

SUPPORTING SUSTAINABILITY WITH RE-USE OF NAVIGATION BEACONS IN ZAMBIA

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The Foundation, Air Traffic Control the Netherlands (LVNL) and the Zambia Airports Company (ZACL) worked together not only to improve flight safety in Zambia, but also ensured re-use of high-quality materials rather than discarding. This was done with a donation of twelve non-directional beacons (NDB) to the Zambia Airports Company (ZACL).

'The navigation beacons have served us well for many years, received excellent maintenance, and are nowhere near the end of their technical lifespan,' says Dave Vrielink, team leader at the LVNL Department of Communication, Navigation, Surveillance and Infra, who took initiative for the donation. 'I'm very happy that these navigation beacons will now have a second life in Zambia, facilitated by the AviAssist Foundation. That feels good.'

Aircraft fly based on multiple sources of information, including conventional ground-based navigation beacons and satellite navigation. The Netherlands has a robust nationwide network with various types of navigation beacons, increasingly relying on satellite navigation. It means these beacons were no longer needed and have been decommissioned and dismantled.

AviAssist is normally reluctant to support the donation of second-hand equipment to Africa in view of the risk of Africa being seen as a dumping ground of old equipment. "It was the commitment of the LVNL in ensuring that the shipment of functioning beacons included the maintenance logs, manuals and spare parts that led us to support the re-use of these beacons" explained AviAssist director Kok. "There are plenty of countries in Africa that could use these beacons but we were also very keen to make sure that the recipients have the knowledge and maintenance discipline to install and maintain them. That why we opted for Zambia. It is crucial for the Foundation to ensure that international standards are met. This type of non-directional navigation beacon has been used in Zambia for some time now. As a result, technical staff at the Zambian airports are already familiar with the operation and maintenance of these NDBs. It is also great to witness the pride at the LVNL of its employees' efforts to make its processes more sustainable".

"These beacons are going to help us to close a number of gaps we have around the country" says Maggie Kaunda, acting director at ZACL. "Some of them will be in Lusaka but they will be spread around the country as well so that they can address some of the gaps that we've had around the nation. We are excited about this donation".

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The AviAssist Foundation has been leading, building and supporting aviation safety promotion in African since 1995. It provides safety promotion deliberately different to Africa's aviation industry. It is the initiator of Africa's first aviation safety promotion centre. More at www.aviassist.org