

Increased arrivals spark service delivery enhancements at Victoria Falls International Airport

The Civil Aviation Authority of Zimbabwe, as a result of the Victoria Falls International Airport's capacity to welcome more flights, has begun working toward a greater spread of arrival times to limit peak congestion for passenger handling.



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Africa Albida Tourism's (AAT) chief executive, Ross Kennedy said the tourism industry in Victoria Falls is working very closely with all of the public-sector departments and ministries to ensure that this demand is matched by service delivery enhancements.

"This includes latest software systems for immigration to accelerate visa processing at Victoria Falls Airport, more immigration desks and officers at Kazungula, and similar such initiatives.

"Victoria Falls Airport is certainly starting to play its role as a regional tourism hub and the varied routes available now make it an obvious southern Africa itinerary access point.

The increase in arrivals to Zimbabwe

"With Zimbabwe being widely tipped by the international tourism industry and mainstream media, as one of the hot destinations for 2018/19 and beyond one can certainly see more long-haul airlines eyeing Victoria Falls as a new route," said Kennedy.

In 2017, there was an 18.5% increase in hotel occupancy in Victoria Falls, compared to 2016, with an additional 35,730 rooms sold across ten hotels, which together have 1,125 rooms available per night and measure arrivals monthly – a surge in December 2017 saw this year-on-year increase rise to 24% for the month.

“These growth rates in key ratios are way in excess of regional industry norms and add substantial weight to the fact that Victoria Falls is back and the future is looking very bright.



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“Reports from industry colleagues reflect occupancies from January to April this year compared to the same period last year, are up by 30% in advance bookings.

“This is extremely positive news as the first quarter is usually the poorest business period in the destination,” added Kennedy.

The new \$150m Victoria Falls International Airport, enabling long-haul wide-bodied aircraft to land, was opened in 2016 and has since welcomed three new international airlines to the destination, while existing ones have increased capacity. “This has so far created an additional 127,000 seats into Victoria Falls per annum.” concluded Kennedy.

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