



**Lanseria International Airport Submission to the  
Parliamentary Portfolio Committee for Transport on 5  
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Compiled/Presented by:

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## Introduction

The issue being presented and discussed is the uncontrolled proliferation of small airfields in relative close proximity to existing commercial airports. Although we are looking at Lanseria International Airport (LIA) in particular this is actually a National matter as there are similar and comparable difficulties at a number of ACSA airports as well as other non-ACSA airports such as Kruger Mpumalanga International Airport.

## Background and Status of LIA

LIA was established as a General Aviation (GA) Airport during 1974 and fully privatised/financed during 1991. The airport has been growing steadily ever since and today serves approximately 1.6 million passengers per year with a large number travelling on Low Cost Airlines serving the Durban and Cape Town.

LIA has full International Status as the second airport with such status in the province of Gauteng.

LIA is also a designated airport in terms of the SACAA security classification and this ensures a high level of security in operations and the presence of the full spectrum of Government Departments.

LIA is also the foremost hub in Africa for business/corporate and charter operations. LIA also serves as the alternate airport (second destination/point of departure in case of a diversion) for routine departures and arrivals associated with Oliver R Tambo International Airport (ORT). This is most significant and supports ORT operators to carry additional payload and have much more cost effective flight operations.

Although LIA has a catchment area serving the South of Tshwane, Mogale City and the Northern Suburbs of Johannesburg a significant percentage of passengers prefer LIA as the airport of choice for ease of use and expediency.

There are some 200 businesses at LIA and some 3500 people gainfully employed. It thus has significant positive social and economic impact.

LIA boast some 250 to 320 Air Traffic Movements (ATM's) per day. It is also the hub for a large number of ambulance and mercy flights and has serves as an integral part of medical evacuations and air bridges in the past. This was indeed the case in the recent past between LIA the DRC and Nigeria.

## Future of LIA

LIA currently has sufficient capacity within the Greater Gauteng (Johannesburg Airspace) to allow for significant growth and to thus further contribute to the economy of Gauteng and indeed the RSA. There is currently an airspace efficiency enhancement project and review process for the use of the upper airspaces associated with Gauteng. We are confident that it will further support the vision which LIA and City of Johannesburg has for the airport by reducing the flight operational interdependency with ORT.

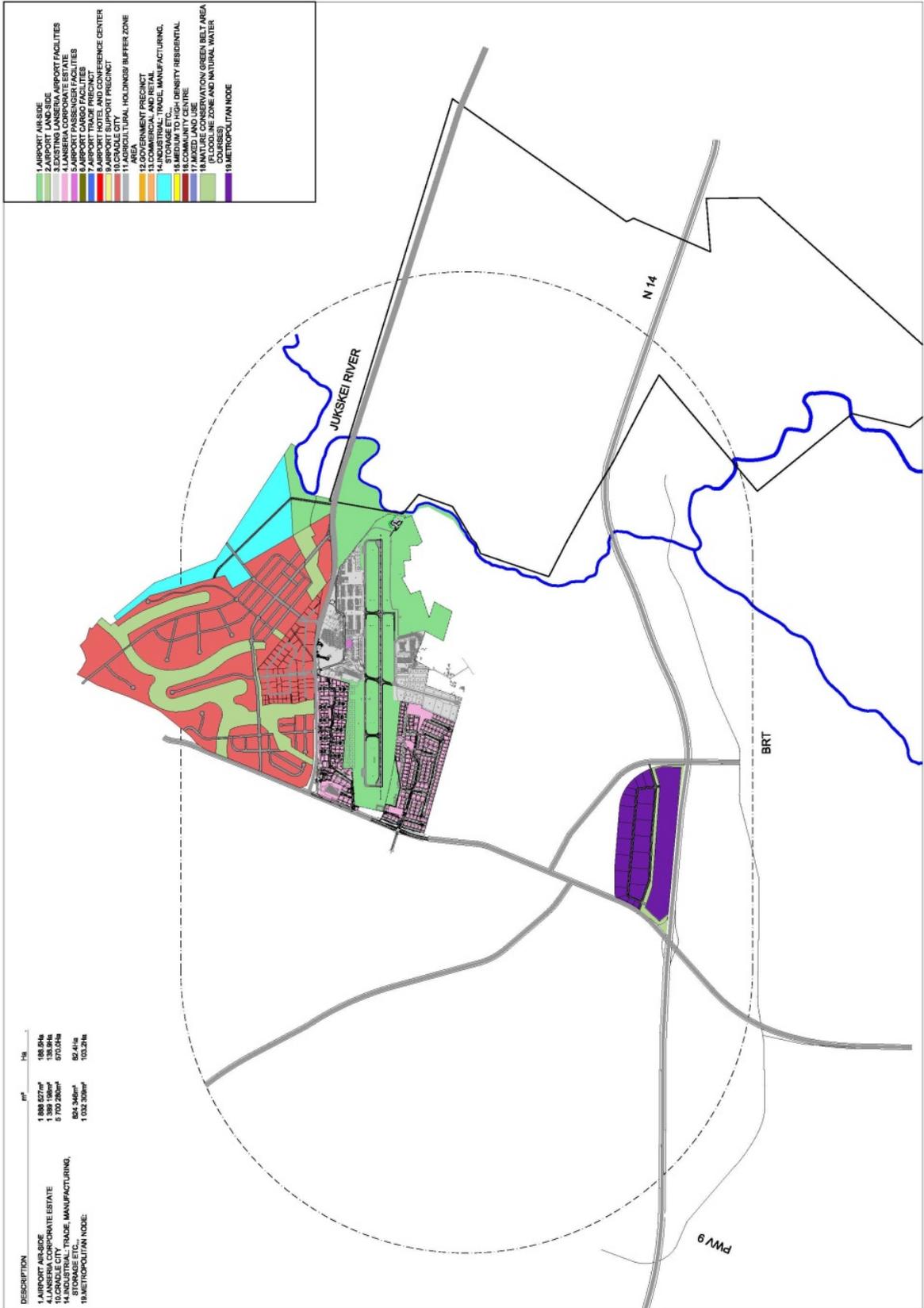
LIA is continuing its extensive infrastructure development plan, with the construction of a new wider runway, scheduled for completion by end September 2013, a terminal building extension, scheduled for completion by end June 2013,. All this development has been privately funded.

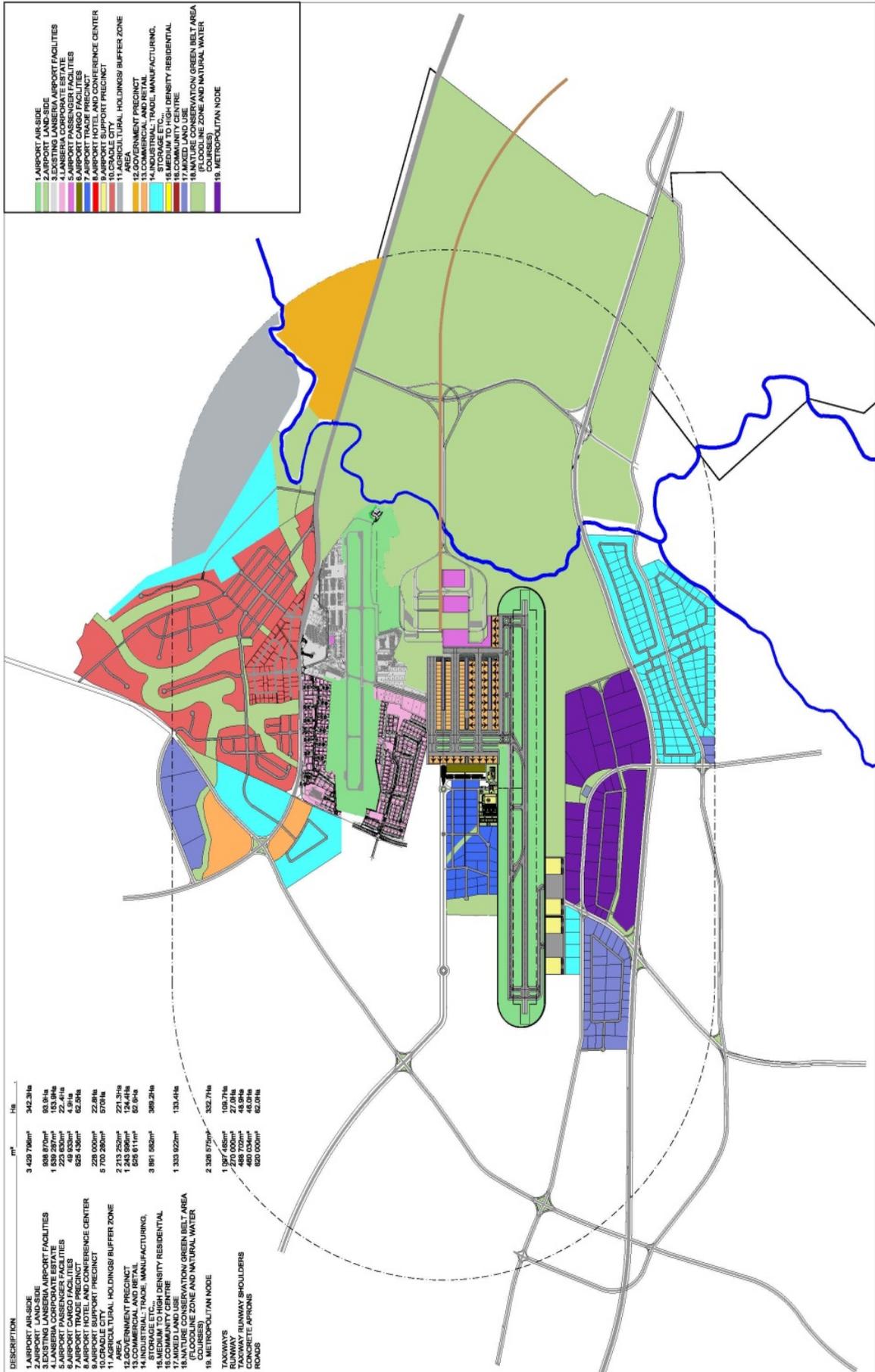
There are further expansion elements also being planned to ensure volume growth and operational efficiencies are maintained. This includes an extension to the main apron and the development of a new multistory parkade

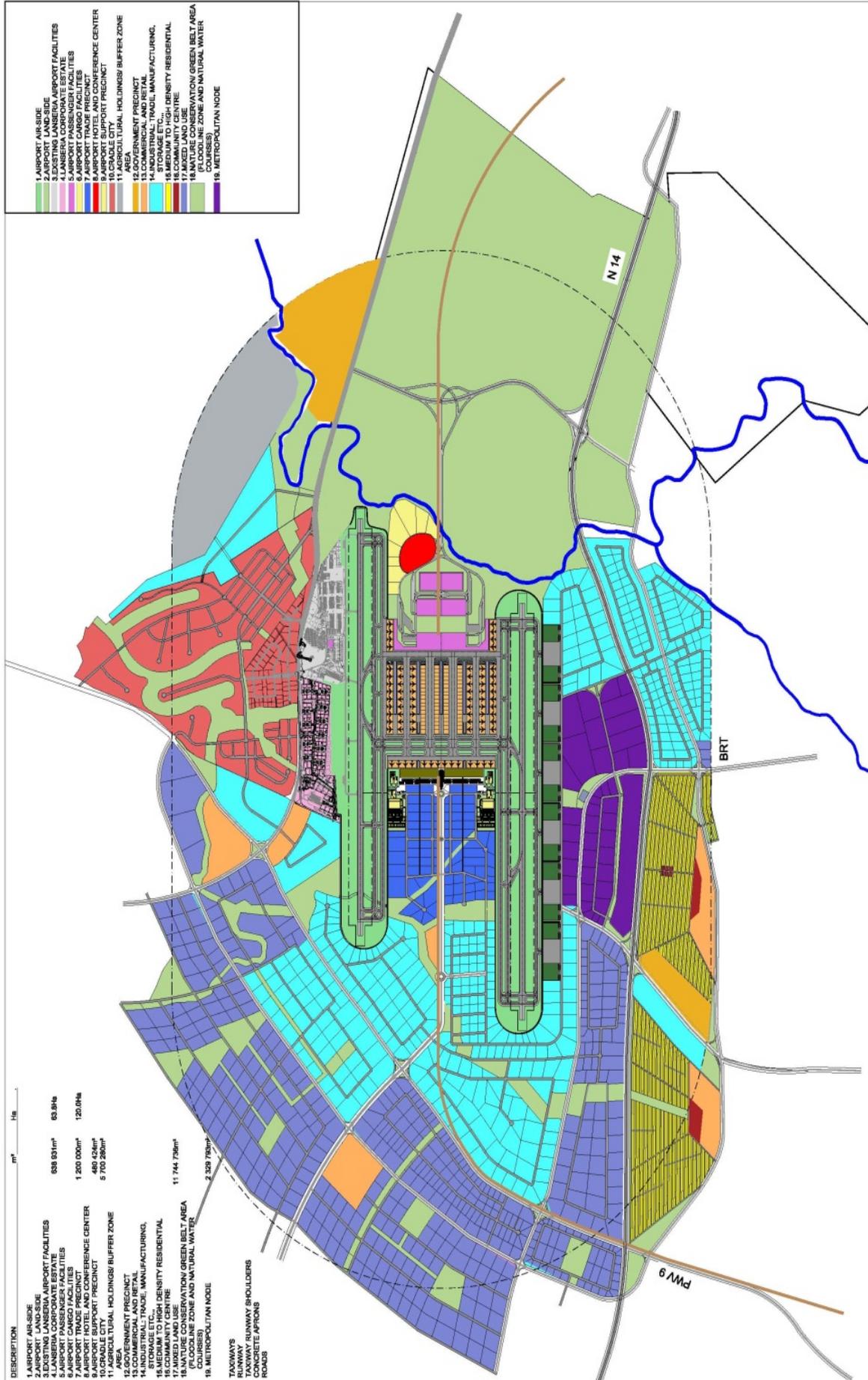
LIA has a proud, formal association with the City of Johannesburg. In 2009 the City commissioned various consultants to look at what the City needed to do in terms of spatial infrastructure development to ensure that the projected GDP targets would be achieved.

One element of this study was an investigation into air transport and the possible need for a third international airport. Various possible locations were researched both from a land and air space perspective. The conclusion of this investigation was that there weren't any viable locations for another large airport and that the development of an aerotropolis around LIA should be pursued

The following plans show the master plan the City of Johannesburg has developed for the greater Lanseria area.







## Description of an Airport

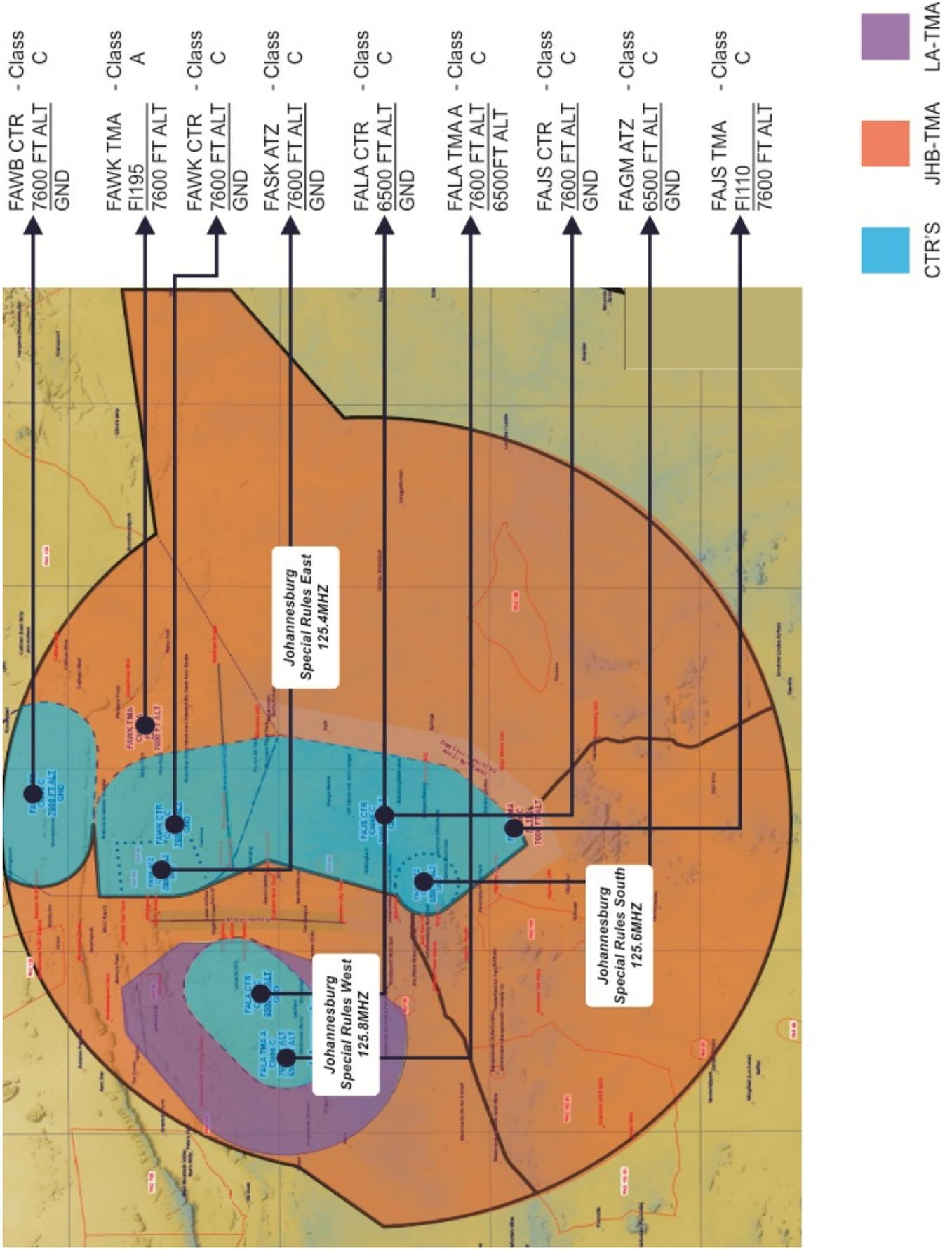
An airport consists of services and infrastructure. Infrastructure includes facilities such as runways, taxiways, terminal building(s), hangars, fuel storage and control tower etc. Services in turn include activities such as emergency/rescue (fire and rescue) and re-fuelling. All of these are contained within the airport land boundaries.

However at all large airports where Air Traffic Services (ATS) are provided there are associated airspaces. These extend far beyond the land limits of the airport. It typically consists of airspace of defined dimensions extending from the surface of the earth around the airport upwards to various levels e.g. LIA has a Control Zone (CTR), which extends from the ground to 6500ft Above Mean Sea Level (AMSL). The purpose of this defined airspace is to ensure a safe, orderly and efficient handling of arriving and departing flights. All aircraft flying within this space are required to maintain two-way radio communication with the airport ATC and are subject to control and the provision of alerting services.

In some cases where there is a confluence of air routes, the CTR is supplemented by a Terminal Control Area (TMA), which abuts onto the CTR. The TMA can serve a number of airports (e.g. the Johannesburg TMA, which serves ORTIA, LIA, Wonderboom Waterkloof, Swartkop and Rand airports and to lesser extent Grand Central Airport). The purpose of the TMA is to serve as the “sorters of the sky” and to separate arriving and departing flights from one another and to receive such flights from their arrival routes and to send flights off to their destinations after departing. All aircraft flying within this space are also required to maintain two way radio communication with the airport ATC and are subject to control and the provision of alerting service.

The Air Traffic Service provider is also responsible for the maneuvering of aircraft on the taxiways and control over runway activities.

The diagram below depicts the various CTR's and Johannesburg TMA.



## The Process for Developing an Airport

A developer can elect to follow the unlicensed route. In which case he will not be required to deal with any aviation authority such as the SACAA. If he does follow this route then these airfields are not subject to any regulatory/safety/security oversight. Our concerns with these types of airports have been documented and recorded, in a number of forums and in different contexts i.e. security, safety and environmental.

If a developer wishes to follow the licensed route he will formally apply to the SACAA in terms of Part 139 of the Aviation Act. Once he has been granted a provisional license he will be required amongst other matters to submit a safety case which will be discussed at the National Air Space Committee (NASCOM). The origins of NASCOM can be traced back to the 1970's. It has been established, in terms of regulation 11.05.1 of the Civil Aviation Regulations 2011, to provide a forum where the SACAA and organisations which provide services in the national airspace as well as the users of such airspace can consider the construction, amendment and usage of such airspace. NASCOM will ensure that such airspace adequately protects any flight procedures designed for such airspace.

It must be noted that in the absence of centralised coordination for policy setting and lack of directives has resulted in the NASCOM being "abused" or attempted to be abused by new and existing entrants. NASCOM simply does not consider National-, Provincial- and Municipal Transport Planning considerations as it is not currently their mandate or role.

This body should thus not venture to resolve matters of economic impact and development planning by relevant authorities, as it has been placed under pressure to do due to the lack of centralised control and planning.

LIA follows all the statutory processes and seeks to pave the way for meaningful, participative and transparent consultative forums. Yet unlicensed airports are allowed to develop and in the process even abuse the situation due to the lack of Governmental Frameworks and Plans.

The Government has endeavored to address the situation. One such an example is the National Airports Development Plan (NADP), which has been under development since 1997 when it was associated with the White Paper National Policy on Airport and Airspace Management. Further detail and direction was provided in the Draft White Paper on Civil Aviation Policy (October 2011).

The following principles were set out with respect to airport development (objectives of the NADP):

- Airport development should not be considered in isolation, but rather integrated into all national, provincial and municipal economic and spatial development initiatives
- Airport development should meet social needs and objectives of local communities
- There should be synergy between airport development and the development of strategies of all spheres of government
- At a national level the planning and integration of airport into the broader transport network from the point of view of modal integration as well as in the context of the total air transport system, should be coordinated with other spheres of government
- Airport and development and planning should also be incorporated into the planning initiatives of the appropriate sphere of government as an airport may influence provincial and municipal socio-economic development. **Aviation knows no borders.** There is therefore a possibility of conflict between airport planning initiatives of two neighboring provinces/municipalities, where their planning involves two different airports close to each other and which may consequently be detrimental to the system as a whole, from a safety and operational as economic point of view.
- Planning of all airports should furthermore be included in a provincial transport plan, which, in turn, should form part of the economic development plan of the province.
- The socio economic “value” of an airport in relation to the total system as well as a more localized point of view, is another consideration when making decisions about seamless transport systems, private investment and the designation of additional, or the reduction of public funding.
- Airport planning should be executed holistically in accordance with a structured NADP, which would support national, provincial and local community objectives. Such development should complement the airport system, and in some cases may even allow for the competition within the system to benefit the user.
- The white paper also stated that the DOT should coordinate with all relevant stakeholders in order to develop and manage a NADP. The NADP should not consider National Airports only, but rather all airports as the interdependencies between airports may have a negative impact on individual operations.

During April 2006 extensive stakeholder engagements took place and in October 2007 a consultant was appointed to produce a draft NADP. During the latter part of 2012 DOT engaged with the Provinces and plans to continue in 2013.

The core objectives of the NADP are thus as follows:

- To develop a vision for the type of airport network the SA needs to meet its development goals into the future.

- To design a framework on how airports should be funded, managed and operated.

The proposed vision for the SA airport network is as follows:

- A network with sufficient capacity to handle passenger and freight volumes.
- A network that is able to meet the need of all airport users.
- A network that is financially and economically sustainable.
- A network that optimises contribution to socio-economic development and meeting government's wider objectives

Whilst we appreciate that it is neither an enviable nor an easy task and will require a hard drive, it needs to be concluded as a matter of urgency.

### Current Challenges

There is an imbalance between the capacity, efficiency and access to the airport between the two opposite approaches to the main runway (06 – 24). The reason for this is due to insufficient airspace towards the North and East of the airport. The impact on arriving aircraft is such that access onto Runway RWY 24 i.e. from the NE is very limited during inclement meteorological conditions. The same applies to aircraft departing from the opposite RWY 06 as Standard Instrument Departures (SID's) are not permitted due airspace restrictions. No Standard Instrument Arrival (STAR's) can be flown onto RWY 24 either and this has a negative impact on the Air Traffic Control (ATC) workload and efficiency for the ORTIA ATC operations.

This has a potential safety impact, which needs to be mitigated through alternate less efficient and cumbersome ATC /flight procedures. (Airlines and other operators have placed this on record and Comair will expand upon this)

Due to the current limited lower airspace available to the North and East of LIA there are a number of airspace violations/infringements by small light GA aircraft.

Despite this situation LIA boasts an ATC flight safety record comparable to the already safe national average ATNS achieves. There are however potential adverse flight safety events, which could be avoided if the airspace was enlarged and right sized.

Rightsizing the airspace will also make the airport safer in general terms for the larger passenger aircraft.

## Current Threats

There are a number of small privately owned and operated unlicensed airfields at various stages of development around the immediate vicinity of the lower airspace boundaries of LIA.

There are around currently 18 known small airfields around the lower LIA airspace. There are at least 4 such new developments of which one is at an advanced stage of development

Private aircraft owners mainly use these airports, for recreational, single person or private flights very for small groups and training flight purposes.

The continuation of this practice, should it be allowed, will have a negative impact on flight safety and more airspace violations/infringements are likely. This may potentially result in midair collisions between light general aviation aircraft and large passenger commercially operated aircraft.

Typically these airports start out as small airport with limited flying activity servicing the recreational flying community. However over time activity increases and the aircraft types become larger. Where this occurs within the greater Gauteng airspace the net affect is a direct adverse impact on the safety of aviation activity. This is also the pivot point when business models have an impact on aviation safety and airports become interdependent on one another by having to share over crowded skies.

Should two of the proposed new airports be allowed to develop to their full extent it is guaranteed to have an immediate and direct safety impact. This is not only relevant to LIA but all traffic within the area. In fact the SAAF has also formally raised written objections to the development of such airfields, as it would impact adversely on their operations at AFB Swartkop and AFB Waterkloof.

The development of these tow proposed airports will also have an negative impact on the NECSA risk model for the Pelindaba nuclear facility.

There is currently an example of an airport, which failed to obtain permission to develop an airport through the formal procedures as detailed above, as they were unable to meet the required safety standards. Despite objections from key safety stakeholders this developer then elected to follow the unlicensed option. Due to the apparent “ignorance” of the aviation legislation by the local planning authority the developer was granted land use rights. After discussions with the local authority we were able to identify a number of contraventions by this developer viz.

- A site development plan has not been presented and approved;
- Roads and storm water have not been properly considered in a formal manner;
- Geotechnical considerations are not formally considered;

- A full EIA process has not been fulfilled and LIA was not involved as an interested and affected party;
- Floor area ratios as contained in the approval are being ignored;
- Building Plans have not been presented or approved by the local authorities.

Why we raise such issues is to highlight the problems that arise from uncontrolled development.

### **Conclusion**

In the absence of the NADP and centralised coordination of the airports network it has led to a situation where:

- The users, operators and owners of airports have not realised and extracted maximum benefits from facilities and infrastructure to benefit all stakeholders.
- Interdependencies are created between existing airports, which results in negative capacity and efficiency impact.
- Future growth is impaired
- Safety and potential safety issues are created
- Fragmentation of the industry role players, during engagements and consultations (GA vs. Airline vs. Aircraft Owners Pilots Association etc.) resulting in additional infrastructure and operational costs in very much a silo type approach during engagements at e.g. NASCOM
- “White elephant” airports are scattered around SA and often authorities with other social responsibilities and priorities are at limb to maintain these.

### **Way Forward and Desired Outcome of this Engagement with the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Transport**

It is our considered opinion that the DOT should to take control of the coordination and all statutory processes for the development of an airport network, with an overall oversight including economic and technical aspects. Due consideration should be given to the National, Provincial and Municipal needs, plans and fit for purpose/relevant solutions. The official master planning of existing airports need to be at the forefront of considerations and deliberations, providing these meet and are aligned with the relevant authorities plans.

The desired outcome that we seek is that a moratorium should be put in place, on all new airport developments that are proposed in the environs of existing commercial airports, until such time as the centralised framework has been created and can be implemented.