



Global summit in Durban to accelerate development of aviation workforce

For immediate release

Montréal and Pretoria, 30 July 2025 – To help address aviation's urgent need for millions of new skilled professionals to work in the aviation sector, and to open the skies to young talent worldwide, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), a United Nations Specialised Agency, and the South African Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA) will bring global aviation leaders to Durban next month for a landmark aviation workforce summit.

From 12 to 14 August 2025, ICAO and the SACAA will jointly host the 3rd [Next Generation of Aviation Professionals \(NGAP\) Global Summit 2025](#) in Durban, South Africa. It will provide a global platform for governments, industry, educators, training institutions, and youth representatives to coordinate action on one of the most pressing challenges facing international aviation: developing a qualified, inclusive, and future-ready workforce to sustain the sector's long-term growth and resilience.

ICAO forecasts indicate that by 2037, more than 665,000 aircraft maintenance technicians, 554,000 pilots, 922,000 cabin crew members, and 106,000 air traffic controllers will need to be recruited. These figures reflect only a portion of the broader and growing human resource demands across the many professions essential to air transport. South Africa is playing an integral role on the African continent with the Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM), an African Union initiative that aims to create a unified air transport market across the continent and is forecast to create nearly 600,000 jobs in Africa alone. This direction is strongly supported by the Minister of Transport of South Africa, the Honourable Barbara Creecy.

“South Africa, alongside its African partners, is dedicated to ensuring that Africa’s unique concerns ranging from safety, security, infrastructure to environmental sustainability are addressed,” said Minister Creecy.

Platforms such as the ICAO 2025 NGAP Summit are crucial for continued global dialogue on aviation matters and provide a gateway to advocate for policies that respond to the aviation community’s shared challenges. The NGAP Summit also reflects South Africa’s

commitment to leadership in international aviation, particularly in advancing global workforce development initiatives.

“I am certain that there will be a lot of insights and recommendations that the sector will take forward from the various 2025 NGAP Summit deliberations,” said Ms. Poppy Khoza, Director of Civil Aviation at SACAA. “With South Africa a leading voice in many ICAO platforms on global aviation matters, we also look forward to hosting a number of our fellow Member States in our country, and to see them collaborate on some ideas with their South African counterparts.”

Under the theme “*The Flight Plan for Future Aviation Talent: Innovate, Educate, Inspire – Building the Workforce for the Skies Ahead*,” the ICAO NGAP summit will highlight innovative approaches to aviation training, technology-enabled learning, and the creation of sustainable career pathways, particularly in support of youth in lesser developed and emerging aviation markets.

The event supports the implementation of [ICAO’s NGAP Strategy](#), which outlines an integrated and collaborative approach to addressing aviation’s workforce needs across four focus areas: advocacy and knowledge-sharing, workforce monitoring and forecasting, education and training, and capacity building and outreach.

“Every State has an interest in securing the talent required for a safe and resilient future for international civil aviation. This is particularly vital for youth and communities in parts of the world where aviation can be a powerful catalyst for sustainable development,” said Mr. Salvatore Sciacchitano, President of the ICAO Council. “ICAO has made aviation workforce development a global strategic priority, and this summit will be for the implementation of the strategy we have developed to respond to this challenge.”

Taken together, efforts will raise awareness of aviation career paths and promote diversity and inclusion, result in better identification of emerging skills gaps and training needs, harmonize qualifications and alignment with industry demands; and strengthen human resources planning globally through a focus on partnerships between governments, industry, and academic institutions.

“The ICAO 2025 NGAP Summit will help ensure that no State is left behind in benefiting from the opportunities that aviation can offer,” said ICAO Secretary General Juan Carlos Salazar. “ICAO is working with partners around the world to build the infrastructure, training capacity, and education partnerships needed to develop tomorrow’s aviation professionals, especially in countries where investment in people can drive broader transformation.”

The NGAP Global Summit 2025 is furthermore organised in line with the long-term goals of ICAO's Strategic Plan 2026–2050, which places human development at the core of global efforts to ensure safety, security, innovation, sustainability, and resilience in the sector.

Additionally, the outcomes of the event will help inform deliberations at the 42nd Session of the ICAO Assembly this September, where States are expected to negotiate and agree upon binding resolutions on a variety of related topics.

Resources for Editors

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About ICAO

The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and its 193 member states develop and implement global aviation strategies, technical standards, and capacity building activities to enhance the safety, sustainability, and inclusivity of air services worldwide. ICAO's mission is to expand access to air transport while progressing towards zero aviation fatalities and net-zero carbon emissions. This year, the Organization is celebrating its 80th anniversary.

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