



Press release

FAB Europe Central reports good progress Successful 2nd Stakeholder Forum

Paris, 11 December 2007

The feasibility study of the FAB Europe Central (FAB EC) for a functional airspace block (FAB) in the core area of Europe is making good progress. At the second Stakeholder Forum in Paris intermediate results have been presented to over 120 stakeholders in the aviation industry. Host Marc Hamy, CEO of French air navigation service provider DSNA, said: "This forum is an important platform for the exchange of views amongst all concerned and a good indicator of the quality and progress of our work. The feedback we have received today gives us good reason for continued optimism."

Precise performance objectives agreed

The intermediate results are encouraging and the cooperative approach in FAB EC will ensure continued progress and the completion of the feasibility study in summer 2008. The FAB EC aims – in view of a 50% increase in air traffic in Europe by 2018 - to

- improve safety and efficiency in air traffic management,
- meet the European target of 1-minute maximum average delay per flight,
- effectively reduce en-route charges by 17% by ensuring that costs do not increase by more than 25%. This objective will be achieved by fostering greater synergies between air navigation service providers.

Furthermore, FAB EC will contribute to reducing the impact of aviation on the environment by improving routes, flight profiles and reducing distances flown.

First trends confirm the ambitious objectives and encourage further work on the largest FAB in Europe.





Largest FAB to improve European air traffic

Jules Kneepkens, Chairman of the High Level Policy Group and Director General of the Civil Aviation Authority of Belgium stated: "The partners within the FAB EC defined performance objectives in the area of safety, environment, capacity, cost-effectiveness, flight efficiency and mission effectiveness. We have accomplished the first phase of our ambitious project and I am proud to say that we are making good progress."

The feasibility study will be finished by mid 2008. It will then be up to the States to decide whether the FAB EC will be established. To accelerate this process, a step-by-step approach has been chosen involving a political commitment within 12 months as the first step and a framework agreement as a second step. Mr Kneepkens continued: "I count on the support of all stakeholders so that we can successfully implement FAB EC and therefore improve European air traffic".

Valuable exchange among stakeholders

The second Stakeholder Forum took place in Paris to continue the consultation process and to encourage the discussions between all stakeholders. Several speakers of airlines' organisations, unions, as well as the European Commission were invited to express their expectations to the air navigation service providers (ANSPs) and the civil and military authorities of the six States. As expected, business stakeholders, including airspace users and airlines, have a strong interest in improving various aspects and performance of air traffic including capacity, cost effectiveness and efficiency. Social partners focus on aspects such as best working conditions for all air traffic professionals.

The organisers of the forum appreciated the constructive atmosphere in Paris and the opportunity to address their concerns and issues in an open and direct dialogue. Marc Hamy, CEO of the French air navigation service provider DSN A concluded: "The FAB EC is a large community with as many opinions and interests as there are members. To be successful in our study and works we need to hear and understand all of them".





Notes to editors

About FAB EC

With the Single European Sky, the European Commission has called for the creation of so-called functional airspace blocks (FABs) in order to respond to the challenges resulting from growing air traffic in Europe. These blocks of airspace would be organised according to traffic flows rather than national boundaries as is the case today in most parts of Europe.

Six European States (Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Switzerland) are currently conducting a feasibility study to determine how a common airspace block, to be called FAB Europe Central, would meet the goals set by the European Commission.

The airspace of the six countries, located as they are in the core of Europe, is one of the busiest and most complex in the world. Most of the large European airports and major civil and military airways are located in this area.

The FAB EC airspace is characterised by

- a dimension of 1.7 million km²
- 5.5 million flights per year
- 55 % of all European air traffic
- a traffic growth of 50 % from 2005 until 2018

Additional information

For photos from the 2nd Stakeholder Forum or more information on the FAB EC study, visit www.fab-europe-central.eu or contact one of the following FAB EC representatives:

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