

SAA to have less domestic flights as Mango's increase

By [Neels Blom](#)

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State-owned South African Airways (SAA) Group has set in motion its September announcement that it would rationalise the route networks of national carrier SAA and its low-cost subsidiary Mango.



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The exercise will see more Mango flights scheduled and the number of SAA's domestic flights reduced. An industry expert said this may result in some inconvenience to SAA passengers who have, for instance, booked business-class seats, which are not available on Mango.

SAA spokesperson Tlali Tlali said passengers would be "assisted" and presented with options in such an event. The preferred option would be to accept an economy-class seat on Mango, but if that proved unacceptable, they would be offered an alternative SAA flight.

"Ticket refunds would be a possibility"

"Business-class passengers tend to fly in the morning, while others usually take later flights," he said. "But if that is not acceptable, ticket refunds would be a possibility." He said a seamless booking change was expected.

The announcement was made on Thursday, though the changes would have been reflected on SAA and Mango distribution systems from 12 December 2017. Tlali did not provide details about this, saying only that it had to do with internal arrangements.

Tlali said the rationalisation programme was "part of the progressive implementation of its turnaround plan. These initiatives form part of the five-year turnaround plan to return the business to commercial sustainability in the shortest time possible".

Both SAA and Mango currently offer 200 return flights a week between Johannesburg and Durban and 278 return flights a week between Johannesburg and Cape Town.

Revised schedule takes effect in January 2018

The revised schedule takes effect on 15 January 2018. Once fully implemented, Mango will operate 132 return flights on the Johannesburg-Durban route and 116 return flights on the Johannesburg-Cape Town route per week. SAA will operate 68 return flights between Johannesburg and Durban, and 162 return flights between Johannesburg and Cape Town.

SAA CEO Vuyani Jarana said the carrier had reviewed its offerings in line with performance, demand and market conditions. "We are satisfied that the changes we introduce will be of mutual benefit to our customers and to the SAA Group. A commercially strong SAA Group offers customers improved efficiencies and schedule integrity."

Mango's acting CEO Nic Vlok said the changes were a group effort and demonstrated its commitment to strengthen the group commercially. "Mango remains committed to service excellence and our brand values of innovation, operational efficiency and excellence in customer service."

Source: BDpro

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