

EASA implements €1.8 million EU aviation support project in Zambia

Developing a reliable and effective aviation sector in Zambia

A new project for the support of the aviation sector in Zambia, funded by the European Union, was launched in October 2017 and had its first official project steering committee meeting on 6 December 2017. This 4-year and €1.8 million project (approx. 20 million Kwacha), managed by the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), is designed to support the development of a reliable and effective aviation sector in Zambia, capable of contributing to the country's economic growth.

More specifically, the project's objective is to help Zambia's Civil Aviation Authority and aviation stakeholders to improve their compliance with international aviation standards, in terms of both air safety and security certification as well as oversight.

To achieve this objective, the project will implement targeted initiatives in the areas of capacity enhancement – for example, improvements in the Civil Aviation Authority Management System-and the strengthening of the institutional and regulatory framework – for example, improvements in regulation of Air Navigation Service and Accident and Incident Investigation. The work plan for the next four years proposed by EASA was reviewed and discussed during the first Steering Committee Meeting held in Lusaka. Present at that meeting were representatives from the Ministry of Transport, the Civil Aviation Authority, EASA, ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization), key sector stakeholders and the EU Delegation to Zambia and COMESA.

Since 2011, the European Union has been contributing to the development of Civil Aviation in Zambia and has built a strong partnership with both the relevant Ministries and the Zambian Civil Aviation Authority. This support contributed to the removal of Zambia from the European Union Air Safety List. Inclusion on the list had prevented Zambia registered air carriers from operating in European skies. In earlier years the European Union financed the development of airport infrastructure at the Kenneth Kaunda International Airport in Lusaka and the Harry Mwanga Nkumbula International Airport in Livingstone.

The Permanent Secretary, MoTC Engineer Misheck Lungu who chaired the Steering Committee, in his opening address, said : “The Zambian Government values the partnership with the European Union from which his Ministry was beneficiary in several projects. The Zambia Government was committed to making Zambia into an inter-modal transport hub and Kenneth Kaunda International Airport into an international air transport hub. The massive investment being made by Government to modernise and expand international airports' terminal facilities and the installation of two state of the art air traffic control surveillance radars and development of domestic airports was testimony to this. I wish to urge the officers tasked to the implementation of the projects to ensure that this was done with diligence by ensure that the resources so provided were used for the intended purpose. The Government and the people of Zambia must receive development worth of the investment put in by the cooperating partners.”

Gianluca Azzoni, Head of Co-Operation at the EU Delegation to Zambia and COMESA said: “The EU is a long standing partner to Zambia in the civil aviation sector. We are particularly pleased at the cooperation established with The European Aviation Safety Agency to assist Zambia to consolidate and further enhance the good progress already made in improving compliance with international aviation standards. This is key to developing a reliable and effective aviation sector able to support economic development in Zambia”

Gabriel Lesa, CAA Director General said: “The Civil Aviation sector in Zambia has seen unprecedented development from the time it started receiving Technical Assistance from the EU through the 10th EDF. From a place of weakness, which saw very poor ICAO Audit results 34.9% EI in 2009 which led to 98 findings and 1 SSC which brought about the EU Ban, saw an improved EI of 62,06% after the ICVM in 2016. The EU Ban was also lifted in June 2016 this has been possible because of great support from the Government and Technical Assistance from the European Union. We are excited that the EU is yet providing more support through the 11th EDF specifically to the CAA executed by EASA. We have great expectations for a revamped and vibrant aviation sector. I wish to urge all stakeholders to rally behind the CAA as it implements requirements and standards that are meant to ensure a safe, secure and environmentally friendly aviation system. We wish to commit to more hard work and carrying along the industry will make none are left behind as we chart out a new course to take the sector to new heights”

Frank Steffens, EASA, Head of International Cooperation, emphasised that EASA as a recognised global player and reference in aviation safety is determined to support the Country in its efforts to improve – “the meeting today showed the high level of commitment of the Ministry of Transport and Communications, of the Civil Aviation Authority and the other stakeholders. This is of utmost importance to achieve the ambitious objectives of the project. Only the full commitment of all parties will enable an effective, efficient and sustainable implementation of project results”.

Under the theme “Working Together to Ensure No Country is Left Behind”, EASA also participated in the Zambian commemorations of the International Civil Aviation Day, on 7 December 2017, which included a formal march and speeches from Frank Steffens and other relevant authorities

