Nelson Mandela International Airport (IATA: RAI, ICAO: GVNP), also known as Praia International Airport, is the airport of Santiago Island in Cape Verde. It was opened in October 2005,[2] replacing the old Francisco Mendes International Airport. It is located about 3 km northeast of the city centre of Praia in the southeastern part of the island of Santiago.

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History[edit]

The first flight to the new airport was on 6 October 2005 with a flight from Sal.[2] Even though the airport serves the capital and largest city, Praia as well as the island of Santiago, Cape Verde's busiest international airport is Amílcar Cabral International Airport located on the smaller island of Sal.[1]

In January 2012 a Cape Verde government statement noted that Praia International Airport was renamed after South Africa's former president Nelson Mandela, an icon for freedom in Africa, not without controversy.[3] Modernization works, including a new departures hall, were scheduled for completion in July 2018.[4]

Airlines and destinations[edit]

Airlines	Destinations
Air Senegal	Dakar–Diass[5]
ASKY Airlines	Dakar–Diass, Lomé[6]
Azores Airlines	Lisbon,[7] Paris–Charles de Gaulle, Ponta Delgada
Cabo Verde Airlines	Boston,[8] Lisbon, Sal, São Vicente
Royal Air Maroc	Casablanca
TAP Air Portugal	Lisbon
TICV	Boa Vista, Maio, Sal, São Filipe,[9] São Nicolau, São Vicente
Transair	Dakar–Diass[10]
TUI fly Netherlands[11]	Amsterdam

Statistics[edit]

See source Wikidata query and sources.

Year	Passengers	Operations	Cargo (t)
2012[12]	497,049		
2013[12]	505,497	8,978	1,418
2016[1]	522,584	8,641	1,109
2017[1]	662,356	11,236	959

See also[edit]

List of buildings and structures in Santiago, Cape Verde