

A catalyst for future investment

Mokgadi Matli, GAAL Acting CEO, reports on plans to turn Polokwane International Airport into a logistics and cargo hub for Limpopo and SADC.



**Mokgadi Matli, GAAL
Acting CEO**

BIOGRAPHY

I grew up in the village of Rosenkrantz, Ga-Matlala. I am a self-driven HR professional and have worked in the Human Resources management field for more than 20 years, of which 14 have been at managerial level. I have served my years in both private and public sector, with most of my experience acquired in the manufacturing and gaming industries. I have a BCom Honours in HR Management obtained from MANCOSA and National Diploma in Operations Management.

How have your previous tasks prepared you for this role?

The various roles I occupied in manufacturing prepared me for the quick turnaround that is required for service delivery, the general principle of Total Quality Management (TQM) and the need for standard operating procedures (SOPs) to ensure high standards and compliance. I grew within the ranks from being an Officer to Executive HR Manager and this management experience prepared me to serve as an interim CEO for GAAL.

What is your number-one priority as CEO?

The number-one priority is to establish new revenue streams in order to ensure that GAAL is financially sustainable and to increase efficiencies within the entity.

Are all key management positions filled?

We still have a couple of management positions that are vacant, particularly in the Business Development and Marketing division.

Does PIA/GAAL have the full confidence of the regulatory authorities such as SACAA?

Yes, absolutely. In a recent conversation that I had with officials from the SACAA I told them that we view them as friends of the airport in that the relationship that we have built over the years has shifted from us viewing them as the policeman that is out to catch us for non-compliance to them being a key stakeholder. They are ensuring that they develop us from "compliance only" to the concept of safety and security as a lifestyle.

How far along the path of infrastructure upgrades are you?

PIA has successfully completed the big project of lighting up the runways. All Airfield Ground Lighting (runway, approach, end and edge lights) are 100% fixed. We are now working on the water reticulation project and it is currently on 70%.

How will you drive additional traffic to the airport?

In our evaluation of current and future traffic for the airport, we have realised that PIA will not survive on passenger movement alone due to the short distance between Polokwane and Johannesburg, which gives travellers an option to drive. However, there is huge potential for cargo movement from PIA to domestic, regional and international airports. PIA is strategically placed as a logistics hub at the helm of both the N1 and a railway, which makes it the best-suited airport for an integrated transportation system. ■