



The Future for Africa`s Business & Private Aviation Industry **By Lorna Titley**

My first glimpse of private aviation in Africa was through the romantic lens of the 1985 Oscar-winning film, *Out of Africa*, starring Meryl Streep and Robert Redford. For some, the real star of the show was the De Havilland Gipsy Moth, the 1929 bi-plane flown by Redford`s character that became emblematic of the freedom and adventure that such an aircraft could offer in the great continent.

Today, the African skies are dotted with many different breeds of private plane. Cessna, Gulfstream, Bombardier and Beechcraft, BAE, Dassault, Embraer, Airbus and Boeing make the planes that join modern-day De Havilland models still seen above the low plains, central highlands and fertile plateau of Kenya, where *Out of Africa* was filmed.

While Kenya boasts a fleet of over 100 private and business aircraft, as does another African economic powerhouse – Nigeria – there is one other country in the continent whose total fleet is more than that of Kenya and Nigeria combined. South Africa is home to over 300 private and business aircraft, of which most are turboprops.

Tanzania has a sizeable fleet of 70 or so private planes, with Angola, Botswana and Morocco each having 50 - plus business aircraft apiece. Egypt, Namibia and Algeria score 30-40 jets per country. Less mature markets like Cameroon, the Congo, Gabon and Zambia show promise as the commodity markets expand. Across the continent, industries such as mining, agriculture, telephony, hydrocarbon, oil and gas have driven the demand for private and business aviation.

Traditionally, private and business planes in Africa have tended to be older, pre-owned aircraft. That is now changing, with larger jets in particular increasing able to attract financing which was previously difficult to obtain. Finding the services and infrastructure that can support operators across Africa's vast continent is also an ongoing challenge.

During COVID, many aircraft owners in Africa started using their jets for business uses, rather than purely for private flights. This trend was driven by the lack of commercial flights during lockdowns, and for some owners it has led to them upgrading from a light jet to a mid-sized jet or a turboprop to a light jet, while others have stayed loyal to their original model.

So, what is next for the African region? Quaynote's webinar, The Future for BizAv Africa, took place on Thursday, 25th January and celebrated the continent's success stories, from creating a free zone at Lagos, developing medevac services in Ethiopia, to transport for farmers to catching rhino poachers. A panel of experts examined how African asset values can be protected and, critically told attendees where to find the best advice for financing, taxation and registering jets in this exciting market.



Lorna Titley is a Director at Quaynote Communications, a communications company specialising in PR & Marketing Consultancy and Live / Virtual / Hybrid Conferences & Events for the Aviation, Maritime and Security Industries.

lorna@quaynote.ca; www.quaynote.com