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AIR TRANSPORT ACTIVITY RISES AS FIRST-TIME VEHICLE REGISTRATIONS AND RAIL FREIGHT DECLINE

Gaborone, Botswana – October 2026: Statistics Botswana has released the **Transport and Infrastructure Statistics – Second Quarter (Q2) 2026**, providing an overview of developments in motor vehicle registrations, rail transport and air transport during the quarter under review.

First-time vehicle registrations decline by 7.2 percent

A total of **7,536 motor vehicles** were registered for the first time during Q2 2026, representing a **7.2 percent decrease** from the 8,119 vehicles registered in the previous quarter.

Passenger cars continued to dominate first-time registrations, accounting for **73.0 percent** of the total, followed by vans at **8.3 percent**, trailers at **6.8 percent** and trucks at **5.6 percent**.

The decline in first-time registrations was recorded across several vehicle categories, including tractors, buses, passenger cars, trucks and vans. In contrast, registrations of tankers/horses, motorcycles and trailers increased during the quarter.

Used vehicles accounted for the majority of first-time registrations at **78.2 percent**, while brand-new vehicles represented **21.7 percent**.

Japan remained the leading country of origin for vehicles registered for the first time, accounting for **67.9 percent** of total registrations, followed by South Africa at **19.4 percent**.

By vehicle make, **Mazda** recorded the highest share of first-time registrations at **20.3 percent**, followed by **Honda at 18.1 percent** and **Toyota at 17.4 percent**.

Vehicle licence renewals increase

Motor vehicle licence renewals increased by **2.7 percent**, from 131,439 in Q1 2026 to **135,021 in Q2 2026**. However, renewals were **9.8 percent lower** than those recorded in the corresponding quarter of 2025.

Passenger cars accounted for the largest share of renewals at **65.7 percent**, followed by vans at **18.3 percent** and trucks at **6.1 percent**.

The ratio of licence renewals to first-time registrations stood at approximately **18 renewals for every first registration** in Q2 2026, the highest level recorded over the period covered by the publication.

Rail freight falls by 16.4 percent

Rail freight recorded a decline during Q2 2026, with **143,531 net tonnes** of cargo transported compared with 171,175 net tonnes in the previous quarter, representing a **16.4 percent decrease**.

Exports accounted for the largest share of rail freight at **41.0 percent**, followed by local traffic at **22.2 percent**, imports at **18.7 percent** and transit traffic at **18.1 percent**.

The decline was recorded across most traffic categories, although total exports increased by **10.5 percent**. Imports declined by **36.6 percent**, local traffic by **27.2 percent**, and transit traffic by **19.6 percent**.

Revenue generated from rail transport amounted to **P39.4 million**, an **8.2 percent decrease** from the P42.9 million recorded in Q1 2026. Export-related revenue accounted for the largest share at **34.9 percent** of total rail transport revenue.

Air transport records strong growth

Air transport recorded substantial increases during Q2 2026. **Aircraft movements rose by 67.6 percent** to **24,575**, compared with 14,667 movements in the previous quarter.

Domestic movements accounted for **81.8 percent** of total aircraft movements, while international movements accounted for **18.2 percent**. Domestic aircraft movements increased by **78.5 percent**, while international movements grew by **31.4 percent**.

Passenger movements increased by 35.8 percent to **257,801** during the quarter. International passenger movements accounted for **60.0 percent** of the total, while domestic movements accounted for **40.0 percent**.

Both international and domestic passenger movements recorded growth, increasing by **29.7 percent** and **46.1 percent**, respectively.

In terms of passenger traffic by airport, **Sir Seretse Khama International Airport (SSKIA)** accounted for the largest share at **42.7 percent**, closely followed by **Maun Airport at 42.3 percent**. Kasane Airport accounted for 14.2 percent, while Phillip Matante International Airport contributed 0.8 percent.

Publication availability

The **Transport and Infrastructure Statistics – Q2 2026** publication provides statistical information on motor vehicle registrations and licence renewals, rail freight and revenue, as well as aircraft and passenger movements.

For more information and enquiries, contact the **Directorate of Stakeholder Relations** at **+267 367 1349**.

The publication is available on the **Statistics Botswana website** and at the **Statistics Botswana Information Resource Centre, Head Office, Gaborone**.

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Issued by:

Statistics Botswana

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Gaborone, Botswana