

# Standing the test of time



**1992**

Business partners Rodger Foster and Barrie Webb successfully bid for liquidated Link Airways. The new airline is named Airlink.

**1995**

"SA Airlink" is officially launched on 25 March at a gathering of important guests, including Queen Elizabeth II.

SA Airlink brand aligns with that of SAA and SA Airlink joins the Voyager frequent flyer loyalty programme.

**1997**

SA Airlink joins SAA and SA Express in a strategic alliance that leads to the establishment of the leading aviation network in Africa.

SA Airlink and SA Express adopt the 'South African' franchise brand.

**1999**

Swaziland Airlink is formed as a joint venture company between Airlink and the Swaziland (now Eswatini) government.

**2000**

On 3 April, SA Airlink officially opens the Kruger Park Gateway Airport in Phalaborwa.

On 30 August, the franchise agreement between SAA and SA Airlink is signed as a bilateral relationship.

**2005**

SA Airlink commences air services to Antananarivo in Madagascar.

**2006**

SA Airlink changes its corporate identity, adopting the brand 'Airlink', emphasising the airline's corporate positioning statement, 'Freedom of the

African Sky', and displaying the distinctive South African national colours of blue, red, green and gold, along with the brightly coloured sunbird emblem. Airlink's badging, while distinctly different from the franchise brand, demonstrates clear alignment with SAA's 'South African' brand.

**2006**



**2008**

SA Airlink, having successfully completed the IATA Operational Safety Audit (IOSA), is placed on the IATA Register on 6 February, assuring customers of the highest possible standard of service.

**2009**

In October, SA Airlink moves into its new head office in Greenstone Hill Office Park, Modderfontein.

**2011**

In December, the Airports Company SA (ACSA) presents four Feather Awards to SA Airlink in recognition of consistent service excellence at ACSA airports.

**2014**

SA Airlink launches the return of scheduled air services between Cape Town and Johannesburg to



**2012**

In June, SA Airlink sells a 32.51% stake of the company in a landmark broad-based black economic empowerment transaction. In December, ACSA presents six Feather Awards to SA Airlink in recognition of consistent service excellence at ACSA airports.

**2013**

In March, SA Airlink commences direct services between Johannesburg and Kasane and between Johannesburg and Vilanculos, bringing the total number of destinations in the SA Airlink network to 31.

On 11 June, Airlink celebrates 21 years in the aviation industry. At this point, SA Airlink has a turnover of more than two billion rand, employs about 1,000 staff, and carries one million-plus customers annually.

**2015**

SA Airlink becomes the first domestic airline to offer scheduled flights between Cape Town and the then recently refurbished Wonderboom Airport in Pretoria.

**2016**

SA Airlink signs an agreement with the government of Madagascar to operate domestic air services within Madagascar, and regional air services between Madagascar and key states within Africa and the Indian Ocean Islands.

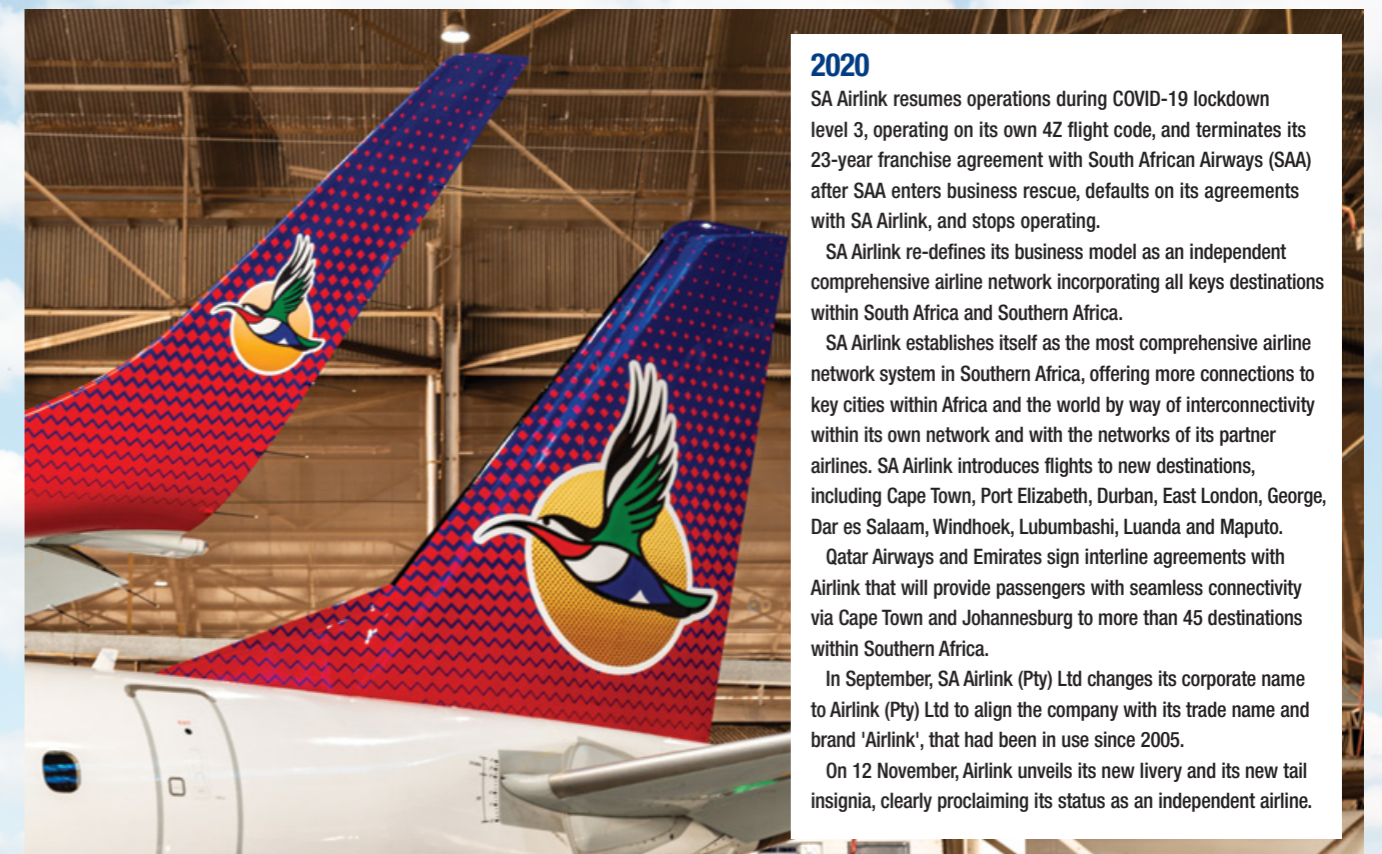
SA Airlink, in partnership with Embraer, opens the Airlink Training Centre in Bonaero Park.

Skukuza Airport, allowing direct access to globally renowned wildlife destinations in the Kruger Park and nearby Sabi Sands Private Game Reserve.



**2017**

SA Airlink celebrates its 25th anniversary under the same leadership, and the 50th anniversary of one of its root airlines, Lowveld Air Services, which started in 1967. In June, SA Airlink is chosen by the St Helena Government as its preferred bidder to provide a scheduled airline service to the island. In August, the first of the airline's new Embraer E-190 E-Jets begin operating on routes to Pietermaritzburg and Bulawayo. In December, ACSA presents Feather Awards to SA Airlink in recognition of Best Performing Regional Airline and Best Performing Domestic Airline.



**2018**

SA Airlink and FlySafair conclude negotiations for a merger/acquisition by SA Airlink of FlySafair. The application for authorisation to proceed is turned down by the Competitions Commission on the grounds that the Competitions Commission believes that SA Airlink and FlySafair are competitors. The matter is referred to the Tribunal, but before arguments are presented the application is withdrawn, as the objectives of the shareholders of SA Airlink and FlySafair had diverged.

**2020**

SA Airlink resumes operations during COVID-19 lockdown level 3, operating on its own 4Z flight code, and terminates its 23-year franchise agreement with South African Airways (SAA) after SAA enters business rescue, defaults on its agreements with SA Airlink, and stops operating.

SA Airlink re-defines its business model as an independent comprehensive airline network incorporating all key destinations within South Africa and Southern Africa.

SA Airlink establishes itself as the most comprehensive airline network system in Southern Africa, offering more connections to key cities within Africa and the world by way of interconnectivity within its own network and with the networks of its partner airlines. SA Airlink introduces flights to new destinations, including Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, Durban, East London, George, Dar es Salaam, Windhoek, Lubumbashi, Luanda and Maputo.

Qatar Airways and Emirates sign interline agreements with Airlink that will provide passengers with seamless connectivity via Cape Town and Johannesburg to more than 45 destinations within Southern Africa.

In September, SA Airlink (Pty) Ltd changes its corporate name to Airlink (Pty) Ltd to align the company with its trade name and brand 'Airlink', that had been in use since 2005.

On 12 November, Airlink unveils its new livery and its new tail insignia, clearly proclaiming its status as an independent airline.

In December, the Airports Company SA (ACSA) presents a Feather Award to SA Airlink in recognition of Best Performing Regional Airline.

**2019**

SA Airlink establishes its high-tech training centre of excellence in conjunction with Embraer, housing both an Embraer E190 and an Embraer ERJ145 simulator. These simulators operate up to five training slots per day and greatly assist in the cognitive, associative and autonomous stages of pilot training.