

Thales to modernise SA's air traffic management

As part of the country's efforts to modernise navigation and surveillance capabilities to ensure significant improvement to safety and efficiency, Thales has been selected by Air Traffic and Navigation Services SOC Limited (ATNS), the air navigation service provider of South Africa to supply, install and commission Wide Area Multilateration (WAM) surveillance, Primary and Secondary Surveillance Radars, and Distance Measuring Equipment (DME) technology to a number of its sites.



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Over the past decade, African air traffic has increased exponentially, with South Africa being one of the busiest airspaces in the continent. As a result, improved airspace management, advanced technologies and system modernisation are needed to meet future challenges of scalability and operational.

ATNS has commissioned Thales to deploy multiple surveillance technologies, including WAM, Star NG (Next Generation) Primary Radars and RSM 970 Secondary Radars, matching the best solution to the operational requirement. The WAM system will be deployed to provide surveillance over the entire Northern region. Radars will be deployed to Johannesburg O.R. Tambo International Airport, Cape Town, Durban and Blesberg sites. These surveillance systems will be integrated into ATNS's existing Thales TopSky Air Traffic Management System, providing cost-effective, scalable and reliable surveillance.

DME systems will be deployed to 31 sites across South Africa where they will ensure high accuracy en-route and terminal aircraft guidance.

Improve ATNS' capability

Together, these technologies will improve ATNS' capability to offer airlines RNAV routes for faster and shorter trajectories, lower fuel consumption, and reduced carbon emissions. Further, in addition to the supply, install and commission of the technologies, these contracts provide for a long term support and maintenance agreement.

“In line with ATNS’s Shareholder Mandate to deliver safe skies and customer-centric services, technology is a central service enabler. To this end, ATNS has invested in the acquisition of new and advanced technology for Air Traffic Management to replace the current national Air Traffic Management Automation system.

Through this programme, ATNS will enter a new era of operational technology advancement for the benefit of the ATM community. The South African aviation infrastructure is considered to be one of the best in the world, contributing to the country’s aviation safety record. It is, therefore, imperative that we continue to invest wisely in this infrastructure to support the country’s overall transport infrastructure”. - Thabani Mthiyane, CEO, ATNS

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