

# **CEMAIR MEDIA STATEMENT**

**Issued 11 July 2024**

## **UPDATE ON OPERATIONS INTO PLETTENBERG BAY AIRPORT**

### **Recent Events**

On Tuesday the 2nd of July CemAir received a call from the Plettenberg Bay Airport manager stating that the Airport license issued by the SACAA was expected to be suspended the following day. The reason provided was that during a recent SACAA audit an unaddressed finding relating to the condition of the runway and taxiway had been escalated to the highest level.

As a result, all flights into Plettenberg Bay from both Johannesburg and Cape Town were cancelled with immediate effect up to and including the end of November 2024. This was the anticipated period for the runway work to be scoped, planned and completed.

On Wednesday the 3rd of July 2024 a further communication was received indicating that the airport would not be closed as the SACAA had accepted a phased action plan and would assess progress of the plan on the 31st of July 2024.

Despite this, on the 7th of July 2024, Bitou Municipality issued a contradictory media statement advising that after careful consideration they had decided to close the Airport from the 31st of July 2024. Subsequently this was again amended on the 9th of July 2024 to state that a plan was in progress and airport interruptions were still to be advised. No airport closure dates have been confirmed.

### **Next Steps**

Following confirmation that an unplanned closure is imminent, CemAir has reintroduced a limited flight schedule from Johannesburg to Plettenberg Bay from Thursday the 25th of July 2024. This will initially operate 4 times per week on Sundays, Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays.

The Plettenberg Bay to Cape Town route will remain suspended and will be reintroduced at a date to be announced.

Based on the anticipated runway work, an airport closure is anticipated in the medium-term future for temporary work and again later in the year for approximately 6 weeks for the permanent runway repairs. Although the date of closure has not been determined it is anticipated that CemAir will be able to provide reasonable notice of flight disruptions for the planned closure.



### **About Plettenberg Bay Airport**

The Airport in Plettenberg is owned by Bitou Municipality which has been operating the facility since construction. The municipality recently entered into an agreement with RSA Aero relating to the long-term management of the Airport facility. The Airport management is currently transitioning between the parties. CemAir is not privy to the details of the Airport, or its operation and we have received limited information on the process expected to be followed.

The Airport was closed to commercial traffic in 2022 for a three-month period when the Airport license was downgraded by the SACAA for unaddressed non-compliances.

### **About CemAir**

CemAir is South Africa's second largest airline by number of flights, operating with bases in Johannesburg and Cape Town and flying to 14 destinations in South Africa and the region. The airline is an IATA member and holds interline and code share agreements with 10 carriers.

CemAir has operated a scheduled airline services into Plettenberg Bay from both Johannesburg and Cape Town since 2014.

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