

# ADVANCED AIR MOBILITY SYMPOSIUM



**CAASA  
OCTOBER 2024  
KEV STORIE**

# ADVANCED AIR MOBILITY SYMPOSIUM

## OBJECT OF INDUSTRY PARTICIPATION IN THE SYMPOSIUM

The inaugural meeting set up by ICAO brought together all experts from all countries to grapple with the challenges that these craft and systems pose while attempting to integrate them into the existing aviation landscape at the speed of innovation expected by the world.

South Africa initially developed the first RPAS regulations however has not managed to keep ahead of innovation and possibly developed these excessively from the construct manned ICAO aviation.

South Africa is moving into the movement into true partnership between the regulator and the industry which is worlds best practice and should be the new world of aviation.





The event was held in Montreal which involves expense to get the South African delegation comprising various department representatives and the DCA and the ICAO representative in Montreal. What is clear is that South Africa as a sovereign state must look at our implementation, within the limitations of our law and unique countries geography and populace expanse. There are very complex considerations from systems to security, from certification of aircraft to cyber security, to cross border flights and then what systems must speak to each other and all this into the integrated air traffic community.

There was 4 days of fruitful debate and experts giving input, which looking from a macro perspective will completely change aviation as we know it.

# DATA WILL DRIVE

DATA and big data will be the driving factor and how well it is conserved and interpreted will be the base factor. Autonomy of flight and the consequence on safety is not a small issue.

The interoperability and interpretability of this data and how it drives every element of disruptive segment in aviation's evolutionary history.

AI has been recognized and a vital player to better deal with this volumous date in an efficient and understandable manner where the industry leaders can distill the simple decisions to effect them as quickly as possible to grow and develop business both locally in our countries and internationally.



---

**The legal  
implications  
especially  
regarding  
municipal  
permissions  
& POPIA &  
bilaterals  
have  
implications**

When it comes to South Africa we have some positive elements where we can easily implement advanced air mobility in and between rural communities and additionally have the airspace with the low volumes to effectively provide the ability both locally and internationally to conduct much needed sandbox experiments. This will require go

---

fast task teams between the regulator, the DOT, DTI and Industry to create these opportunities and allow them to flourish in a structured and safety manner will encompassing the need for testing new technology and systems without bureaucratic impedence.

# The Dark Horse in the room, or the elephant

The need for power and lots of it to charge the craft (i.e. fuel) and the current under supply, the need for green alternatives, specialized routes, bylaw changes, auditing existing infra structure and the plans to modernize it and prepare it for multi-use.

Harnessing national and provincial design of roads, rail and vehicular hubs to grow and facilitate , along with harmonizing and integrating various policies and transport plans will need a very careful yet expedited approach, linking this in to passenger movements and the African continent ideologies while having this oversight by AFCAC ( note EU) with over arcing yet equitable regulations and the freedom of movement of goods in the free trade agreements along with the open skies policies need focused and targeted approach.

The integration of the growth of e-commerce freight and the need to secure land usage and connectivity with all the issues that come with need a very deep view with some significant policies developed at lightning speed.

Current Acts and legislation need to be urgently overhauled to facilitate this change and create an enabling environment.

The over arcing principle is how does it enable safely the movement of people and goods. How does it take the learnings from the past to fast track the systems of the future and how can we implement while still testing.

---

Is Africa ready, in my considered opinion, nowhere close. There will need to be a government endorsed, private public partnership to get us to where we need to be as a country.

This symposium has created more questions than answers but has if distilled shown us where the low hanging fruit can be found and where if we enable these rapidly, we can showcase, test and bring the future closer.

The time is now – the expertise is within our grasp, and we can if we embrace the challenge see the beginning of full integration from the outside (read rural) in, where we can then have learned enough to ensure safety and systems to be integrated into our densely populated and urban areas in a sustainable and environmentally conscionable manner.

On closing off this report, the balance between safety, cost, efficiency and embodying and accepting the rapid pace of innovation will be key.

ICAO will be holding this symposium regularly (every 2 years) and we as a country need to have a plan in place and I firmly believe we can showcase a workable solution that other countries can access and possible use cases.

Our advantage is our vast areas and rural power, our poor road infra structure and need for urban generation and above all our indomitable expanding youth that embraces innovation.

South Africa has always found ways around the rules and new methods which belies our success as a nation – if we harness it in a productive manner, we can be the leaders in advanced air mobility. Nobody said AAM must be in our city centers from the get-go and it does not necessarily need to be people movement but could easily be cargo movement.

In my close off – Collaboration, Sandbox active live trials, harmonization, open bi laws and municipality focus, risk based, dynamic regulatory development and environmentally friendly.

