



**CLOSING REMARKS AT THE 7th IFATSEA AFRICA REGIONAL
MEETING AND ATSEP WORKSHOP
PRESENTED BY: MR MABITSI LEGODI**

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- Programme Directors, Distinguished guests and participants, it is my pleasure to join you for the closing of this 7th IFATSEA Africa Region Meeting and ATSEP Workshop themed “**ATSEP – licensing Africa's aviation professionals and its relevance to safety**”
- On behalf of the Host, Organizers and sponsors of this Meeting and Workshop, it is indeed my pleasure to make a few closing remarks and express gratitude to all those who made this event a reality.

- The planning of this 7th IFATSEA Africa Regional Meeting and ATSEP Workshop was initiated last year at the 6th IFATSEA Africa Regional Meeting that took place in Tunisia. At this Meeting, the representatives of South Africa invited the sponsors and all those who attended to come to this beautiful country, which I hope you enjoyed its hospitality since your arrival to date.
- The planning of an International Meeting is paved with difficulties. I must give credits to all the organizers for making the planning of this event seem like an easy task.

- A Meeting becomes a success only if participants arrive. They are the lifeblood of a Meeting. Thus, we do express our sincere thanks to all of you who have come to be with us during the past 3 days. Your presentations and active participation contributed immensely to the success of this event.
- During the past 3 days, the workshop had robust discussions on the competence of the ATSEP and IFATSEA's active contribution to the improvement of air traffic safety performance to ensure the advancement of the sector around the world, with emphasis and focus on the African Region.

- We heard presentations from a number of sectors of our industry. These gave us the context from the regulatory authorities perspective (by the SACAA and DoT), the Airline perspective (by SAA), ANSP perspective (by ATNS) and the Supplier perspective (by Thales)
- We also had an opportunity to have an overview of the trends and developments in the industry, amongst others, ASBU Implementation, ATM/CNS Capabilities, and the deployment of Space Based ADS-B technology. SESAR also gave us a glimpse of the context of Regional Harmonization within the European Union and the 2020 ATM Masterplan for Europe.

- I would like to thank all the moderators, panelists and speakers for sharing with us their experience, which reflected the benefits of **licensing ATSEP and its relevance to civil aviation safety.**
- Above all, I would like to thank all of you here for making this Meeting and Workshop a success through your valuable contributions and active participation throughout the past 3 days and especially during the discussion panels.

- The main aim of this Meeting and Workshop was to provoke a discussion among the African Region Associate Members of IFATSEA and other organizations over the best ways to implement mechanisms towards the licensing of the ATSEP and its relevance to safety.
- It was clear from the deliberations of this Workshop and Meeting that having a global licensing system as a standard for the ATSEP competence ensures a uniform level of service, thereby contributing to enhanced performance, mobility, and cost savings in addition to greater efficiency as well as higher revenues for Air **Navigation Service Providers and airspace users.**

- It is evident that the ATSEP roles are continuously changing in a complex environment, and it is also evident that its impact on the safety of the sector has the potential to affect the growth of the civil aviation industry and in turn erode the economic benefits that could be realized from this sector.
- In his address, the Vice President of IFATSEA, **Mr Theodore Kiritsis**, pointed out a number of challenges related to the licensing of the ATSEP. One of the key challenges that he pointed out is the inclusion of Licensing of the ATSEP under ICAO Annex 1, as Annex 1 currently does not yet include the licensing of the ATSEP, although this was an agreement in principle by the 36th Assembly of the ICAO Council.

- IFATSEA's determination to achieve its goal of the inclusion of Licensing of the ATSEP under ICAO Annex 1 is evident and commendable. With the recent milestone being the presentation of a Working Paper at the 39th Assembly of the ICAO Council in 2016.
- This challenge of the inclusion of the ATSEP under ICAO Annex 1 was further acknowledged by the Africa Regional Director, **Engineer Frank Kofi Apegyei** in his presentation titled ***“African resolution on ATSEP Licensing and inclusion under ICAO Annex 1”***. This challenge was also widely acknowledged throughout the Meeting by different speakers.

- Currently ICAO Annex 1 sets Standards and Recommended Practices on licensing and ratings for other professionals such as pilots, flight crew members, ATCOs and aircraft maintenance engineers. It does not include the licensing and ratings of the ATSEP. This exclusion is where the theme of this Meeting and Workshop emanates from.
- We had a panel discussion which unpacked the “***Successes and Lesson Learnt on ATSEP Licensing***”, which covered presentations from three associate members (**namely Tanzania, Kenya, and Nigeria**) who shared their individual experiences in the implementation of licensing of the ATSEP.

- It was evident during this panel discussion that many states have developed their own national requirements for licensing and ratings for the ATSEP. This is a very good undertaking and step in the right direction by the States, however, this approach is not harmonized. This State-based approach creates disparities between the States because each State departs from its own frame of reference and use different ICAO reference material to put this initiatives in place
- ICAO's contribution on this subject does not go unnoticed. Back in 2009, ICAO launched the Next Generation of Aviation Professionals (NGAP) initiatives. The intention of these initiatives was to ensure that enough qualified and competent aviation professionals are available to operate, manage, and maintain the **future** international air transport system.

- Through these initiatives, ICAO hosted the first NGAP Symposium in 2010 which drew two main outcomes:
 - The first outcome identified the need to develop regulatory frameworks that enable and support the use of modern training and learning technologies that are not an obstacle to industry best practices; and
 - The second outcome identified the need to define competencies for all aviation activities affecting safety, in order to facilitate the free-flow of professionals through internationally agreed upon Standards and assessment practices.
- In 2013, attention turned to Air Traffic Control Officers (ATCOs) and the ATSEP. This new focus was a clear indication that a “voice of the industry” would bring speed, knowledge and harmonization to the project.

- The draft ICAO guidance material on this subject of **Licensing of ATSEP** is contained in ICAO doc 10057. The development of this ICAO document was not an easy task, as to date, it is still an unedited version of an ICAO publication and has not yet been approved in final form.
- Allow me to take your focus to the context of the Africa Region. The Vice President of IFATSEA remarked that his ambition is to have the entire African continent as members of IFATSEA. I have no doubt that all of us in this room share the same sentiments. The IFATSEA Africa Region currently has only 16 members, with South Africa due to be included as the 17th. With a total number of 54 states in the African continent, these 17 members translate to only approximately 30%. This is a clear indication that the task that **lies ahead** of us in lobbying other African States to support this **initiative is of a higher magnitude.**

- It is also worth noting that the challenges faced by IFAIMA as an industry body as far as licensing of the ATSEP is concerned are not unique. They are similar to those faced by other industry bodies such as IFAIMA.
- IFAIMA is the International Federation of Aeronautical Information Management Association and they only attained their ICAO observer status in 2015. As an industry body representing the interests of AIM Personnel, they have also recently embarked on a journey of advocating for the Licensing of AIM personnel

- Ladies and gentlemen, I can only be proud and grateful of the interest you expressed on the discussions of this complex theme, but our work does not end here. We all need to continue working together as we face these many challenges. We should continue the dialogue among all of us so that we can learn from each other.
- It is my sincere duty to thank all of you here today. Do enjoy the remaining activities of this Meeting, and once back in your own environments, use the concepts that you learnt at this Meeting and Workshop to contribute to the engagement of aviation safety in Africa, as we build towards the 47th IFATSEA General Assembly in November this year, the 8th IFATSEA Africa Regional Meeting **next year, and the 40th Assembly of the ICAO Council in 2019**

I THANK YOU



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