



UPDATE ON PROGRESS MADE ON THE PLETTENBERG BAY AIRPORT

03 September 2024

Media Statement

No Embargo

Bitou Municipality is committed to working with all relevant stakeholders to address safety concerns at the airport so that flight landings can resume as soon as possible. These concerns led the South African Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA) to suspend the airport's license in July 2024, thus preventing flights from landing.

Staying true to this commitment, the Bitou Council, at the Special Council Meeting held on 30 August 2024, resolved to contribute R5 million to this cause. These funds will be used to address the safety concerns raised by the SACAA, including maintenance work on the runway.

It should also be noted that all contractual matters between the Municipality and Garden Route AERO have now been concluded. This means that the process of handing over the facility and all airport operations to the service provider is back on track. Garden Route AERO has initiated the process to acquire the airport license in its name. Their initial application is for a Category 2 license, which will allow general aviation activities to resume.

However, while it is good news that general aviation activities will resume, larger commercial aircraft will still not be able to land immediately due to ongoing safety concerns related to the runway. As previously mentioned, the process of repairing the runway will be expedited without compromising the goal of providing a comprehensive medium- to long-term solution to this issue.

Recent media statements suggesting that there is an intention to upgrade the runway to accommodate larger aircraft, such as the Boeing 737, are incorrect and should be disregarded.

Issued by **Mr. Mbulelo Memani**, Acting Municipal Manager, **Bitou Municipality**

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