

## > euroAtlantic to hire planes from TAAG and include them in its operations

Tomaz Mettelo to PressTUR  
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The Portuguese company euroAtlantic is to include planes from TAAG, currently forbidden from operating from and to the European Union, by exclusively hiring aircraft to operate them according to its model in which it assumes full operational responsibility, even if they make flights for the Angolan company its chairman Tomaz Metello confirmed to PressTUR.

"We have already had the go ahead from TAAG " said Tomaz Metello, who explained that euroAtlantic is to hire planes from TAAG in a system which in aviation is called dry-lease, meaning that only the plane is referred to.

The chairman of euroAtlantic explained that these planes will then be operated in accordance with the company business model whose core business is ACMI, the English acronym meaning involvement in the rental of the Aircraft, Crew, Maintenance and Insurance to other companies, including TAAG.

"We will be responsible for the operation of these plans", stressed Tomaz Metello.

The chairman of euroAtlantic stressed that this solution will firstly enable TAAG not to have planes costing tens of millions of dollars immobilised or underused, whilst simultaneously improving the chances of keep flights with their code during the non-compliance resolution process which led to their prohibition by the European Union.

Even under this ban, TAAG has kept flights with their code, to wit between Lisbon and Luanda, but in a South African Airways (SAA) plane, as it previously had with euroAtlantic planes, Orbest and White.

This process does not breach European Union provisions insofar as the Angolan company is the marketing carrier (it has flight commercial management) and the South African company is the operating carrier (operationally responsible).

It is also according to this model that euroAtlantic designed the finalised agreement yesterday with TAAG and which has been accompanied by Boeing, the manufacturer of the planes used by the Angolan company.

The advantage of the solution designed with euroAtlantic as regards the solutions found is that besides remaining the marketing carrier, TAAG may resolve the problem of plane immobilisation, to wit of the two new Boeing B777 for which the company led by Tomaz Metello is confident that customers will not be lacking [as well as the Angolan company itself], because the market is going through a shortage of planes to meet the growing demand.

The connections between São Tomé and Lisbon may be one of the routes benefited by this solution since with the TAAG ban the Luanda – SãoTomé – Lisbon flight that the Angolan company used to run for STP Airways, now has to cover São Tomé – Luanda in its own plane and then Luanda – Lisbon in the SAA plane.

"I had the idea and went ahead with it", said Tomaz Metello to PressTUR, mentioning that he has kept the Portuguese and European authorities informed.

However, Tomaz Metello did say that a date has yet to be set for the materialisation of the transfer of planes to the euroAtlantic Air Operator Certificate (AOC), merely stating that he expected the process would be able to go ahead in the last weeks of this month..

Tomaz Metello also told PressTUR that he aimed to take "full advantage of the resources" of TAAG, to wit crews, when certified by the European and Portuguese aeronautical authorities. He stressed that his aim is to help the Angolan company "at zero cost".

However, the chairman of euroAtlantic did admit that the company has "strategic interests" involving Angola and TAAG, giving the example of the fact that the two carriers were chosen by the São Tomé Government to take up stakes in the share capital of STP Airways.