

# Opening Up The Skies

THE application for a licence by Quickjet Pty Ltd serving before the Namibian Transport Commission (NTC) presents an interesting opportunity to test the new legislation passed at the end of last year amending the Air Services Act of 1948.

The new legislation specifically removes any protection against competition for Air Namibia and TransNamib.

The applicant viz Quickjet is a company funded with private money and in no way relies on government for financial assistance. It is backed by Namibian Harvest Investments, a public company whose aim it is to empower Namibians. It is unlikely that any other application involving a similar amount of money (N\$10 million) will come before the NTC again in the near future.

While it is known that there is another airline viz Kalahari Express that is also supposed to serve the Eros-South Africa routes, this airline has after some two years not been able to start operations and it in any case now resorts under Air Namibia, a company making heavy losses and becoming an increasingly heavy burden on the taxpayers. If Kalahari Express is to be run by Air Namibia with the same degree of unpunctuality and unreliability as its own services then it is certainly in the public interest that a privately funded airline be given an opportunity to provide an alternative to the travelling public.

It will be interesting to see how the NTC views the Minister of Works Transport and Communications' latest piece of legislation aimed at making the transport sector more competitive and less reliable on public (taxpayers') money.

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