



THE HISTORY OF

NATIONAL AIRWAYS CORPORATION

1945

The company was incorporated on November 8, 1945, under the name "Aviation Corporation of Africa (Pty) Ltd". However, it was not until May 1946, under the holding company Fisher and Simmons Ltd, that the fledgling company actually began its operations as a charter company. One of the company's main objectives written into its Articles of Association was to "carry on all or any of the business of aeroplane and airship enterprises and aviators, carriers, transporters and conveyors of passengers, mails, parcels and goods, and all the departments and branches of such business." From humble beginnings at Baragwanath airfield, the company had developed into a "private airline" with a fleet of 45 aircraft by 1965. The airline flew routes serving the High Commission Territories and the newer Republics to the north of South Africa. Its aircraft flew an average of one million air-miles a year out of Baragwanath alone, plus another million out of its other nine bases.



In Southern Africa . . . from Cape to Congo

Aviation Corporation of Africa (Pty.) Ltd.

are the leading importers of

Aircraft, Aero Engines and Aeronautical Products

HEAD OFFICE:

Beresford House, Corner Simmonds and Main Streets, Johannesburg

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THE Beechcraft® SCENE



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MASSIVE NEW GENERAL AVIATION AIRPORT TO OPEN SOON

THE NEW, multi-million rand Lanseria Airport is scheduled to be opened to traffic on August 16, and because of its ideal situation in close proximity to Pretoria, Johannesburg, Krugersdorp and Roodepoort, this airport is likely to become the hub of general aviation in South Africa.

The Beechcraft Sales Division of NAFCO, together with its sister company, National Airways Corporation, will begin operations at the new airport from that date thus further extending the company's country-wide services to its many customers.

Beechcraft Sales and NAC will have two hangers initially at Lanseria with a third one already planned. This will be erected when the need arises. The company will provide sales, service and instruction at Lanseria as well as a first class charter service which will link the new airport to any point in Southern Africa.

A special reception area and office for the NAC charter service will be situated in the main terminal building and because of the facilities which are being provided by the Lanseria Airport Company from the outset, international flights can be commenced and terminated at Lanseria with the mini-



mum of inconvenience to passengers and crew.

Mr Paddy Browne, Managing Director of NAFCO's aviation division, told Beechcraft Scene: "We are confident of the future of Lanseria - this is why we will be there from the start. Our customers can expect topline service from the word 'go'."

"We would like to take this opportunity of congratulating the Lanseria Airport

BEECHCRAFT SALES WILL BE THERE!

An aerial view of the new Lanseria airport looking north-east from the threshold of runway 06.

Company on its foresight and courage in building this new airport. We see a great future for Lanseria and we are proud to be a pioneering company there and be associated with its development."

AUGUST 1974

National Airways Corporation was based at Rand Airport throughout its formative years but, always with an eye to future expansion, the company was one of the first tenants of Lanseria Airport, outside Johannesburg, when it opened in August 1974. NAFCO originally purchased three hangars at the airfield to house some of its divisions. NAC's "stamp of approval" on the new airport was cemented by one of its aircraft being the second aircraft to touch down

there moments after the "official aircraft" had done so.

At about the same time, NAC spread its wings to the Eastern Cape with the appointment of Border Air Charters in East London as a Beechcraft sub-dealer, thus joining other NAC branches or dealers already established, or soon to be so, in Port Elizabeth, Bloemfontein, Pretoria, Cape Town, Durban and Nelspruit.





1968

Exclusivity with Beechcraft

After its foundation as a charter company and its expansion into aircraft maintenance, the company opened an aircraft sales division. Over the years it acquired distributorships for Gates Learjet, Aero Commander, Britten Norman, Mooney, Beagle, Navion, Aircoupe, Citabria, Maule and British Aerospace, all of which ended in 1968 when they were awarded the Beechcraft dealership by Olive-Ann Beech. Her condition was that they become an exclusive dealership, one which they proudly accepted and became one of the largest Beech dealerships in the world. It was 1974 when NAC made the first sale of the then brand-new Beechcraft Super King Air 200. When asked by a World Airnews reporter at the time what NAC estimated as the market potential for the type in South Africa would be, the answer was "Around 14". This was perhaps NAC's biggest understatement for within six months there were 16 in the country which were collectively flying 13000 hours a year and covering some 3,25-million miles.

Today, the NAC team is not certain as to exactly how many King Airs have been sold in the region, but there are at least 130 currently on the register in

South Africa and neighbouring states. Small wonder because the King Air now ranks as the biggest-selling turboprop business aircraft of all time. In fact, the manufacturer, the then Beechcraft Corporation, delivered its 200th King Air 200 within four years after the type's first flight. At the time of the Type Certificate having been awarded by the FAA, the King Air was claimed to have been the most thoroughly tested general aviation aircraft in US history. Another Beechcraft turboprop model which achieved great sales success for NAC was the 1900C and later the 1900D mini airliner. The first Beechcraft 1900C was sold by NAC to Namib Air (now Air Namibia), in Windhoek, in May 1987 to be followed shortly afterwards by two more for the airline. The Air Namib sale opened the flood gates and within the next ten years over 100 of both the "C" and larger "D" models had been sold, predominantly to airlines in various parts of the continent.



1974

First sale of the Beechcraft Super King Air 200



1989

In 1989, NAC took over as the Bell Helicopter Independent Representative in 13 African countries and in 1990 added a Robinson dealership to its rapidly growing helicopter division. NAC is the only Bell Customer Service Facility on the African continent and also has the only Rolls-Royce Authorised Maintenance Centre on the continent, both based at Rand Airport.



2012

NAC ended its relationship with what had become Hawker Beechcraft in 2012 when Hawker Beechcraft entered Chapter 11 bankruptcy proceedings in the USA, cancelling the Support Plus program on the Hawker 4000 and Premier 1 business jets, of which NAC had sold many examples. NAC sided with its customers who had trusted them with the purchase of the aircraft emboldening their commitment to "Customers for Life".



2021

Today, NAC's helicopter operations business is substantial, headquartered out of the magnificent Ultimate Heliport in Midrand, but operating from bases all over Africa. It is the largest charter and HEMS operator in South Africa. NAC Helicopters Cape Town, based in the V&A Waterfront, is a leading tourism-based helicopter operation.

The sale of corporate jets has also been a high priority at NAC, and it has been particularly successful in this sphere. Although NAC does not like boasting of its corporate aircraft sales successes, anyone with access to a copy of the South Africa aircraft register can see for themselves that it is certainly substantial. Having also enjoyed dealer relationships with Gulfstream, Socata, Diamond and Tecnam, today NAC represents Dassault, Kodiak and Piper in the region and has an extensive pre-owned sales business as well.

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As sales volumes diminished and sales margins shrunk after the 9/11 tragedy and the 2008 global financial crisis, NAC turned its attention to more annuity-based income streams in its flight operations businesses. Today, the charter and international operations businesses are large, serving governments, corporates, individuals and the world's largest humanitarian aid organisations such as the United Nations and The World Food Program, amongst many others. NAC's jet air ambulance service, Universal Air Evac, is the largest on the African continent, servicing customers from all corners of the world.

NAC's joint venture leasing business, Awesome Flight Logistics is a highly successful specialist dry leasing business, managed out of Perth, Australia. Other international interests include Specialised Aircraft Services Inc. in Wichita, Kansas, NAC Malta and Discovery Jets in Fort Lauderdale.





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