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Media Statement

For Immediate Release

ATNS academy offers new groundbreaking aviation programme

The Air Traffic and Navigation Services SOC Ltd (ATNS)'s Aviation Training Academy (ATA), in partnership with the South African National Space Agency (SANSa), has launched a new groundbreaking aviation programme to understand and mitigate the effects of solar activity on the aviation industry.

The five-day training programme titled, An Introduction to Space Weather for Aviation Personnel, was officially launched on 18 March 2024 at the world-renowned ATA, with the graduation of the first test cohort of 10 students from the programme this week.

The new programme, which is aligned with the global aviation safety initiatives of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), is designed to create awareness and prepare aviation personnel on how to appropriately respond to adverse space weather conditions. This is particularly essential because climate and environmental changes are impacting various global economies.

The aviation space is no exception, as it is increasingly becoming prone to the effects of space weather due to the greater use and continued miniaturisation of microelectronics. This is in addition to the growing reliance on signals from satellite-based aviation navigation systems.

In aviation terms, space weather refers to the state of the atmosphere and conditions in space, such as solar wind, magnetosphere, ionosphere, and thermosphere. Such may influence the performance and reliability of space and ground-based aviation-related technological systems.

“Awareness and preparation for eventualities like solar storms and mass coronal ejections has become critical in our industry,” said ATNS Chief Executive Officer, Ms Nozipho Mdawe.

“Congratulations to the ATA and the first class of the new programme. Indeed, the ATA continues to cement its position as the ultimate centre of excellence in the African continent and beyond on aviation training products and service offerings, and we look forward to new enrolments,” she said.

Ends

Issued by the Air Traffic and Navigation Services (ATNS) SOC Ltd
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