



National Assembly

**Transport; Budget Vote Debate: 12 May 2026**

**Cde Hon. Nkopane. N.S**

(7 minutes)

A key component of South Africa's (SA's) increased trade is its efficient transportation infrastructure, which immediately boosts economic growth by lowering logistics costs and expanding access to both local and foreign markets. Due to the country's most advanced transportation infrastructure in Africa, which includes large ports like Durban and Richards Bay, a dense rail system for bulk goods, and a sizable road freight industry, seamless connectivity enables both cheaper imports and the quick movement of export commodities like minerals, automobiles, and agricultural products. Transport investments increase the competitiveness of South African companies globally by reducing transit times and post-harvest losses, especially for perishable goods.

The African National Congress (ANC) in its manifesto has made it clear on its focus on Civil Aviation and Airports, the organization is in favour of making strategic investments in airport infrastructure to assist aeronautical training and innovative logistics. This involves utilizing alliances to build airports, such as the strategic purchase of airports for industrialization and training, effective transportation corridors encourage private investments at logistics centers, generate employment in warehousing and freight services and connect isolated rural producers to supply chains, thus expanding the tax base and producing ripple effects throughout manufacturing and services ultimately increasing Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and promoting sustainable development.

The ANC leading the Government of National Unity (GNU) declares its support for the budget because it believes it will cover key sectors and entities like Civil Aviation, trade, SANRAL and projects, oceans economy, Improved Rapid Disaster

Response through aviation for emergency responses, technological advancement and others. A safe, secure and effective air transportation sector is made possible by the Civil Aviation program (Budget; R240.4m in 2025/26 rising to R289.6m in 2028/29). Airports Company South Africa (ACSA) and the South African Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA) are important organizations when it comes to SA's global market reach; we have nine major airports, including OR Tambo, Cape Town International and King Shaka, are owned and run by ACSA. The number of passengers has returned to pre-pandemic levels, according to ACSA, non-aeronautical revenue (retail and parking) will drive revenue growth from R8.7 billion in 2025-2026 to R11.3 billion in 2028-2029.

62% of ACSA's R 551 million infrastructure investment in 2024-2025 went to Black-owned suppliers, with 39% going to businesses with 30% or more Black female ownership. Three airports, including Cape Town International, started terminal expansion and upgrading projects in 2024-2025. Construction on an R5.7 billion middle cargo terminal at OR Tambo International is scheduled to start in 2026-2027. This project will increase employment and Small, Medium, and Micro Enterprises SMME's prospects, a significant expansion is now taking place at South African Airways (SAA's), due to fleet growth and additional routes, spending is predicted to increase at a rate of 31.3% per year, from R14.5 billion in 2025-2026 to R32.8 billion in 2028-2029. It is anticipated that passenger revenue will increase from R12.4 billion to R22.8 billion projects.

Over the course of more than 40 years of scheduled airline operations, South Africa has maintained an outstanding safety record in commercial aviation, with no fatal accidents reported. This is a noteworthy accomplishment that demonstrates strict control, orderly operations and a deeply ingrained safety culture throughout the industry. Disaster Response & National Security; in order to rebuild infrastructure destroyed by natural catastrophes, the government set aside an extra R1.5 billion in 2026-2027. Oceans Economy (Marine Transport); the Ports Regulator of South Africa and marine safety are governed by the Maritime Transport program (Budget: R376.9m to R542.4m).

The Phase 2B Cape Town container terminal extension (R883.4 million) and the Durban container terminal rehabilitation to lengthen and deepen berths are

important. Modernizing Passenger Rail is important because there is a need for an integrated transport hubs link it to aircraft. In the medium run, PRASA projects that passenger travel will rise from 77 million in 2024-2025 to an anticipated 116 million in 2025-2026, reaching 250-450 million, the ocean economy is positioned as a major force behind industrialization, job creation and economic expansion in the ANC's 2024 election program. In order to generate over 100,000 direct jobs while maintaining sustainable environmental protection, it places a high priority on investing in marine transportation, increasing port capacity, encouraging oil and gas exploration and growing aquaculture.

The following are important facets of the ANC's seas economy strategy; infrastructure development includes port capacity expansion, modernization and ongoing support for maritime transportation, offshore Exploration; encouraging funding for the production and exploration of offshore oil and gas as potential new markets, Sustainability & Governance; creating an integrated framework for governance to safeguard the marine environment and optimize socioeconomic advantages. Aquaculture and Job Creation; reviving fishing harbours to create jobs and finalizing fishing limits to assist aquaculture.

I thank you