

Skyguide reports continued traffic growth and even higher punctuality for the first half of 2016, along with tangible progress in LP24 implementation

Geneva, 4 August 2016. Skyguide, Switzerland's air navigation service provider (ANSP), managed and monitored 573,478 civil instrument flight rules (IFR) flights in the first six months of 2016, a 1.6% increase on the same period last year. The further rise in first-half air traffic volumes was accompanied by an improved operating performance: average delays for the period were some 20% below their prior-year level, and affected a historic record low 2.6% of flights. Skyguide and the Swiss Air Force also achieved a first intermediary goal in their joint establishment of a new round-the-clock aerial policing facility; and skyguide again performed its air traffic management mission for the annual World Economic Forum.

More flights handled

With the exception of April, the monthly air traffic volumes handled by skyguide consistently increased in the first half of 2016. (The slight 1% decline for April is attributable to strike action by air traffic controllers in Belgium, France, Greece and Italy and to the closure of Brussels Airport following the terrorist attack on 22 March.) The biggest increase was seen for February, at 6.2%. At the same time, the growth recorded in skyguide's first-half air traffic volumes was still below the European average of 2.6% – a figure strongly influenced by substantial increases in the levels of traffic to and from the UK and Spain.

As Eurocontrol's STATFOR-sourced statistics confirm, 2016 first-half traffic volume trends also showed strong variations among the traffic categories. Charter traffic for the period suffered a particularly sizeable decline, as a result of the conflicts and terrorist activities at destinations in Russia, Egypt, Tunisia, Turkey and elsewhere.

First-half air traffic volume trends by category (Europe)

Traditional airlines	+ 3.6%
Low-cost carriers	+ 3,6%
Charter flights	- 19%
Cargo flights	+ 0,6%
Business aviation	- 0,7%

IFR flights¹ handled by skyguide in the first half of 2016

	January-June 2016	January-June 2015	Change
Total IFR flights	573,478	564,377	+ 1.6%
of which en-route traffic	335,120	330,451	+ 1.4%

The first-half growth in en-route traffic volumes handled – 1.4% – was more modest than it had been for January-June 2015. The number of controlled movements (takeoffs and landings) throughout Switzerland increased by a more substantial 1.9%. Both Zurich and Geneva airports reported slight rises in their IFR movement volumes, of 1.3% and 1.0% respectively. The traffic handled at Switzerland's regional airports saw well-above-average first-half growth.

¹ IFR or "instrument flight rules" flights are performed in controlled airspace and require air traffic management services to ensure their safe and efficient operation.

Area control centres report positive volume trends

Skyguide's Geneva and Dübendorf area control centres or ACCs both saw encouraging increases in their volumes of traffic handled: 1.7% for ACC Geneva and 1.9% for the Dübendorf ACC.

Daily peak of 4,087 flights on 24 June

Skyguide's busiest day to date in the first half of 2016 was Friday 24 June, when a total of 4,087 flights were handled.

2016 first-half movement volumes by area control centre and airport:

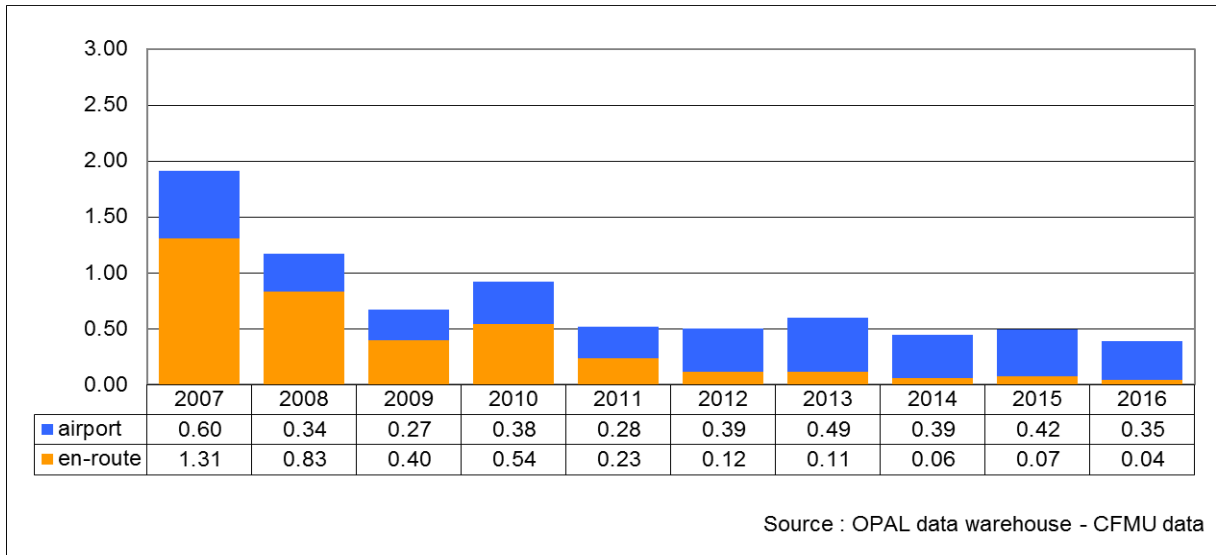
	January-June 2016	January-June 2015	Change
Area control centres			
Geneva	316,423	311,159	+ 1.7%
Zurich (Dübendorf)	367,339	360,563	+ 1.9%
IFR arrivals/departures			
Bern	8,787	8,141	+ 7.9%
Buochs	1,175	889	+ 32.2%
Donaueschingen	652	693	- 5.9%
Friedrichshafen	7,806	8,333	- 6.3%
Geneva	92,775	91,858	+ 1.0%
Grenchen	2,537	2,380	+ 6.6%
Les Eplatures	857	844	+ 1.5%
Lugano	5,268	4,732	+ 11.3%
Sion	3,132	3,146	- 0.4%
St. Gallen Altenrhein	4,795	4,621	+ 3.8%
Zurich	126,390	124,784	+ 1.3%

Higher traffic volumes and high punctuality

Despite the higher traffic volumes, skyguide further enhanced its already excellent operating performance in the 2016 first-half period. Some 97.4% of all flights were handled with zero delay – a further improvement on the previous record of 97.0%, set last year.

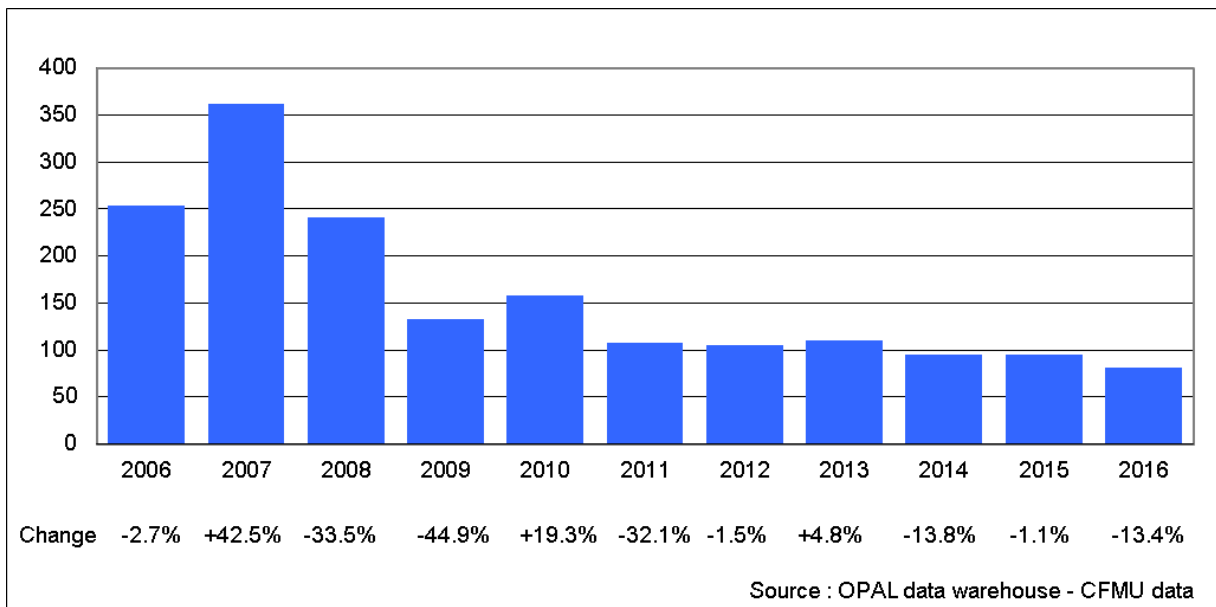
Most capacity-related air traffic control delays are incurred during peak operating periods. In spite of the slight increase in en-route traffic volumes, en-route delays declined by a sizeable 40% year-on-year in the first-half period, putting skyguide well within the European performance targets here for 2016.

Average airport and en-route delays per flight (in minutes), January to June



Skyguide saw declines in both its average en-route delays and its average airport delays per flight in the 2016 first-half period.

Average skyguide delayed flights per day, January to June



The average number of delayed flights per day for the 2016 first-half period amounted to 82, a substantial improvement on the 94 of last year.

First phase of LP24 round-the-clock aerial policing facility implemented

The first phase of the new “LP24” round-the-clock policing of Swiss airspace, which provides this facility Mondays to Fridays from 08:00 to 18:00, was implemented on 4 January. The facility will be further extended to seven days a week in the next few years, and to 24/7 by 2020.

Swiss military air traffic management, which is also provided by skyguide, remained fully available during the above times, and various “hot missions” were safely and effectively managed and monitored by skyguide’s military controllers in the first-half period. The next phase of LP24, which will begin next year, will see Switzerland’s aerial policing extended to weekends, too.

Highly complex airspace

As statistics maintained by Eurocontrol show, skyguide manages the most complex airspace in Europe. This poses sizeable challenges for the company’s operations and personnel, in terms of both the sheer volumes of flights handled and the structure of the air traffic flows.

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Skyguide is responsible for providing air navigation services in Switzerland and in certain parts of neighbouring countries. With its workforce of 1,400 employees who are active at 14 locations in Switzerland, skyguide guides over 3,100 civil and military flights a day – or 1.1 million a year – safely and reliably through Europe’s busiest and most complex airspace.

Skyguide is committed to continuous improvement, targeted innovation and creative collaboration. Together with its partner organizations in Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg and the Netherlands, skyguide is a member of the FABEC alliance to manage Central European airspace. Skyguide is a non-profit limited company, the majority of whose shares are held by the Swiss Confederation. Its head office is in Geneva.
