

New functions to assist radar controllers at skyguide's Dübendorf control centre

Geneva, 24 February 2012. Skyguide adopted two new functions at its control centre in Dübendorf near Zurich on 23 February to support its controllers in their radar work. Switzerland's air navigation service provider had already introduced these innovations at its Geneva control centre on 9 February.

The first of the new functions adopted is the Cleared Level Adherence Monitoring tool, or CLAM. This tool constantly monitors whether a flight actually keeps to the flight level it has been assigned by air traffic control. If the flight leaves this altitude, the controller responsible for it will be alerted to this immediately by a visual alarm. The second innovation is a tool which automatically calculates the precise separation between two aircraft that are on converging flight tracks. The tool thus shows the controller immediately whether they will need to issue any instructions to either flight – such as corrections to their speed or heading – to ensure that the requisite minimum separation is maintained.

As is customary with operational changes of this kind, the capacity of the airspace concerned (i.e. above Eastern Switzerland) has been reduced as a safety precaution, and will gradually be restored over the next days. Skyguide has also taken steps to alleviate the impact of this short-term capacity reduction, including temporarily assigning more controllers than usual to the Dübendorf control centre to minimise any delays.

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Skyguide is responsible for providing air navigation services within Swiss airspace and in the airspace of certain adjoining regions in neighbouring countries. The company guides the civil and military aircraft entrusted to its care – around 3,270 flights a day or 1.2 million a year – through the busiest and most complex airspace in Europe.

Skyguide is a non-profit limited company which has its head office in Geneva. The majority of its shares are held by the Swiss Confederation. The company generated total operating revenue of over CHF 365 million in 2010, and employs some 1,400 people at 14 locations in Switzerland. Skyguide is also a member, together with its partner organizations in Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg and the Netherlands, of the FABEC initiative to create a common functional airspace block that will bring greater efficiency to Central Europe's air traffic management services and activities.
