

Air Nam to engage government on attachment

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OPEN TO ENGAGING: Air Namibia says it is exploring all possibilities to ensure that its assets will not be attached. Photo: FILE

Air Namibia says it is exploring all possible avenues to ensure that its assets will not be attached by liquidated Belgian firm Challenger SA because of non-payment for the lease of a plane.

The Munich Regional Appeal Court in July 2015 ruled on several payments Air Namibia had to make in respect of money owed to Challenge Air, totalling, at today's exchange rate, in the region of N\$360 million, with an added daily payment of US\$1 335 in respect of unpaid maintenance.

The airline said it had tried to seek an amicable outcome on the matter.

“Although Air Namibia has throughout maintained its legal position on the matter and has unsuccessfully prosecuted its position in this transaction [in] mostly hostile European tribunals with the best available local and international counsel, Air Namibia received a written communication on 11

October 2018 from the firm of Sisa Namandje Incorporated, informing of the fact that they were acting on the instructions of Wilhelm Shali and Anicet Baum," Air Namibia spokesperson Paul Nakawa said.

"Mr Baum is the court-appointed liquidator of Challenge Air," he said.

According to him, all avenues were being explored to find a solution.

"The airline hereby takes the opportunity to assure all its stakeholders that all necessary steps are being taken, including but not limited to engaging the claimant directly to find a permanent solution to the matter," Nakawa said.

Last year, Nakawa told The Namibian that the leased aircraft was "defective".

"Air Namibia subsequently discovered that the aircraft was defective in material respects, and Challenge Air was unable to rectify the defects. Air Namibia cancelled the agreement on 27 July 1998," he told the newspaper.

Challenge Air was then placed in liquidation and the liquidators are now seeking the reported damages from Air Namibia.

A meeting involving several ministers, including those of finance, public enterprises and transport, as well as the attorney-general, will be held on Monday next week to discuss the way forward for Air Namibia.

STAFF REPORTER