedy circulation by e-mail?

René van Wyk endeavours to maintain a current circulation list and she is sometimes contacted by people who wish to be taken off the list. This is indeed a help but we want to go further and reach many more prospective readers who are not currently on her list, and hopefully we can achieve this with your help.

We sincerely wish to put this complaint to bed – starting right now!

If you would like to add a name to René's mailing list please forward their names to her - rene@caasa.co.za

IN-HOUSE AFFAIRS

from the desk of the CEO, Kim Gorringe

The December holidays are now a thing of the past and the new year is about to start in earnest. I trust all our members had a restful December break and wish you all a very happy and prosperous 2009.

As we have all heard via the media, the first part of 2009 is forecast to be difficult economically, with the world economic outlook only improving towards the end of the year. Although the economic picture in South Africa is much less gloomy than in other countries, our country and industry will no doubt also experience some challenging times in 2009. In line with CAASA's mission to promote and protect commercial aviation, we intend to do everything possible to help our members and industry weather the storm.

This year, CAASA will focus on combating any measure or fee that will increase business costs in the aviation sector as well as pursue initiatives that will channel new business into our sector.

Although not all our planning has been finalised, we can say this. Our association will strenuously oppose any fee, charge or tariff increase proposed by the parastatal aviation service providers and regulators. Our first step in this direction is our proposal to CARCOM to implement a FEECOM to regulate any fees to be introduced or increased by the SACAA. Although we have been told by the SACAA that our FEECOM proposal is not acceptable to them, we intend pursuing this matter with all the vigour and gusto that we can muster.

Furthermore, in order to reduce or keep costs static, we will continue to lobby the SACAA to properly differentiate the regulatory standards applicable to small and medium aeroplane operations on the one hand and airline operations on the other. Under the auspices of the CAASA affiliate ANSO, a regulatory research group has already been set up to ascertain what the best international practise is in this regard. From an informed position, we will engage the SACAA to amend some of the costly and unnecessary requirements contained in Part 135. Where necessary, we will also propose our own amendments to the operating regulations via the CARCOM process. Regarding the issue of developing more business opportunities for General Aviation, CAASA together with ASAAT will look at expanding South African aviation business ties with Africa. The economic experts predict that business within Africa will be less affected by the economic slowdown than in other markets. There is undoubtedly business to be done with rest of the Continent. This business drive into Africa will commence with an ASAAT "Into Africa Indaba" to be held in early March. The purpose of the Indaba will be to brief and advise ASAAT members on the business opportunities in Africa. Full details regarding the "Into Africa Indaba" will be announced in the next CAASA Newsletter. Subsequent to the Indaba, an ASAAT trade visit, with possible support from the South African Department of Trade and Industry, will be made to some of the countries in East Africa, probably Kenya and Tanzania. More detail regarding the trade visit will also be announced in the next newsletter.

So all in all, although, the next six months to nine months might be challenging, there is much to be excited and hopeful about as we start 2009. There is also much work to be done to promote and protect our businesses and Industry. However, in order to be successful, we will have to work together and give of our time to make a contribution to the Industry.

And also, we will need to believe in the now famous and effective Obama slogan of "...YES, WE CAN..."

CEO'S REPORT

GENERAL AVIATION SAFETY INITIATIVE (GASI) MEETING: 12 JANUARY 2009.

As reported last year, the purpose of GASI is for the General Aviation industry and the SACAA to discuss and develop initiatives and measures to improve the levels of safety in and reduce the current accident rate for General Aviation.

At the first GASI Meeting of the year, the following issues of special interest were discussed-

Programme for mentorship and supervision of students.

In order to facilitate a better transfer of skills and opportunities to gain flying experience, the Commissioner announced that the SACAA was considering allowing an optional dual pilot crew requirement for single engine freight operations for the purposes of hour building and experience transfer. CAASA placed on record that it would support this concept as long as it did not increase the operating costs for these type of operations.

Resource Management Training for Single Pilots and AME's.

The Commissioner confirmed that the SACAA was investigating requirements for training along the lines of the system that is being introduced in Australia.

From the middle of this year, pilots undergoing training in Australia will be tested on their knowledge of human factors and threat and error management. To prepare the flying training industry and trainee pilots for the new requirements, the Civil Aviation Safety Authority has issued special guidance material on the teaching and assessing of human factors and threat and error management. This guidance material will make sure new pilots receive practical instruction in developing and improving their non-technical skills. These skills include communication, interpersonal dealings, good judgement and decision-making. The initiative follows a recommendation from the International Civil Aviation Organization that these skills should be taught and assessed right from the beginning of a pilot's career.

The SACAA also undertook to investigate the possibility of developing a human factor training system for use in the maintenance environment.

The SACAA's Single Pilot Resource Management system would be along similar lines to the Australian one and once the indigenous system had been developed, the SACAA would consult with GASI regarding the implementation thereof.

Standard terminology for radio syllabi

This standard is under development and when complete will be promulgated in the appropriate form.

Fitting of ballistic parachutes to NTCA involved in training.

The SACAA presented the results of a study that had been done on this issue. The conclusion of the study was that the number of accidents involving NTC training aircraft did not warrant the cost involved in fitting a ballistic parachute system. Although the SACAA would not go down the ballistic parachute route, they would however introduce appropriate requirements for the approving of NTCA for flight training.

CAASA MEETING WITH COMMISSIONER TO DISCUSS EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENT FOR ISSUING OF AME HELICOPTER LICENCE: 12 JANUARY 2009

A meeting took place between the Commissioner, the SACAA General Manager Air Safety Operations and two SACAA Officials on the one hand and CAASA President Johan Nell and the writer on the other to discuss the refusal of the SACAA Testing Standards Department to issue licences to various apprentices that had undergone training. Around this time, various CAASA members were alleging that the SACAA Testing Standards Department was requiring applicants for the AME Rotorcraft licence (Cat A & C) to receive not less than 6 months experience on rotorcraft airframes and an additional 6 months on the specific engine.

After examining the applicable regulations and technical standards, an agreement was reached between CAASA and the Commissioner with reference to the interpretation of the current SA-CATS – AMEL (66.02.9). It was agreed that an applicant for an AME Rotorcraft licence (Cat A&C) needs only 6 months experience on the practical maintenance and inspection of the type or group for which application was made or one of similar characteristics.

It was further agreed that the 6 month experience requirement covers both the airframe and engine maintenance. The Commissioner has provided CAASA with a written “minute” of the meeting evidencing the agreement reached. Any CAASA, AMOSA or HASA member still experiencing difficulties with the SACAA Testing Standards Department on this issue may obtain a copy of the above-mentioned minute from CAASA House.

SACAA INDUSTRY LIAISON FORUM (ILF) MEETING : 20 JANUARY 2009

The following issues of special interest were discussed-

Unlicensed Aerodromes. It was announced that the SACAA is to convene a workgroup to discuss the suitability of the current regulatory requirements and investigate amendments thereto. The first meeting of the workgroup will take place on 5 February 2009. [Representatives from both CAASA and AAASA will be attending].

Coming into force of Part 108. It was announced that the Minister had approved a postponement in the coming into force of Part 108. Part 108 will now come into effect from 1 July 2009 instead of the 1 February 2009 previously announced.

Advisory Notice with respect to Certificates of Airworthiness (CoA's). The Industry was advised that the SACAA Airworthiness Department had released a “Maintenance Advisory Notice” with respect to various issues pertaining to CoA's such as-

- Waiver of payment of currency fees when an aircraft is unserviceable if owner advises SACAA of this fact;
- Notification that an aircraft without a valid CoA may not be returned to service;
- Notification that CoA's of the “old type” are no longer valid and an aircraft may not be legally flown on these certificates ;
- Procedure to be followed when maintenance on an aircraft is complete and the issuance of a CoA “has been delayed for some reason”

A copy of this advisory notice can be obtained from the SACAA Airworthiness Department.

Scarcity of ILS facilities in Gauteng for training. The Commissioner undertook to follow up with the SAAF regarding the use of the AFB Waterkloof ILS for training purposes.

Formation of ILF Part 108 Implementation workgroup. The formation of a special workgroup consisting of ILF members to plan for the implementation of Part 108 was discussed. The workgroup will be chaired by the SACAA and comprise interested members from the ILF.

Specifications for Cargo type tamper evident tape. A supplier of tamper evident tape requested the Commissioner to establish specifications for the tamper evident tape required for use in terms of Part 108. The SACAA reported that the South African Bureau of Standards (SABS) was in the process of developing the applicable standards.

Calibration of Technical Testing Equipment. AOPA complained that the content of AIC 15.8 with respect to the calibration of testing equipment was “too narrow”. It was reported that some airworthiness inspectors in the SACAA realised this and one inspector had issued a letter containing a more “moderate” approach to calibration requirements. However, the majority of the airworthiness inspectors followed the letter of the AIC. AOPA requested that the industry be allowed to participate in the redrafting of the offending AIC, to which request the SACAA agreed.

SACAA Fee increases. The Airlines Association of Southern Africa (AASA) raised the issue regarding SACAA Tariff increases. AASA advised that they were concerned about the SACAA's intention to raise the current Passenger Safety Charge from R10 to R12 which constituted an increase of 20%. AASA expressed the belief that the airlines were bearing most of the burden for funding the SACAA and that the funding obligations should be spread more equitably. CAASA countered by arguing that the increased numbers of staff being employed by the SACAA and the associated cost were as a direct result of the SACAA needing to maintain its FAA A1 Safety rating so that the national carrier could continue to operate into the USA and EU. The ability to operate into the US and EU was not a necessity for the General Aviation Sector.

On the issue of consultation over fees, CAASA announced that it had developed and submitted to CARCOM a proposal to create a consultative (advisory) committee to be called FEECOM. It was proposed that FEECOM would be responsible for assessing the reasonableness of all fees levied by the SACAA .

[In terms of the CAASA FEECOM proposal, a fee is defined as any financial consideration payable to the SACAA for the purpose of funding the authority and includes administrative fees payable in terms of Part 187, administrative penalties payable in terms of Part 185, any fuel levy and/or passenger safety charge. If the proposal becomes law, then, whenever the SACAA wishes to introduce or amend any fee it will have to submit a proposal for the fee to FEECOM and motivate why the introduction of, or increase in the fee is necessary. FEECOM will then be able to consider the application and make a recommendation to approve, disapprove or amend the amount of the fee].

The Commissioner responded by saying that this concept sounded too bureaucratic. He also mentioned that he had sympathy with the airlines perspective and would consider reducing the increase in the Passenger Safety Charge to R11 if a fuel levy of 5 cents a litre was introduced on JET A1. He also revealed that all SACAA Administration fees (as contained in Part 187) would be increased by the average increase in the Consumer Price Index.

SACAA Satellite Offices. It was announced that the SACAA would be setting up satellite offices at various centres throughout South Africa. The SACAA was already in the process of identifying office space at Cape Town International Airport and would open the satellite centre in Cape Town by no later than 1 September 2009.

Revision of Operating Standards. The Commissioner advised that the SACAA was researching a revision of the current operating standards contained in Parts 91, 121, 135. Consideration was being given to introducing a new Part 90 containing General Rules of the Air, to a re-designing of Part 135 for "Non Scheduled Operations" only and Part 121, for "Airline Operations" only. A new Part 93 for "Corporate Jet Operations" might also be created.

Re-occurrence of delays with modification approvals. The SACAA confirmed that there was again a backlog in the processing of modification approval applications. The main reason for this is that many AMO's are applying for approvals where they are not required to do so. In order to address this problem, the SACAA would release an AIC giving clarity on the difference between minor and major modifications and how minor modifications should be dealt with. Furthermore, additional staff had been employed in the Certification Section and once these new recruits were up and running the situation with modification approvals would improve.

SACAA's intention with Part 61. In response to a CAASA question, the SACAA confirmed that its immediate intentions with Part 61 were only to correct deficiencies and mistakes in the document. In the longer term consideration might be given to simplifying and reducing the size of the Part.

Obtaining co-operation from Disaster Management Structures. CAASA raised the concern that certain of the General Aviation aerodromes were not receiving adequate co-operation from the disaster management structures. The issue was debated and the further concern raised that better disaster planning and co-operation was required to manage an “off” airport aviation disaster. The Commissioner undertook to send a letter to the Department of Transport requesting them to take up the matter with the Department of Local and Provincial Government.

Implementation of GNSS Procedures. CAASA raised its concern that very slow progress since 2002 had been made with the implementation of GNSS procedures in South Africa. Also very little had been done to implement these procedures at the smaller General Aviation Airports that were not equipped with the navigation aids that existed at the big airports. It had also come to the attention of the Association that the GNSS procedures for ORTIA, DIA and CIA had recently been withdrawn.

Mr Peter Marais of ATNS confirmed that the GNSS Procedures at ORTIA, DIA and CIA had indeed been withdrawn due to concerns regarding some of the published procedures and a lack of an ATC GNSS training syllabus. It was agreed that the training syllabus would be finalised by 31 March 2009. The Commissioner also stated that the SACAA would design the GNSS procedures for the other smaller airports.

Regards,
Kim Gorringe

CAA Announcement:

On 21st November 2008 the SA CAA announced the formation of a new body to oversee the regulation of recreational aviation on behalf of the CAA.

The establishment of the new body, the Recreation Aviation Administration SA (RAASA), is an attempt to better manage and improve on safety standards in recreational aviation, a sector of aviation particularly affected by light aircraft accidents in the past few months.

RAASA will be given a mandate to regulate all non-type certified aircraft, including light sport aircraft and microlights, and it will be authorised to issue new light sport licences, and to issue aircraft with permissions to fly.

The functions of the new body have until now been performed by the Aero Club of SA, but this arrangement has presented several problems.

The CAA Commissioner, Colin Jordaan, said representatives of the recreation aviation sector, including the respected Des Barker, a former SAAF fighter pilot, will participate in the CAA’s General Aviation Strategic Initiative Committee. The Committee, consisting of members of the CAA and specialists in the aviation industry, has been given a mandate to develop and implement new initiatives to further improve safety in general aviation.

CAA Affairs:

The police are currently investigating various aviation-related legal contraventions, and intend to prosecute the allegedly guilty offenders. This is in line with the CAA’s CEO, Colin Jordaan’s initiative to no longer tolerate corruption or under-performance in the aviation sector.

For this purpose, Colin Jordaan met with members of AOPA recently at Wonderboom Airport to explain to aircraft owners/operators and Pilots’ Associations his strategy. Some of the issues he addressed were:

1. The level of training offered by flying schools in the past year, which has dropped drastically.
 2. His patience has run out with pupil pilots who undergo unlimited and extended periods of training, just because they have the money, in the hope that they may one day obtain a licence to fly.
 3. Plans are to be implemented to improve the quality and standard of flying instructors in an effort to improve the standard of pilots in the country.
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Third Heathrow runway approved:

The go-ahead has now been given to the building of a R135bn third runway at the congested Heathrow Airport, delighting the aviation industry but enraging environmentalists. The transport minister also told Parliament that he was approving the construction of an additional terminal at the world's busiest international airport.

Meanwhile, Greenpeace has brought a large chunk of land earmarked for Heathrow's expansion, and is prepared to defend its purchase in court. Also opposing the construction are those whose houses will be razed.

Proposed legislation to register all private airfields

Meeting of private airfield owners in connection with the proposed legislation to "register" all private airfields.

On a recent Wednesday evening about twenty owners were present at the first communication meeting with the SA CAA official who is responsible for the proposed legislation. It is estimated that South Africa has between 3800 and 4000 privately owned landing strips, which are presently unregistered. However, the SA CAA appears to be determined to legislate that ALL private airfields are to be registered, a process that will involve minimum standards, and naturally will involve the owners of these airfields in some expense. An important person who attended the meeting was lawyer and pilot Ron Wheeldon, who made some constructive suggestions, but unfortunately we do not have the details.

Air New Zealand jet crashes on test flight – 28 November

An Air New Zealand Airbus A320, on a test flight with seven people on board, has crashed into the sea south of France, killing at least two people. Rescuers found the bodies of two crew members but five others were still missing at the time this media report was issued. The crew comprised five New Zealanders and two Germans, all technicians.

The plane was on lease to XL Germany and was due to return to service with Air New Zealand this month. It was on a test flight and took off from the southern French city of Perpignan at about 3.30 am AEDT before crashing into the sea east of Perpignan where the wreckage was found. A spokesman for XL said that at first they heard the plane had managed an emergency landing on water, but then the coastguard reported that it had broken apart. It had just undergone routine maintenance and was one and a half hours into a technical testing flight when it crashed.

Setas set for a shake-up:

The Department of Labour has indicated that public hearings on the future of the Setas will be held in June, but as yet there is no indication as to the future of the authorities, or of the targets and success

indicators of the national skills development strategy (NSDS III). The Setas' operating licences expire on 31 March 2010. Among the possibilities being mooted is the merging into between five and nine Setas, clustering of several Setas, or if the DA has its way, their disbandment.

Cheryl James, CE of the financial sector Seta, believes strategy comes before structure and before the future Seta structure can be determined the NSDS III must be crafted. She said that Setas and their stakeholders have a critical role to play in the formulation of NSDS III. It is imperative that there is broad participation in the public hearings. This will ensure that the voice of Setas and employers is heard and informs the NSDS III and future Seta landscape.

SAA Technical receives stamp of approval

The FAA has given SA Technical a "clean bill of health" following an inspection in November, after expressing some concern about dwindling staff numbers in April.

Earlier this year concerns were raised about the company which services aircraft for 42 airlines, following a massive staff exodus of 372 from the company. This exodus included mechanics, inspectors, certifying staff, quality supervisors and management personnel.

The company's CE, Clive Else, said the company went on an extensive recruitment drive, and when inspectors returned in November they were pleased with what they found.

Qantas woes continue

Following several recent mishaps to Qantas international flights, a man who worked as an engineer for the airline, after forging his qualifications, put the lives of thousands of passengers at risk, a court was told.

Timothy McCormack, 27, posed as an aircraft engineer for almost nine months, and conducted 30 maintenance checks on planes leaving Sydney Airport before being exposed. In September he pleaded guilty to 42 charges including forging an engineer's licence, and then faked four character references for the court as it considered his sentence.

More recently, a Qantas flight from Sydney to New Zealand was cancelled minutes before takeoff after problems with one of its wings were noticed. The 747-300 had just begun to taxi out of the terminal when the decision was taken to stop the flight. All 213 passengers on board were given accommodation for the night and booked on another flight the next day.

In another instance, a Qantas jetliner that had been damaged by a mid-air explosion in July collided with another of the airline's planes on the apron at Avalon Airport, near Melbourne. Both Boeing 747 jets were damaged when they ran into each other while being towed at the Qantas maintenance base.

NAC sells Durban helicopter flight training and charter division

NAC recently announced the sale of its Durban helicopter flight training and charter division to Legend Aviation. The NAC aircraft sales division, based in Durban and run by Colin Fletcher and Bjorn Hanssen, will remain with NAC and has not formed part of this transaction.

Well known Durban Aviation personality Nick Hill, who previously managed the operation for NAC, and business partner Vince Christoforos have bought the business. According to Nick "Our core focus will remain helicopter flight training and charter and we will continue to have a close working relationship with NAC on projects such as the Netstar contract". All the staff have been transferred to the newly-formed company.

Yet another light aircraft crash

Following a chopper crash close to the Panorama airfield near Alberton recently the student pilot was airlifted to hospital with minor injuries. The chopper had taken off from Rand Airport and then landed at the airfield, where it was about to take off again when it toppled over. The flight instructor, who was apparently watching the young pilot during the training, and giving instructions, escaped unhurt.

DID YOU KNOW.....

There is an international Premier Club lounge at OR Tambo Airport that is not affiliated to any one airline, but can be used as a courtesy lounge by a number of organisations. Should you have someone who has to spend some hours at the airport in transit, they can use this lounge. Holders of certain cards do not have to pay a charge, but for others it is R175 for four hour' stay. The lounge has showers and other facilities and drinks and snacks are available. For further details phone Premier Airport Services on 011-390-1343 or contact a Renfin Travel branch.

NEWS IN BRIEF:

1. The Supreme Court of Canada recently ruled that obese people have the right to two seats for the price of one on flights within Canada, and declined an appeal by Canadian airlines of a decision by the Canadian transportation Agency that people who are "functionally disabled by obesity" deserve to have two seats for one fare.
2. EU lawmakers have decided that plans to allow airports throughout the European Union to use full body scanner security checks that show private body parts raise serious human rights concerns.
3. Increasing obesity has prompted an Australian state, New South Wales, to seek larger planes for the country's famous flying Doctor service ambulances. The two new planes would be able to carry patients up to 260 kg, nearly twice the current limit of 140 kg.

2. An abandoned jumbo jet is set to open at Sweden's biggest airport this month as a 25-room hotel, furnished with bunk beds, overhead luggage compartments and TVs. A reception area and café will be at the front and toilets and showers at the rear, with accommodation for 74 people.
5. Qatar Airways is to help passengers keep their New Year resolutions to remain fit and healthy by introducing on-board yoga sessions.
6. Virgin Nigeria has announced the suspension of its loss-making long-haul flights to Britain and South Africa to focus on its domestic and regional operations within West Africa.
7. A British family was heartbroken when one of their suitcases containing all their Christmas presents went missing on their flight from Southampton to Paris for the holidays. They were very surprised to find it eventually returned home via Afghanistan, as there are no direct flights from Southampton or Paris to Farah.