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Community Safety and Transport Management
North West Provincial Government
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



COMMUNICATION SERVICES

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MEDIA BRIEFING BY MEC WM MORWENG ON AVIATION SCHOOLS AT THE GD MONTSHIOA AIRPORT GD Montshioa Airport – Mmabatho

Head of the Department, Dr Hans Kekana
CFO Mme Kutlwano Phatudi
Chief Director for Transport Operation, Mme Mpho Rantona
Members of the media
Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning,

We called this media briefing to clarify the insinuations that flooded social media platforms earlier last week on the aviation academies run from the GD Montshioa Airport. Historically, the Government has invested significantly in the development of the infrastructure of our airports. Over a period of time, the Government realised that, this approach is unsustainable. It was for that, that a strategic external part was sought to manage both airports economically.

It was during that time that the current companies that operate academies came into an agreement with the company that had an agreement with the Department. One of these aviation companies is called African Union Academy. Before then, the African Union Aviation Academy had a lease agreement with the Department from 2006. The lease went on until the airport was taken over by the management company after signing an agreement with the Department.

During that time, as part of the agreement, the African Union Aviation Academy renovated all the buildings at the former Air force base from 2007 to 2008. This after the building was vandalized and looted during the Bophuthatswana Uprising in March 1994.

As part of the renovations, they built the lecture rooms and an auditorium. Among the products of that era is the first North West woman black Pilot. She and other two students had received bursaries from the Department. The African Union Aviation Academy does not have students at the moment.

The other aviation school operating at the former air force base is called Paramount Aviation and is owned by Ms Kaela Seoe-Okafor who is a South African and her husband who is a Nigerian national. Similarly they had a contract with the management company that had agreement with the Department. Paramount Aviation has about eleven students, eight of whom are Nigerian nationals and are in the country legally. The Department's contract with the management company has ended and after their departure the two schools continued to operate without any agreement with the Department.

"Let's Grow North West Together"



The Department has written to the two academies on several occasions and gave them a grace period to leave but did not do so. Last week the Department wrote to them again and gave them 14 days to vacate the premises. The 14 days period is ending next week and will have vacated by then.

The Department has a plan to resuscitate the two airports in the Province. These two airports are strategic assets and are going to play an important role contributing to the economy of the Province. The process to identify a strategic partner to invest in these airports is almost done and the announcement will be made soon. The status of the airports is that there were non-compliance issues raised by the South African Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA) which have not as yet been resolved due to budgetary constraints.

Understanding uneconomical nature of the air transportation from the commercial point of view, the strategic partner that will be announced will be expected to amongst others, ensure that this airport serves as hub of commerce, moving cargo and attract international airlines to be serviced and parked here.

We will call you again to announce that strategic partner and the expectations as well as the business strategy to be implemented henceforth.

Thank you very much.

**ISSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SAFETY AND TRANSPORT
MANAGEMENT**

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