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COLLOQUIUM

Establishing an Aerospace Village in Africa: A Catalyst for Economic Growth & Social Impact

Mr Brad Mears (Cape Winelands Airport)

DATE: Monday, 2 March 2026 | 16h00–17h00 SAST

- VENUES:**
- **Stellenbosch University:** NITheCS Seminar Room, Merensky Building
 - **University of the Witwatersrand:** Room P215, 2nd Floor, Physics Building
 - **North-West University:** Seminar Room K310, Physics Building G5
 - **Online**

--- A recording of the talk will be published on the NITheCS YouTube channel afterwards ---

ABSTRACT

Through a partnership between Stellenbosch University and Cape Winelands Airport, the establishment of an Aerospace Village is envisioned. Our mandate is to develop a Special Economic Zone focused on strengthening the aerospace sector in Africa.

With rapid growth in the drone industry, satellite component manufacturing, and other aerospace sub-sectors, the need for a centralised industry hub has become increasingly clear. The Aerospace Village is intended to serve as a focal point for innovation, collaboration, skills development, and industrial expansion within the African aerospace ecosystem.

BIOGRAPHY

Brad Mears has extensive experience in building strategic partnerships through innovation. He leverages expertise gained across both the private and public sectors to drive growth, and innovative initiatives. His focus is on identifying new business opportunities, cultivating key partnerships, and ensuring the successful implementation of projects.

In 2018, Brad followed his passion by pivoting from healthcare consulting to the aerospace sector. He now provides commercial aviation and aerospace services to Africa, drawing on his deep interest in aviation, space, and the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR).

At the age of 55, Brad qualified as a Commercial Pilot and is also a Drone Pilot Instructor with a Beyond Visual Line of Sight (BVLOS) rating.

Brad is currently contracted to Cape Winelands Airport to establish an Aerospace Village and Special Economic Zone (SEZ). As part of the broader Cape Winelands International Airport development, the vision for the Aerospace Village is to serve as a catalyst in strengthening and advancing the aerospace industry in Africa.



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