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Newsletter from The Commercial Aviation Association of Southern Africa NPC

From our CEO

Christmas Closure Message - 2025

Reflections on a year in South African General Aviation and preparing for 2026

As we reach the close of 2025, I look back with deep gratitude and optimism on what has been a remarkable year for South African general aviation. Despite operating in an environment defined by economic pressures, regulatory transitions, and infrastructure challenges, our sector has continued to demonstrate its resilience, innovation, and unwavering commitment to safety and service. Above all, with a few matters, our resolve to stand unified.

Highlights From 2025

This year brought several positive developments that deserve recognition:

• Renewed Collaboration Across the Sector

General aviation stakeholders - operators, associations, training organisations, and regulators have shown renewed determination to work together. Constructive engagement with cross-association initiatives has demonstrated what is possible when the industry aligns on shared objectives, including partnerships built across sub-Saharan Africa and further afield.

• Growth in Training and Skills Development

Our flight schools and ATOs reported a welcome stabilisation in student numbers, with a noticeable increase in African regional trainees returning to South Africa for quality instruction. This signals trust in our training ecosystem and reaffirms our role as the aviation skills hub of the continent. The DTO system, with less admin and more focus on the practical aspects of safe aviation, has been a contributing factor in the better-than-usual accident statistics.

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• Continued Contribution to Economic Activity

General aviation once again played a vital role in business continuity, tourism, medical outreach, firefighting, agricultural support, and essential logistics. Without overstating the obvious, many of these communities often serve as the first – and often only – responder.

• Safety Culture Improvements

Industry-driven safety initiatives, peer-to-peer programmes, and enhanced access to safety materials contributed to a more proactive safety culture across GA. While safety will always demand our full attention, the commitment shown this year deserves recognition.

Challenges Ahead for 2026

While we celebrate our achievements, we must also acknowledge the areas requiring concerted focus in the year ahead:

• Regulatory Bottlenecks and Administrative Inefficiencies

Licensing delays, AOC, Aircraft onto the RSA register, AMO and ATO approvals, and inconsistent regulatory interpretation continue to hinder operations. Improving turnaround times and predictability must be a priority in 2026.

• Infrastructure Deterioration

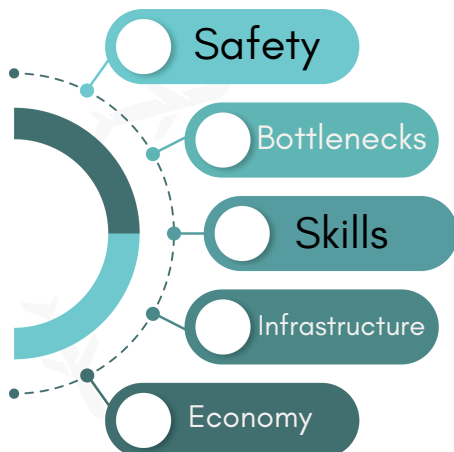
Many regional and municipal airfields remain under pressure due to inadequate maintenance, funding constraints, and a lack of long-term planning. A national strategy for sustainable airfield infrastructure is overdue and essential.

• Economic Pressures on Operators

Rising operational costs, fluctuating fuel prices, and constrained disposable income among recreational aviators will continue to strain the sector. Operators will need support, stability, and pragmatic regulatory solutions to remain viable.

• Skills Pipeline Fragility

Despite positive momentum, the industry continues to face shortages in critical technical skills, AMEs, instructors, and experienced pilots. Retention, training incentives, and professional development pathways will be central discussions in 2026.



Looking Forward

The general aviation community enters 2026 with both challenges and renewed purpose. What should give us confidence is not only the resilience the industry has shown, but the spirit of collaboration that has grown throughout 2025. Suppose we continue to work together with transparency, accountability, and a shared vision for a safe and sustainable aviation ecosystem. In that case, South African general aviation will remain a vital contributor to national growth and regional connectivity.

As we break for the festive season, I extend my sincere thanks to every member, operator, aviator, engineer, instructor, regulator, and partner who has helped steer our sector forward.

Your dedication keeps our skies safe, our communities connected, and our industry strong.

Wishing you all a peaceful Christmas, a well-deserved rest, and a prosperous 2026 ahead.



Kev Storie - CAASA CEO



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Commercial Aviation Association
of Southern Africa NPC



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Member's News



IAS and Cloudline Partnership Achieves Regulatory Approval for Solar-Powered Airship Operations

South African collaboration unlocks commercial deployment of autonomous airships, positioning the region as a global leader in zero-emission aerial technology

Integrated Aerial Systems (IAS) has achieved a major milestone by receiving full operational approval from the South African Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA) as the first third-party operator of Cloudline's remotely piloted airships.

The approval follows successful demonstration flights of the Cloudline Sc-240 airship system and represents a significant advancement in unmanned aviation.

"We are excited to have certified this remotely piloted airship with the SACAA, it marks a new era in the UAV space in South Africa and abroad " said Warren Witte, Co-Founder at IAS. "After more than 12 months of dedicated work by two great teams, we're thrilled to announce that we've passed the demonstration and received full approval for operations."

The certification process required extensive coordination including hangar modifications, comprehensive flight simulator training, and close collaboration with military airspace authorities. The approval permits Beyond Visual Line of Sight (BVLOS) operations and nighttime flight.

Leading Solar-Powered Airship Technology

Cloudline's Sc-240 airship is the first commercially available solar-powered airship in its class globally, representing a proudly South African innovation with ambitions to lead the world in green aerial surveying and monitoring. Using helium for lift and solar-recharged batteries for propulsion, the Sc-240 carries payloads of up to 40 kilograms while remaining airborne for over 10 hours with zero carbon emissions, offering order-of-magnitude cost savings over traditional aerial platforms.

"Partnerships are how we scale, and we couldn't be prouder to see IAS fully licensed as an operator of our solar-powered airships," said Spencer Horne, Founder and CEO of Cloudline. "IAS has established itself in South Africa as a leader in precision drone surveys, including work in environmental and infrastructural use-cases, where we see our platform expanding boundaries."

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Diverse Applications

The Sc-240's extended endurance and payload capacity enable applications beyond traditional drone capabilities, including environmental monitoring for conservation areas, disaster response mapping and communications, resource surveys for mineral exploration, and serving as an airborne base station for smaller UAV systems.

About IAS

Integrated Aerial Systems (IAS) is a South African aviation company specializing in advanced unmanned aerial systems services helping bring innovative solutions from concept to certified operations.

Learn more at www.iasystems.co.za

About Cloudline

Founded in 2018 and based in Cape Town, Cloudline builds autonomous solar-powered airships that redefine aerial operations globally. Backed by Schmidt Futures, Verod-Kepple Africa Ventures, 4Di Capital, and other leading investors, Cloudline is scaling from its African base to serve global markets in environmental monitoring, disaster response, resource surveys, and logistics.



Learn more at www.flycloudline.com

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NAC turns 80!

Our story began on 8 November 1945, when we were first registered as the Aviation Corporation of Africa. By 1946, we had launched our charter operations, transporting passengers and goods across the continent and laying the foundation for decades of growth.

In 1968, we became the sole accredited Beechcraft Dealer in Southern Africa, a milestone that marked the start of our expansion into aircraft sales. Over the years, our portfolio grew to include Bell, Robinson, Nextant, Technam, Eclipse, and several other renowned brands.

As our company evolved, so did our identity—but our purpose has always remained the same: to keep moving forward as one. This commitment is reflected in our Flight School and Technical School, where we continue to produce industry leaders who shape the future of aviation.

Today, our Aircraft Sales, Charter and Operations, Maintenance, and Supply Chain divisions continue to grow year after year, driven by innovation, resilience, and a shared vision.

This year, we proudly celebrated our 80th anniversary, a monumental milestone. While our identity has once again transformed, our heritage remains the foundation of who we are.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to every stakeholder who celebrated with us. We honour our former leaders, recognise our current leadership, thank our customers for their trust, and acknowledge our most valued asset—our dedicated staff.

Together, we look forward to the next chapter of our journey.







Come Fly with Us in 2026

At CAASA we remain invested in *your* success.

To that end, CAASA would like to support our valued member's endeavours by offering the opportunity to participate and contribute to our monthly newsletters in the months ahead.

All we need is:

1. Your company logo (JPG or PDF)
2. Your company overview, along with the products and/or services you offer (long short form)
3. Share any significant milestones (again, long or short form and any supporting visuals (JPG or PDF) – Optional
4. All your contact details, including your website and social media links.

Do this, and we'll rack and stack your contribution for inclusion. We'll also share the final copy and the laid-out page(s) with you for review and approval before publication.

Get involved and reap the benefits of getting your business in front of curated, aviation-focused peers pro bono!

Reach out to our General Manager, Melissa Sewgolam (melissa@caasa.co.za) and she'll make sure your voice is heard amongst our fellow members and beyond.

With 80-plus years of legacy and reputation, your contribution can only help us foster growth in your business and across our critically important aviation sector.



OFFICIAL NOTICE

Please Note

The **CAASA** office will be closed from the **12th of December**, and re-opens on the **12th of January 2026**.

For any urgent matters during the break, please email:
melissa@caasa.co.za



Your Aviation Partner

We thank all our members and suppliers for their contributions and continued support to **CAASA** throughout 2025.

We appreciate your commitment.

CAASA wishes all a
safe and blessed festive season.

We look forward to a prosperous 2026, working together to support and grow the general aviation sector for the collective benefit of all.

With warm regards from the **CAASA** team.

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