

# Aviation academy to create jobs, skills development for KZN youth

In a bold and historic first for the province, KwaZulu-Natal Premier Nomusa Dube-Ncube, has officiated the launch of the Fuze Aviation Academy Training Programme.



Image source: Terrence Bowen from [Pexels](#)

The programme is aimed at job creation, skills development and supporting young people in the aviation sector.

Speaking during the launch at the Oribi Airport in Pietermaritzburg on Thursday, Dube-Ncube described the event as a groundbreaking initiative, marking the entry of Black men and women into what remains a white-dominated industry, 28 years into democracy.

“Today, we are launching the training programme for Private Pilot Licence, Commercial Pilot Licence, Aircraft Maintenance Engineers and Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems Training. The Fuze Aviation Academy, which was opened in 2021 in KwaZulu-Natal, opens opportunities to the girls and boys of rural and urban areas to enter the exciting world of flight,” Dube-Ncube said.

The Premier commended the Transport Education Training Authority for guiding and supporting the Fuze Aviation Academy during the critical stages of its development path.

## Partnership

She announced that the academy has also entered into a partnership with the provincial government, through the Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs.

“As the provincial government, we will continue to provide the necessary support to ensure the successful rollout of various programmes in the aviation sector.”

The Premier noted that the academy has entered the market at an opportune time, when capacity has been severely diminished by the withdrawal of Comair, which operated Kulula and British Airways in South Africa.

While other airlines including Lift and FlySafair have responded by adding more flights to their rosters, Dube-Ncube said, this has led to exorbitant ticket fees.

“At the same time, the price of jet fuel has not assisted because it has risen globally following the geopolitical tensions in Eastern Europe. One of the concerns also raised by the airlines in South Africa is that they are struggling to get trained pilots and cabin crew on board quickly enough.

“So even as Fuze Aviation Academy mulls entering into full commercial operations, you should be content that there is indeed demand for the crew that you are training at the Oribi Airport,” the Premier said.

She also highlighted that with the holiday season fast approaching, there will be a demand for inward and outbound travel together with demand for human resources.



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“The Fuze Aviation Academy, with its various elements – charter business, cargo, repair and maintenance, pilot and cabin attendant training is thus posed to take its place in this attractive, safe and growing sector of our economy.

“I wish to remind cadets and the graduates at the Fuze Academy that thanks to this strict, but necessary international and local governance of virtually every aspect of flying, there is no space for mistakes. There is no room for error because lack of attention to detail can cost lives,” she said.

## Opportunities

Dube-Ncube reminded the trainees at the academy that they represent the hopes of millions over generations who are in awe of the wonders of flight.

“You are the realisation of dreams of the girls and boys of rural and urban areas of our province who want to enter this world of work that offers so many possibilities. Aviation offers you very rewarding possible careers as pilots, cabin attendants, air traffic controller, aeronautical engineer, aircraft mechanic, airport planner, airport security manager, airfield operations specialist, airline operations agent and airport manager, among others.

“In terms of employment opportunities, the world is your oyster as some of the biggest employers are aircraft and

spacecraft manufacturers. There is no industry that is brimming with such opportunities and promise.”

She added that with air traffic set to double in the next 20 years, the African aviation market is one of the world’s most attractive with high profit and stable passenger growth prospects anchored on a fast-growing middle class.

“As drone pilots they will provide real time capture of accident scenes and take pictures first-hand before any interference can happen to conceal crucial information and evidence. The drones will also be used for monitoring the coastline for swimmers in distress and expedite the dispatch of rescue boats and medical assistance.

“It is also envisaged that they will play a crucial role in pest and disease control within agriculture, where drones will be dispatched to deliver medication especially in rural areas,” the Premier highlighted.

The trainees include 30 drone operators, 20 aviation engineers, and 10 private and commercial pilots.

Dube-Ncube said that upon exit, some of the students will be able to work with the Department of Transport and Health in identifying road accident monitoring and data collection especially during peak seasons and major events throughout the country.

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