

Skyguide raises both punctuality and productivity in the first half of 2015 while handling slightly higher traffic volumes

Geneva, 27 July 2015. Skyguide, Switzerland's air navigation service provider (ANSP), managed and monitored 564,377 civil IFR flights in the first six months of 2015, a 1.8% increase on the same period last year. The further rise in first-half air traffic volumes had a slight adverse impact on skyguide's operational performance, in that the average lengths of the delays incurred were up from the same period in 2014; but only 3.0% of all the flights handled suffered such delays, a new record for the company. The result was also achieved by a very efficient organization: Eurocontrol, the sector's umbrella body for Europe, again gave Switzerland's ANSP high marks in productivity terms.

Higher volumes handled

Air traffic volumes in Europe have generally been depressed in the face of the difficult economic situation since the end of 2011. But for the first time since then, Skyguide saw increases in the volumes of flights it handled for every month of the 2015 first-half period. These ranged from 0.2% in March to 2.4% in April. The overall 1.8% six-month increase was also stronger than the European average of 0.9%

As Eurocontrol's STATFOR-sourced statistics reveal, the recovery in traffic volumes was far from uniform across the various traffic categories:

Traffic trends by category (Europe)

Cargo traffic	+ 5.2%
Business aviation	- 2.2%
Charter flights	- 5.6%
Traditional airlines	+ 1.0%
Low-cost carriers	+ 4.0%

IFR flights¹ handled by skyguide in the first half of 2015

	January-June 2015	January-June 2014	Change
Total IFR flights	564,377	554,593	+ 1.8%
of which en-route traffic	330,451	320,698	+ 3.0%

The first half of 2015 saw a stronger increase in the volume of en-route traffic handled by skyguide – 3.0% – than had been the case last year. And after two years of declines, the number of controlled movements (takeoffs and landings) throughout Switzerland remained broadly stable at + 0.1%. IFR movements at Zurich Airport saw a slight 0.7% rise, while IFR movements at Geneva Airport were largely unchanged at + 0.2%.

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 see differing volume trends

The numbers of flight movements that an ANSP's area control centres (ACCs) are required to handle are a key indicator of the workloads involved. Skyguide's Geneva and Dübendorf ACCs both saw increases – though of differing degrees – in their traffic volumes in the first-half period. While the Geneva ACC experienced a slight 0.3% increase in flights handled, the Dübendorf ACC reported an encouraging 1.7% rise in its movement volumes.

Daily peak of 4,015 flights on 26 June

Skyguide's busiest day to date in 2015 was Friday 26 June, when 4,015 flights were handled. This is a slight 0.3% decline on the busiest day in the first half of 2014, which witnessed 4,026 flights.

2015 first-half movement volumes by area control centre and airport:

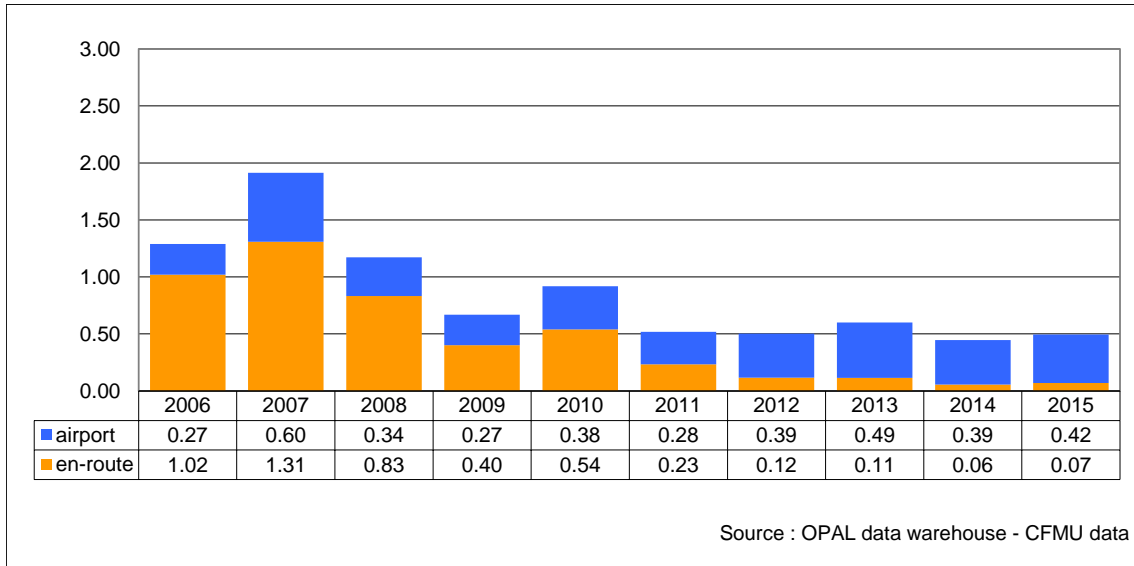
	January-June 2015	January-June 2014	Change
Area control centres			
Geneva	311,159	310,103	+ 0.3%
Zurich (Dübendorf)	360,563	354,571	+ 1.7%
Arrival/Departure Control			
Bern	8,141	8,987	- 9.4%
Buochs	889	849	+ 4.7%
Donaueschingen	693	810	- 14.4%
Friedrichshafen	8,333	7,822	+ 6.5%
Geneva	91,858	91,640	+ 0.2%
Grenchen	2,380	2,621	- 9.2%
Les Eplatures	844	979	- 13.8%
Lugano	4,732	4,589	+ 3.1%
Sion	3,146	3,032	+ 3.8%
St. Gallen Altenrhein	4,621	4,877	- 5.2%
Zurich	124,784	123,940	+ 0.7%

Increased traffic volumes but high punctuality

Skyguide continued to enhance its already excellent operating performance in the 2015 first-half period. Some 97.0% of all flights were handled with zero delay – a further improvement on the previous record of 96.9%, set last year.

Most capacity-related air traffic control delays are incurred during peak operating periods. Needless to say, with the general slight rise in traffic volumes, skyguide's capacity remains fully utilized at these peak times; and this explains the delays that are occasionally suffered in skyguide airspace by its en-route traffic. At the same time, the company still more than meets the European performance targets here for 2015.

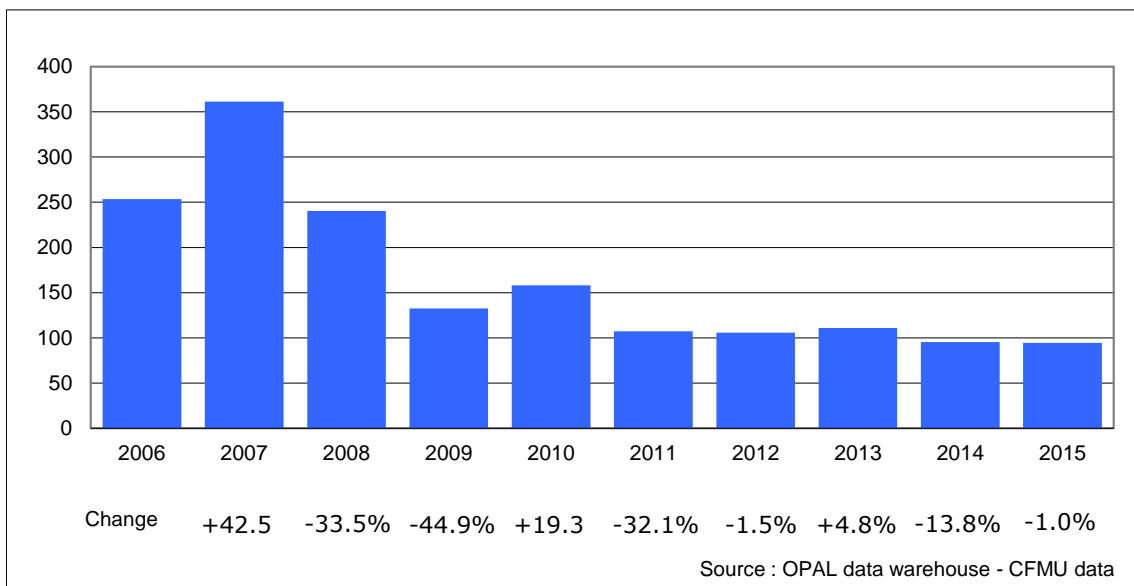
Average airport and en-route delays per flight (in minutes), January to June



Skyguide did see increases in the lengths of both its average en-route delays (up 24.8% compared to 2014) and its average airport delays (up 9.2%) in the 2015 first-half period:

- average arrival/departure delay per flight: 0.42 minutes (= 25.2 seconds)
- average en-route delay per flight: 0.07 minutes (= 4.2 seconds).

Average skyguide delayed flights per day, January to June



The average number of delayed flights per day for the period amounted to 94, a minimal improvement on the 95 of last year.

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 its air traffic flows.

Extremely productive in European terms

Productivity-wise, too, skyguide can report a quality performance. The 2014 Eurocontrol Performance Review Report places Switzerland's ANSP first in Europe in controller productivity terms, ahead of NATS of the UK, DFS of Germany and Belgocontrol.

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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 safely and reliably guides almost 3,100 civil and military flights a day – or 1.1 million a year – through the busiest and most complex airspace in Europe.

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.
