

South African Airways Appoints Captain Eric Manentsa as Chief Pilot

Written by Australian Business

(PRLEAP.COM) July 15, 2014 - Johannesburg, South Africa – South African Airways (SAA) has announced Captain Eric Manentsa as its new Chief Pilot. The announcement, which was made by Minister Malusi Gigaba, Minister of Public Enterprises, follows the retirement of Captain Johnny Woods, who was the Chief Pilot and Head of Flight Operations. His appointment has been effective from 1 June 2014.

Capt. Manentsa has been with SAA for twenty years, and has been the fleet captain on the A319/A320 fleet for the past six years. As chief pilot he will be responsible for the airline's 800 pilots in terms of their day to day function, ensuring that SAA remains compliant to local and international regulations and supporting the company in fulfilling its mandate.

Capt. Manentsa has 30 years of experience in aviation in South Africa, as a pilot and in managerial and leadership roles. His background encompasses the commercial, military and general aviation sector. To date he has amassed approximately 14, 000 flying hours.

He obtained his Commercial License in 1987 and has worked for the Department of Transport in the former Ciskei, the SA Department of Defence and completed Officer Forming and Junior Command staff courses at the South African Air Force College.

He joined SAA in 1994 as an in-flight relief pilot on the Boeing 747 for nine months before flying as a First Officer on the Boeing 737 on the domestic and regional network. He has also flown the Airbus A320s and when these were phased out he flew as Senior First Officer on the Airbus A340s.

In 2005, twelve years after joining SAA he became a captain on the Airbus A319/320. On 1 July 2008 he was appointed as Fleet Captain of the A319/A320.

Capt. Manentsa played a key role in the formation of the original SAA Cadet Pilot Programme. He was also a member of the committee that was tasked by SAA and SAAPA (the SAA Pilots Association) to address the seniority of those pilots from non-white groups who got their licenses prior to 1994 and subsequently joined SAA after 1994. This process resulted in producing the airline's first black and female captains. To maintain the integrity of the process, he opted to not have his seniority adjusted, even though he met the criteria for this.

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He has also served as an executive member on SAAPA and the Airline Pilots' Association of South Africa.

Other achievements:

He was involved in designing and developing a recruitment and selection policy for the flight deck crew. He was appointed as non-executive director in the Board of the Commercial Aviation Association of South Africa. In 2007 he co-founded Mtha Aviation which seeks to further contribute to the skills development agenda in the industry. He holds a BA (Industrial Psychology), and BA Honours degree and is currently busy with a Master's degree in Business Leadership. Minister Gigaba described his appointment as a proud moment for the airline which will go down in history and as a 'milestone decision' coinciding with the country celebrating 20 years of democracy.

About Us South African Airways is a Star Alliance member that offers flights to 38 destinations worldwide. Domestically, SAA operates 544 flights a week between Johannesburg – Cape Town, Durban, East London and Port Elizabeth. Regionally SAA offers 24 destinations across the African continent and its international network creates links to all major continents from South Africa through 10 direct routes. In the regional category, SAA has received the Skytrax 'Best Airline in Africa' Award for 11 consecutive years. For more detail please visit, <http://www.flysaa.com/za/en/>.