RwandAir Ltd is the flag carrier airline of Rwanda. It operates domestic and international services to East Africa, Central Africa, West Africa, Southern Africa, Europe and the Middle East from its main base at Kigali International Airport. Our mission is to provide unsurpassed, safe, and reliable services in air transportation, including strategically linking Rwanda with the outside world while ensuring a fair return on investment. As part of the expansion strategy, we are looking for interested, qualified, and competent candidates to fill the following position:

Job Title: **Head of Airside Operations**
Reports to: **Director Ground Operations**
Department: **Ground Services**
Location: **Kigali International Airport**

Job Purpose

Lead and direct RwandAir's end-to-end airside operations to deliver safe, on-time, cost-efficient and customer-centric ground handling that underpins the airline's ambition to become the premier 4-Star carrier and regional hub of choice. Set the strategic agenda, operating standards and performance benchmarks for ramp, baggage, load control, GSE and airside safety in line with ICAO, IOSA, ISAGO and IATA AHM requirements. Build a high-performing leadership team capable of scaling operations sustainably, optimising commercial returns and embedding a generative safety and service culture.

1. Key Duties and Responsibilities:

Strategic

- Translate RwandAir's corporate and 4-Star transformation strategy into a multi-year Airside operating roadmap covering capacity, infrastructure, technology, talent and partnerships.
- Set the enterprise safety, quality and operational performance standards for all Airside activities in full alignment with ICAO, IOSA, ISAGO, IATA AHM and RCAA regulatory frameworks.
- Shape RwandAir's hub strategy at Kigali (and Bugesera transition) by partnering with the Airport Operator, ATC, border agencies and OEMs to secure slots, infrastructure and turnaround efficiency.
- Define and govern the Airside investment portfolio — Ground Support Equipment (GSE) fleet renewal, digitalisation, automation and sustainable ground operations roadmaps.
- Establish the commercial strategy for third-party ground handling at Kigali, positioning RwandAir as a credible ground handling provider for other carriers operating the hub.
- Champion a generative safety culture and SMS maturity uplift — embedding Just Culture, human factors and proactive risk management as enterprise capabilities.
- Lead enterprise risk identification for Airside operations and integrate ESG, decarbonisation and sustainability commitments into the Airside operating model.

Operational

- Direct daily Airside operations — ramp, load control, baggage, aircraft turnaround and GSE — to consistently deliver Departure On-Time Performance (D-OTP), Ground Time Adherence and Baggage Mishandling targets.
- Own the Airside P&L, ensuring unit cost per turnaround, GSE utilisation and labour productivity meet or exceed budget and benchmark norms.

- Oversee execution of Standard Ground Handling Agreements (SGHA), SLAs and KPIs with third-party providers, OEMs, regulators and the airport authority.
- Drive Operational Performance Review (OPR) governance — convene daily, weekly and monthly forums to dissect KPI variance, action root causes and close the loop on customer impact.
- Lead operational readiness and recovery for IROPS, weather, security and emergency scenarios, ensuring the Airside contribution to the Emergency Response Plan (ERP) is robust and regularly exercised.
- Ensure full operational compliance with the Operations Manual, Ground Operations Manual (GOM), Aircraft Handling Manual and all approved SOPs; commission audits and close findings within agreed timelines.
- Cascade KPIs and individual performance contracts to all direct reports and frontline supervisors; leverage performance management to drive accountability and recognition.

2. Accountabilities

Management & Leadership

- Establish the departmental or teams' objectives and priorities to align with and support business objectives.
- Regularly evaluate the departmental or teams' objectives, plans, procedures and practices, and makes appropriate changes if needed.
- Oversee and supervise employees. Direct daily activities, recruit, train, develop and discipline to ensure a high standard of service delivery.
- Train and develop other employees, to ensure succession planning is in place.

Personal Development

- Take responsibility for own ongoing personal development and growth of expertise.
- Keep abreast with any market trends and developments.
- Assist in the response to any emergency or a major operational disruption affecting RwandAir or its subsidiaries.

Safety

- Responsible to ensure that employees at all levels understand work health and safety requirements and expectations through provision of relevant RwandAir induction, information, instruction, training and supervision.
- Ensure compliance to all relevant safety, security, quality and environmental management policies, procedures and controls across the operation to assure employee safety, security, legislative compliance and delivery of high quality service with a responsible environmental attitude.
- Ensure that all managers and supervisors understand work health and safety requirements and expectations to the extent that they can pass on relevant information, identify training needs and provide appropriate supervision in their workplace.
- Take a direct and personal interest in reported injuries, incidents, near misses and hazards to ensure that appropriate reporting, investigation and response is being achieved.

Environmental Management

- Identify future issues and challenges stemming from environmental legislation and global trends.

- Incorporate these issues into business strategy and management tools to deliver enhanced business resilience and embed environmental issues as part of business strategy.

3. QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE & SKILLS:

Qualifications and Experience:

Essential

- Bachelor's Degree in Aviation Management, Engineering, Business Administration or a related discipline.
- Minimum 10 years' progressive aviation experience, with at least 5 years in a senior Airside / Ground Handling leadership role at a comparable carrier or major ground handler.
- Demonstrable P&L and budget ownership of a major operational unit, with proven delivery of unit-cost and productivity improvements.
- IATA / ICAO Senior Management or Ground Operations qualification (e.g. IATA Diploma in Ground Operations, AHM, SMS).
- Hands-on experience with IOSA / ISAGO audit programmes and Civil Aviation Authority engagement.
- Experience leading multicultural, multi-shift workforces, ideally in a hub or major-airport environment (Bugesera transition exposure is an advantage).

Preferred

- Master's Degree (MBA or MSc Aviation Management); Lean / Six Sigma or equivalent operational excellence certification.

Job Specific Skills:

Essential

- Strategic Aviation Leadership — strong commercial, regulatory and operational acumen across the full Airside value chain.
- Safety & Compliance Leadership — deep working knowledge of ICAO Annexes 6, 14, 17 and 19; IOSA; ISAGO; IATA AHM; SMS and Just Culture.
- Financial Acumen — P&L ownership, budget design, unit-cost management and capital investment business cases.
- Stakeholder Influence — proven ability to negotiate and influence regulators, airport operators, OEMs, GHAs and labour representatives.
- Data-Driven Decision Making — fluency with operational dashboards, ROC tools, DCS, BRS and GSE telemetry.
- Crisis & Resilience Leadership — composed and decisive under disruption, IROPS and emergency conditions.
- People & Culture Leadership — coaching, talent development, succession planning and change management in multicultural settings.
- Digital & Innovation Mindset — champion of digitalisation, automation, predictive analytics and sustainable ground operations; multilingual capability (English essential; French / Kinyarwanda preferred).

4. JOB DIMENSIONS:

Organisational Accountability

- Local accountability with Global impact

Managerial & Supervisory Accountability

- Manages a department within a division
- Supervises through other management personnel

Leadership & Strategic Accountability

- Develops policy and sets strategic direction
- Develops department strategy

Financial Accountability

Operating Budget

- Full management of operating budget (Prime Accountability)
- In line with the department's budget

Expenses

- Approves expenditures
- In line with the department's budget

Revenues

- Department revenue accountability

Customer Accountability

- Interfaces with executive decision makers

Freedom to Act Independently

- Sets policies and objectives

5. How to Apply:

- An application letter addressed to the Chief HR & Administration Officer;
- Recent Curriculum Vitae;
- Copies of Notarised Degree/Diploma certificates
- Relevant certificates;
- Copies of academic papers;
- A photocopy of the Passport/National ID
- Three referees

The deadline for submitting application documents **(in PDF Format Only)** is **October 13th, 2026**. Please apply via the link: https://erecruitment.rwandair.com/