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Dec. 2004



OUTPUT

by EGATS

The Eurocontrol Guild's publication of Air Traffic Control

In this issue you read about ...

- ... the 2005 Annual General Meeting,
- ... the Eurocontrol CISM Workshop,
- ... the last Regional Meeting of IFATCA in Bucharest,
- ... the 'Quick-Wins' our Space Management Doc,
- ... the EGATS Photo Competition,
- ... and many other interesting matters.

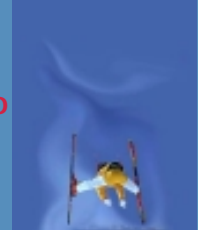


Skiing events in 2005:

The Golden Flight Level 2005 in
Chamonix/France
15. - 22.01.2005
info: www.GFL2005.com



NATCA Skifest 2005 in Breckenridge/Colorado
USA
05. - 12.02.2005
info: www.natcaskifest.com



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Chances!

Dear members,

It's getting colder outside. And I don't only mean the fact that we are approaching winter.

We are facing a cold front and stormy times. The national service providers from the 4 states of the Maastricht airspace are conducting informal talks to have the Maastricht UAC released from the Eurocontrol agency. For many years already they claim wanting to split the service provision from the regulatory body. This is a pushed forward argument as the multilateral agreement between the 4 states and Eurocontrol clearly states that the regulation rests with these 4 states. The truth behind though is that our profession is, more and more, seen as a business, which makes profit. And it is these profits they are interested in. Furthermore, in their eyes, the MASUAC has to become cheaper, - to increase the profit even further! The DFS under the leadership of Mr. Kaden have managed to persuade the German Ministry of Transport to transfer MASUAC into a service provision unit managed by "global players" like the DFS or LVNL (both members of CANSO). Talks are going on behind the back of EUROCONTROL between the DFS, ATC – The Netherlands (LVNL) and Belgocontrol as well as the Luxembourgian authorities. Should these talks continue to be successful and the DFS keep on with their march against a Eurocontrol MASUAC, then it will not only become colder for us, but will be freezing instead. In this power-play, smaller service providers like Belgocontrol will also, either be eaten or at least have to co-operate with the "global players".

It is easily imaginable that our working contracts won't remain the way they are currently. There may be some advantages for us, but for sure these contracts will be "streamlined". And having the current reduction of salaries, due to the change in cost of living-factor, in view – you might be able to imagine where we end up.

The so far valid notion of: "If you think that safety is expensive – try an accident!" is to be seen in a different light. Safety is being assessed as a risk that can be calculated. It thus appears cheaper to allow a certain risk rather than to invest in improving safety. Does human life become payable when investment is returned?

Do we want to go down that track?

The DFS is currently promoting SMOP – Single Man Operation in some of their major units. How does that fit in just 2 1/2 years after the Ueberlingen-catastrophe?

The recommendations of the accident

investigation board state that sufficient manning incl. contingency staffing shall be provided for at all times. It was criticized that there was only one controller working 2 positions and no further help available. Is the renunciation from the 4-eye principle not giving way to cheaper but safety critical working methods (talking about busy middle European centers)? I am sure that the DFS has made plenty of safety surveys to prove their case – but how would the public react to this? Can we afford to ignore the board's and also IFATCA's recommendations? Are we not giving way for an evolution that we might regret one day?

But let us go back to Maastricht: In all these discussions about cost reduction it is purposely forgotten that we as the EUROCONTROL Maastricht UAC are playing a leading role in research and development, we are one of the most productive ATC centers in Europe (Performance Review Commission-Report 2004) and we still are a masterpiece of cross border ATS provision in a multi-national environment. And here lies our biggest strength.

In the framework of the Single-European Sky Initiative of the European Commission (see also OUTPUT 2/2003), the creation of FAB's – Functional Airspace Blocks (*) has been decided.

The European Commission is, in January 2005, carrying out a study to find out in how far the Maastricht UAC could be seen as a FAB or, with in other words, what would be necessary to convert the MASUAC into a FAB?

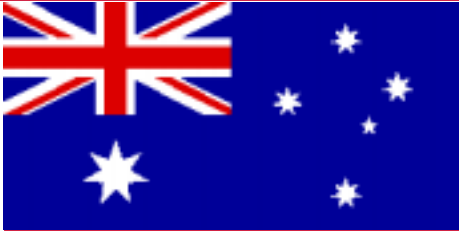
This is a chance for the Maastricht UAC. Even the 4 states have realized this and envisage the UAC as a "de facto FAB avant la letter". Which makes us a very well liked cash-cow, wanted outside of the Eurocontrol agency. Should that happen, we might lose our R&D status, states might fight for their individual benefits and thus destroy one of the most European centers existing.

This is why we, as staff of the UAC, as operational staff and as members of the Eurocontrol Guild of Air Traffic Services should voice our concerns and stand united for a Maastricht UAC inside the Eurocontrol agency!

I wish all our members & their families within Eurocontrol, be it in Brussels, Bretigny, Luxembourg or Maastricht, a peaceful Christmas time and a healthy and good 2005!

Patrik Peters
EGATS President

(*) Framework regulation: A Functional Airspace Block is "an airspace block based on operational requirements, reflecting the need to ensure more integrated management of the airspace regardless of existing boundaries".



IFATCA International Conference Melbourne/Australia 17th - 22nd April 2005

The 2005 International IFATCA conference is going to take place in the wonderful city of Melbourne "down-under" in Australia.

To avoid the busy season of the Melbourne Gran-Prix, the conference had to be moved to April - making it a bit more chilly as this is the begin of the autumn season. But that doesn't matter too much - we will be there to work! All necessary information on the conference and about IFATCA in general can be found on these websites:

www.ifatca.org
www.ifatca2005.com

You wish to join us once for this IFATCA conference?
Then please inform the EGATS EB by E-mail to ifatca@egats.org
(deadline 15.01.2005) and you can participate in our
2005 IFATCA International Conference draw.

We expect you to attend all daily meetings, take actively part in the conference, represent EGATS in an orderly manner and observe the rules of conduct. Attending an IFATCA conference can be a very professional fulfilling event. It makes one feel more part of the bigger world of air traffic control and puts our issues, strengths and weaknesses on to a broader perspective.

Expenses (registration, transportation & hotel) will be carried by EGATS.



The following rules apply:

- ➔ Be an EGATS & not an EB member
- ➔ Be an active controller at MASUAC,
- ➔ Have never attended an IFATCA meeting on behalf of EGATS,
- ➔ Agree to & attend the whole meeting.



IFATCA EUROPEAN Regional Meeting BUCHAREST 22 -24 October 2004



The meeting was attended by Patrik Peters, Raff and myself. We had the pleasure to also see Max Bezzina attending on behalf of Eurocontrol Luxembourg.

There were 200 delegates present and 45 Members associations represented. The day prior the Regional Meeting a CISM seminar took place, more on this by Patrik.

The Eurocontrol DG, Victor Aguado was present the first day and gave a presentation on the past year and the tendencies for the future.

We learned that we did in fact quite well this Summer, with a raise of traffic, a reduction in the number of incidents / accidents, a halving of the delays and costs remaining at the same level since last year.

Personal note: With this image and those results, one has to wonder as to why we need so badly to continue to cut costs and upset staff in Maastricht. Competition with one another seems to be the only reason.

I had a brief discussion on Maastricht with the DG during a coffee break and I understand his hands are tied by the 4 States. It is my impression that the 4 States are telling different stories to the Press (and to us) than they are to the DG regarding their plans for the future of the Centre.

The main subject of discussion at the meeting was the **Functional Airspace Blocks** (FAB) from the Single European Sky (SES) plan of the EU. Many are fearing that the creation of such blocks (in fact pieces of airspace not liked to States, a bit like our Coastal sector) could lead to closure of ATC facilities and competition amongst service providers, with the cheapest gaining the contract. This could lead to the renegotiation of contracts bringing everybody downwards. The fears expressed are reduction in salaries, in staff numbers and in social benefits.

What we see happening in the core of Europe today would tend to give credits to the pessimists:

In **Germany**, for cost reductions reasons, they want to close control towers at night and have the service done from another Tower situated hundreds of Km away (rationale given : In fog the TWR controllers do not see anything either, they could be anywhere, so no difference to put them 100 Km away).

Also in Germany they want to introduce Single man operations in ACC en route sectors. This despite the recommendation of the report of the Ueberlingen accident. (Rationale: the report is valid for Switzerland, not Germany). The relations between management and controller association-Union, the newly formed GDF (replacing the old VDF) are extremely difficult and described as "on ice".

In **Norway**, the service provider decided to close down its main ACC in Oslo and move the services to Stavanger. This without any consultation with its controllers Association. The ones who objected were apparently told they would be dismissed. An Operations Manager in Oslo who supported the controllers has apparently already been fired.

In **Belarus**, the leader of the Controllers union was simply dismissed and anyone active with the Union –Association received a 6 months contract renewable if staff remains quiet.

The controllers associations of the countries that make up CEATS (the Central European UAC managed by Eurocontrol) are apparently extremely unhappy with the way Eurocontrol does things there. An extremely hard report was made by Italy, the association tasked with reviewing the project, which did upset the Eurocontrol Agency delegation.



Work on monitoring what the EU is doing with **SES** is continuing and Patrik was nominated as Head of one of the major projects (Airspace), replacing the IFATCA chairman Technical and Operational committee (Akos Van der Plaats) who was getting overloaded.

On the technical side, we got a presentation from Alex Wandels from Eurocontrol on data link. Nothing new for us.

Nadine Pilon from Eurocontrol Bretigny did a presentation on the image ATC has in the Press. Bad of course, only receiving coverage in case of incidents and accidents. We have a lot of work to do and we are not sufficiently good at it.

The meeting issued a Press release that can be viewed on www.ifatca.org website. The social events in the evening were very well organised and allowed many contacts with our neighbours. It was only saddened by the fact that a 40 years old controller from Serbia, suffered a stroke during the farewell dinner and died 2 days after, leaving a sick wife and a small child behind. We are deeply shocked by this and have meanwhile collected funds for financial support to this poor family.

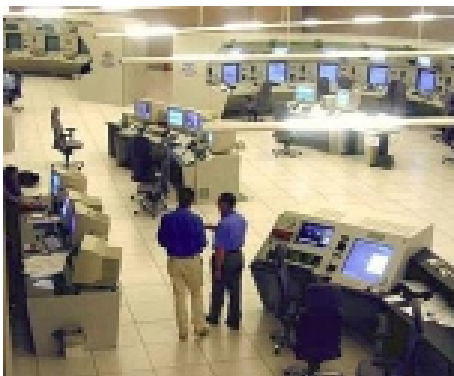
Philippe Domogala
IFATCA Liaison Officer

A visit to Bucharest ACC and a couple of thoughts...



Hello dear EGATS colleagues,
I have attended the IFATCA European Regional Conference in Bucharest, Romania as a Eurocontrol Observer for Training Matters.

There I had the pleasure of meeting the EGATS delegation and Patrik asked me to write down an article on my short visit to Bucharest ACC.



Since Patrik gave me the opportunity of communicating with my colleagues up-north, I thought of also taking the occasion to share with you some of the personal impressions I got from the part of the regional meeting to which I attended. For me the key word during this meeting was change and the key emotion was the fear of the future.

The Single European Sky was debated heavily during the meeting and for me a very few important points emerged:

1.) Change is all over the European ATM environment.

MUAC, specifically the Ops Division, has been going through a phase of change which has raised questions and created tension and a feeling of uneasiness. I feel this is but the beginning.

Change is all over the place, not just at MUAC.

Like the right of free movement of humans and goods through the EU, the liberalisation

of many services (e.g. financial, airlines, telecommunication, etc), and the monetary unification, all of which brought revolutions in their respective domains, the Single European Sky will bring dramatic changes to our business and to the way we do business.

I feel that the changes that MUAC in particular and Eurocontrol in general have gone through so far are but the beginning of more fundamental changes still to come. Even though I feel things will change, and that some ideas are already on some tables and undergoing discussions, the way our working environment will look like in the near future is still, to the greater extend, unknown to me.

The fear of the unknown is a justified emotion, but, if after analysing the situation



and the forces (many and powerful – EC, ANSPs, Airlines, Industry...) who are pushing for the change, you arrive like me to the conclusion that change is inevitable, then, maybe, it is the right time to start thinking of how to influence this change to get the most benefits out of it.

Resisting the change altogether – and here I need to underline this is just my opinion J, will only delay it, if at all, for a little while more, and will in the mean time create a lot of tension and a bad feeling throughout our day-to-day work.



So what could we do?

2.) Mandate our Professional Body and our Trade Union to act firmly but constructively to maximise the benefits from the change.

Through this period of high activity, the number of meetings our representatives attend to and their work load have multiplied by a dramatic degree. The resources have remained the same.

At this point we, together with our representatives should think about what the key competencies for each body are (EGATS and also through IFATCA: perhaps professional and technical, TUEM and also through ATCEUC and the other consultation groups: perhaps social issues) and mandate them to focus their work on their key competencies. We should mandate them to act firmly but constructively to highlight issues related to the subjects for which they have been set-up and in which they are good in order to maximise the benefits we can get from each respective domain.

I feel that this is the only way to come out of this feeling good and satisfied.

On the other hand, by having our representative bodies trying to dilute their focus on too many issues, sometimes not directly related to their core competencies, and by categorically resisting change, I am afraid we will come out of this feeling tired and dissatisfied.

We will be asked to change and if we act wisely, we too can get profit from all of this.

The rest of the conclusions are for you to make...

...aah yes, back to my visit at Bucharest ACC:

As a reporter, I have to start with an apology, because the photographer was indisposed and I had to improvise with the camera handling. I only managed two pictures of the building, as pictures of the Ops Room were STRICKTLY forbidden! (Pictures on the previous page are taken from the official RATCA website - The Editor)

Apologies aside, Bucharest ACC is working on a very new system designed by Alenia Marconi and inaugurated in November 2003. The consoles look very much like ours, including the highly agronomical-friendly support screens!

During the visit we were told that the Romanian FIR is divided in 3 ACCs, the one we were visiting in Bucharest, and two more, one in Arad and one in Constanca.

The ACCs in these 2 locations will be brought to Bucharest in 2007 (changes have started here too!) and on these sites only the approach and tower units will be left, together with some contingency in case something happens to Bucharest.

The current Bucharest ACC is divided into 12 sectors, and each sector is (wo)manned, like us, with an Executive and a Coordinator.

They still use paper strips, and the reason we were given for why they still do this is because electronic messages would take too much of their screen size. (I will remain factual here and refrain from commenting!)

After 15 minutes on the balcony, we were accompanied to the coffee room where we spent the remaining 30 minutes!!

This ends my report,

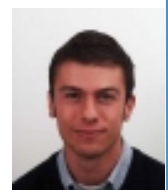
One other thing I always remember when I attend IFATCA meetings and/or visit other centres, is that we basically all think we are different, special, unique, have big problems, etc. but then we realise, with the exception of some extreme conditions, that we are basically similar, work in similar environments and experience similar thrills, frustrations and problems.

These conferences are an eye opener. If you can, you should attend.

From your colleague approaching Luxie.

Max

Max.bezzina@eurocontrol.int
Any comments to this article, but also simple 'postion reports' are welcome!



CISM Workshop Bucharest

On Friday 22nd October, in conjunction with the EUR meeting, IFATCA in cooperation with the DFS and EUROCONTROL, held a workshop on Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) in Bucharest. The objective of this workshop was to present and share the experiences of various service providers regarding CISM. Various presentations showed from different angles the view on an integrated human factors element of modern management. The presentations were aimed at ATCO staff and managers with the intention to pass on information to those having never heard about the program, being in the process of introducing such a system and those wanting to share their experiences on CISM.

Alexander Skonieczki, Head of Human Factors Management (Eurocontrol) gave an overview on the present level of implementation of CISM in the ECAC area. He reminded the audience that the introduction of CISM is a harmonisation objective in the European Convergence and Implementation Plan to be implemented in the ECAC area by the end of 2007. CISM has proven its necessity already - especially in the light of the recent catastrophes of Überlingen and Milano.

Ian Patterson, DAS/HUM CISM expert (Eurocontrol), presented the historical background of the program, starting with identified reactions in "battle conditions" during the American Civil Wars of 1865, followed by the two World Wars and Vietnam. Studies on psycho-traumatology finally led to debriefing methods first used for fire brigades in the USA in 1983, entering the aviation world after the DC10 crash of Sioux City (1989) and the EL-AL B747 crash in Amsterdam (1992).

Critical Incident Stress are normal reactions to an abnormal event.

We today differentiate between two different ways of CISM. The one-one counselling method with a peer counsellor and the group therapy led by a medical health advisor and a peer.

In Europe we separate accident investigation strictly from CISM. Data exchange between these two parties is not done, which might at times lead to legal implications.

Kevin McGrath, Dublin Airport Station Manager and a peer since 1999, gave an update on the IAA CISM system. Following an airprox in 1997 where two controllers were suffering from post traumatic stress and where no formal system was existing that could have helped those staff members, the necessity to establish such a system was seen. Kevin highlighted the importance to consult staff representatives such as unions and associations in the draw up of such programs. After contact had been established with the EATCHIP program of Eurocontrol, a call for tender was released and following selection a company tasked with the training (5 days off-site (3 plus 2 days)) selected. Out of 49 nominations, 18 peer counsellors were selected. Costs for time-off and travelling expenses etc. is reimbursed to the peers. More information can be found on their website: www.iaa.ie

Currently the program is being reviewed and extended. 12 additional peers were selected.

Isabel Cambraia, a NAV Portugal psychologist, talked about the role of peers as seen in Portugal. She stressed the voluntary and confidentiality aspect as well as the fact that the peers should come from the immediate working environment (colleagues). NAV Portugal provides a 5 day training course followed by yearly refresher training. She also mentioned the limitations of a peers and highlighted the link between peers and a mental health professional.

The by far most interesting presentation was a cooperation between colleagues from DFS and SKYGUIDE. Jörg Leonhardt (DFS), Ralf Schultze (DFS), Ralf Mersmann (DFS), Carol Minder (SKYGUIDE) and Sabine Zimmermann (SKYGUIDE) gave a highly interesting overview about their experience gained in the CISM work following the Überlingen catastrophe. Jörg, a trained Human Factors Specialist and CISM Trainer, explained the different crisis intervention methods. He clarified that CISM is not only a model but an integrated system.





After the Überlingen accident, 120 ATCOs went through 6 debriefing sessions.

4 different methods are being used:

- One-to-one (Safer Model)
- Small group crisis intervention (Defusing)
- Large group crisis intervention (Debriefing)
- Follow-up/Referral

Having a look at the picture on the right, one can see that the ATCOs went through the emotional level ending their programme on the cognitive level. A debriefing is to be seen as crisis intervention but not to be misunderstood as therapy. Peers conducting this intervention are following the above structure, therapists do not.

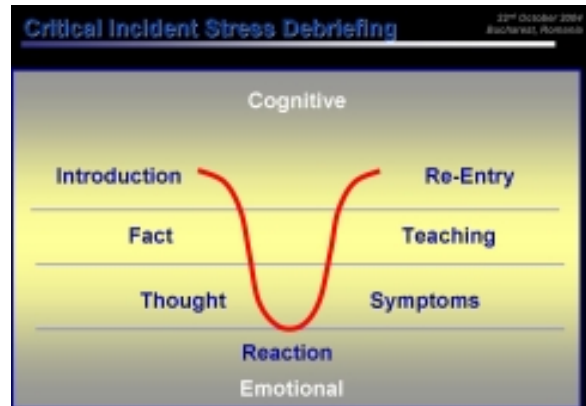
The phases:

Introduction: The team will introduce themselves, describing the rules of conduct (no disturbances, no hidden signs) and the processes with the aim of reducing fears and thus create trust. Absence of criticism is one of the basics of crisis intervention. Sabine, as one of the ATCOs having participated in the debriefing sessions, felt at ease after this first step. She realized being amongst colleagues.

Fact: Purpose of this phase is to bring all participants on the same level of knowledge (information gathering) and to voice how the individual is "connected" to the accident. "When did the accident come into your life?" or "When did you hear and how did you hear about the accident?" These easy questions are setting the base, they are non-emotional - simply facts, told us Carol, another one of the Swiss debriefing participants.

Thought: "What was your first thought?" or "Which thought can't you let go?" Ralf explained: When thoughts are voiced, they lose their emotional power. This will not let you go into the spiral of uncontrolled emotions. The level of involvement in an accident has to be equal - a homogenous group is essential to limit the impact on the other group members. Sabine states that they were looking for answers to questions like "What if that would happen to me?" and "How is that possible?" or "Can I continue to work?" Due to the close feeling amongst the group members individual feelings of weakness are fading away.

Reaction: Here the bottom of the emotional level is being reached.



The question to be asked is: "What was the worst part for you?" Imagining the whole accident as a kind of movie: "What part would you like to cut out?" This question leads to the identification of the most stressful point. The search for this point helps coping with other parts of the accident (side-effects). Carol said that this highly emotional time was best expressed in the questions raised by the participants: "Why him/me/us?"

Symptoms: Did you notice any changes in your behaviour & your thinking, or did you change physically? In this phase the participants slowly enter the cognitive level again by asking themselves what the effects for them individually were. Like this the person can regain control. Sabine explained that colleagues had lost confidence in their work. They did not know how to go on. Sleeping disorders, no appetite, not wanting to watch the news on TV were typical symptoms. Through group discussions the participants found it easier to accept their own problems.

Teaching: In this phase there were no questions asked; the peers gave a summary of the symptoms and previously asked questions. This shall normalize and take away the uniqueness of these reactions - provide coping mechanism on how to deal with stress. The peers gave ideas on how to manage the next day/s, outlining that alcohol is counterproductive as it reduces the ability to work, makes people unfit and puts the stress back into the brain. The participants experienced this phase as very helpful because they could learn from their colleagues experience.



Re-entry: In this final phase the question for a possible positive aspect for the future was asked. The idea behind this is to focus on the way ahead and not looking back. This way ahead has to be mastered in small concrete steps where every individual finds a perspective for the future - day by day. With time passing by, the stress will decrease. After this last phase it is important to have peers available to accompany the participants. They will reconsider their work, their attitude towards their profession and their working methods.

The debriefings were ended with a non-alcoholic drink giving the chance to discuss question which remained open and providing a hotline for future queries.

The team around Jörg finished this very interesting and moving presentation by stressing the need for a uniform CISM model and an international network in order to interlink and be able to support one another. Standards will have to be set on peer and management level.

This presentation showed the possibilities a functioning CISM system can provide. As a participant of this workshop and in particular of this presentation, I myself went through the different phases of the above described model. I could feel how I was suffering emotionally as we went "downhill", how I was asking myself the exact same questions. I was trying to find answers to those questions and ended on the cognitive level again. A very interesting experience.

Christiane Damal, Human Factors Specialist for SKYGUIDE, briefed us about the research that is been done to assess the benefits of CISM. Only very few studies are so far available on this subject and that makes it very difficult to evaluate the efficiency of CISM. The ICSF (International Critical Stress Foundation) was used to receive data for this evaluation. One differentiates between benefits for the person and for the organisation.

Personal benefits:

- psychological effects
- team spirit (group feeling)
- physical benefits (reduction in drug/alcohol consumption)
- reduction of stress reactions

Others:

- family support
- decline of marital discord
- reduction of medical costs

Company benefits:

- awareness of possible consequences
- reflection about error management
- facilitation of post incident process of skill reacquisition
- improves internal image group moral

Financial return on investment:

- less sick leave
- shorter duration of sick leave
- less premature retirements
- less personnel turnover

As a conclusion Christiane showed an example from the Commonwealth Bank of Australia, showing that the branch with CISM was showing more positive results than the one without CISM.

Johan Kjaer-Hansen from Eurocontrol gave a presentation of a feasibility study on economic evaluation of human factors programmes. This study concentrated on the economical benefits of CISM - using data from ca. 60 DFS-ATCOs. The promising result showed a good return on investment for the CISM program.

Roger Bartlett gave a very lively presentation about the CISM introduction in-house. He paid respect to the driving force of **EGATS** in the set-up of our program, mentioning **Inge Vander Eyken** as the main actor in this.

After these presentations, an interesting discussion about various aspects of the CISM programmes took place - resulting in the following conclusions:

CISM should be:

- ✓ integrated in a crisis management system
- ✓ following clear harmonised procedures & structures
- ✓ conducted by well trained & certified peers
- ✓ a standard of care in ATM

There is a need for one model and network, management support and commitment!

Patrik Peters





Update on the Space Management Project

About a year ago EGATS launched a program called Space Management at Maastricht UAC. The goal of the program was the improvement of the way space in general is managed in our centre.

Often, the needs and wishes of the staff and especially operational staff were not considered with the importance it deserved. This was not only a question of comfort and well being but mostly a question of giving the staff a good environmental working and rest space in order to perform their assigned duties in good conditions.

Therefore, EGATS produced a document called "Quick Wins" which described the first and urgent needs that were spotted in order to improve the space management in the short term.

It is now time to inform you about the developments and first results of our program. Some results are already visible, other aspects are still under development but things are moving and we are confident that more result will be achieved shortly.



The new TV and DVD set of the Rest Room was our first achievement. After more than ten years of loyalty and good service, the old EGATS's TV set could finally retire and enjoy a well deserved ETS. We now can enjoy a wide screen TV and a DVD player which hopefully will serve us for many coming years.

Regarding the dormitories in the basement, a lot of improvements have been achieved already. First of all, the quality and the flow of the air in the room have been looked at. The flow of air that was circulating in the room was pointing directly towards the zone where the head of the person sleeping in the room was positioned. The speed of the flow was extremely high resulting in uncomfortable and unhealthy sleeping conditions which were resulting in dry eyes and throat the next morning.

This has been solved. The ventilation has now been optimised to have a good balance between fresh air and good sleeping conditions.

The soundproofing of the dormitories is a more complex subject. The soundproofing of the walls is apparently good but the sound is spreading via the ceilings. To solve that problem a lot of money should be invested, the whole area should be rebuilt which would leave us with very few dormitories for an extended period. Since the project is to relocate the dormitories in a window environment, the dormitories will remain as they are for the moment.

The noise coming from the pipes of the heading system has been looked at and appropriate maintenance has solved the problem.

As you all know, the quality of the mattresses is a main point of concern. Hopefully, at the publication of this article some mattresses will be installed in the dormitories for testing. A form will be at your disposal for evaluation and to collect your comments. After selection, all mattresses will be replaced and installed at the beginning of 2005.

We are now investigating the possibility of providing staff with bed sheets and blankets. Unfortunately, this nice service would be more expensive than expected (more than 60000 euros per year for renting and cleaning). So this will all depend on the available budget of the Facility Management Section. We will keep you informed about future developments on the subject.

We wish you in advance sweet dreams on those new mattresses.

The rooms used as dormitories within our centre will be equipped with a lock. Actually, some of them are equipped already.

The next improvement for those rooms will be the installation of a system to hide the room from the lighting of the corridors and from the outside and the refurbishment of the couches which are used as beds.

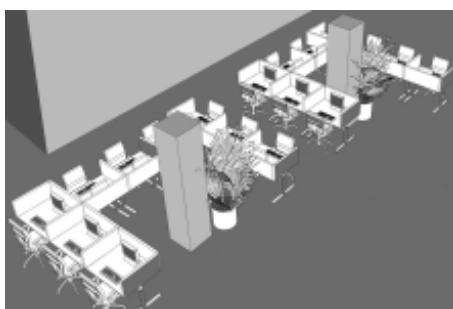
The replacement of the equipment of the fitness room is delayed to next year for budgetary reasons. A list of new cardiovascular machines has been done. We are now waiting for the funds. As you will see further, there is a plan to relocate as well the fitness room at another location. Another problem in our centre is the kiosk PC's disseminated all over the corridors.

It's annoying for staffs that are looking for an available PC and very disturbing for office staff in the neighbourhood of those PC's. Therefore, we are planning to group about 20 PC's on the third floor of the actual OPS Room building next to the DFS' rest room.

This will have several advantages:

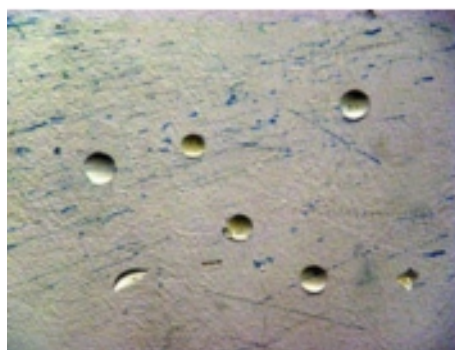
- Staff will have an easier access to the PC's.
- A minimum of office staff will be disturbed by the kiosk PC's.
- No more time lost to find an available PC.
- It will make the maintenance of the PC's easier.

Hereunder you can see a first drawing of the project.



Regarding the billiard room, we had requested a change of the cloth of the two tables and a general refurbishing of the room. It is quite surprising to see how people care about things which are not theirs.

The first request was attended immediately but the second one did not receive the same enthusiasm which is understandable if you look at the picture below.



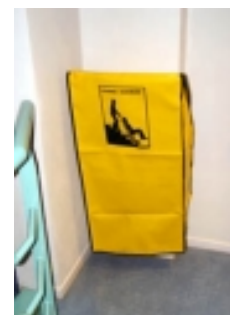
No, this is not a photo of the surface of the moon but only a part of the billiard room's wall.

We are not here to give lessons to the users but if we try to improve our facilities, we expect in return a minimum of respect for the work done by our colleagues. Those colleagues will of course not be very motivated to help us if we treat their work like this.

We therefore count on your cooperation to help us in this project.

Here are a few more results of the "Quick Wins":

- The installation of an extraction device in the two smoking rooms.
- Adequate lighting on the way leading to the parking area behind the old GAF building.
- Better adaptation of our centre to disabled staffs: access, parking...





The Future..... End 2006 - Early 2007

Once the new building extension will be in place and after the relocation of some sections, we will have sufficient space at our disposal for the creation of a large area where could be grouped the rest and recreation area and the dormitories.

Each dormitory will have its own window...

Yes, you read correctly, a window!!!!!!!!!!

This area would be located at the first floor of the actual OPS Room building at the actual location of the classrooms.

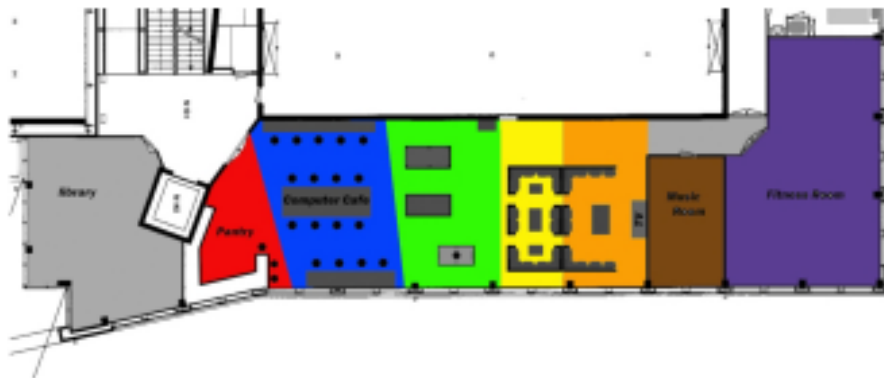
This drawing is a first draft of our project. It will most probably evolve together with new requirements or requests from staff and from certain sections.

For those reasons, we will not provide you with too many details that could at the end not be reality.

Feel free at anytime to come with your ideas, they are always welcome.

Now, we wish to thank some people who are our partners in this project: Arn, Johan, Peter and Heinz-Jose. We thank them for the great job they are doing, for their commitment, their interest and their listening...Thank you all.

That's all for now folks...See you soon with further news.



If you are motivated, have some spare time, want to work in a dynamic team & achieve something for our profession.... then you should join the Executive Board of EGATS.

For the elections 2005 we are looking for you!
For more info, contact us in person or via board@egats.org



EGATS PHOTO COMPETITION and the winner is?



Our first photo competition only attracted thirteen entrants but I consider it to have been a great success, if only for the standard of the photos submitted. The 36 photos were of a very high standard indeed and interpreted the subject, water, in a variety of ways, although reflections prevailed.

I had some vague ideas about how, and by whom, the entries should be judged but when one of the entrants suggested that perhaps children would take a totally different view of the photos to adults I decided to follow it up. I approached one of the teachers of my daughter's class in the international department of the Joppenhof primary school in Maastricht. Her enthusiasm convinced me that this could indeed produce an interesting result, and thus the stage was set for the judging to be executed by a group of 20 eight and nine year olds from the United States, Russia, Japan, Italy, Spain, Czech Republic, Poland and others.

The judges' selection of Jakub Vinicky's waterfall photo was undisputable and made Jakub the winner of our first competition. The photo was taken in Eupen, Belgium in August of this year using a Canon EOS 300 camera loaded with Fuji Sensia 400 film. He used a 28-105mm lens. Jakub's submissions provided the only film entries. I must admit to being a little surprised, in a most positive way, that the kids selected such an abstract picture to take the second prize.

Anja Lingk's 'Ice Hole' photo was taken in/on (I didn't ask...!!) the Franz Joseph glacier on New Zealand's South Island in March of this year using a Casio EX-Z4 digital compact camera. Anja is already planning her strategy for next year's competition, even though she doesn't know the subject!

Two photos were selected for the third place, both entered by the same person – Ilija Bojilov's wife Dessi. At this stage the teachers entered the action to select which photo would collect the third prize. They chose Dessi's shot of water flowing over pebbles in a stream close to Elsloo castle. Taken in May the photographer used a Minolta digital camera.

Congratulations to all three prize-winners who have received gift vouchers redeemable for photographic items.



It is just a pity that we could only select three photos as many of the other entries were worthy of prizes. However, I hope this will encourage the other entrants to submit entries for next year's competition.

Paul Hooper



Bird strike ... and more



Say again....

Questions via the radio should not always be answered exactly.

Tower: Aircraft in holding pattern, say fuelstate?

Aircraft: Fuelstate

Tower: Say again?

Aircraft: Again....

After this the tower controller switches off his radio and climbs down the stairs to drink coffee the rest of the afternoon.

And the Big Hand Is On the...

Tower: "Delta 351, you have traffic at 10 o'clock, 6 miles!"

Delta 351: "Give us another hint! We have digital watches!"

Turbulence on taxiway!

For months after California's Northridge earthquake of 1994, aftershocks rocked the San Fernando Valley and Van Nuys Airport. One morning about three weeks after the initial quake there was a particularly sharp aftershock. Moments later on Van Nuys' ground control frequency: "Uh, four-three-kilo would like to file a pilot report for moderate turbulence on the east taxiway..."

ATIS Hotel

"ATIS" stands for "Automated Terminal Information Service," which is a recorded message broadcast at most busy airports around the country. ATIS gives pilots the current wind, air traffic, and runway information and each time the information changes, the broadcast is revised, with each revision being assigned the next letter in the phonetic alphabet. This designation is included in the broadcast, which is identified as, "Information Alpha..." Bravo, Charlie, etc.

At ATIS-equipped airports, pilots are required to listen to the recording prior to contacting

Approach Control or the tower and must repeat the "Information so-and-so" identifier when they make their initial radio call. Sometimes, the results can be hilarious...

The scenario: it was night over Las Vegas and "Information Hotel" was current on the ATIS. Mooney 33W wasn't too sharp, but he didn't let that stop him from talking to Approach Control.

Approach: "33W, confirm you have 'Hotel.'"

33W: "Uhhhhhmm, we're flying into McCarren International. Uhhhhhmm, we don't have a hotel room yet."

After that, Approach was laughing too hard to respond. The next several calls went something like this call to United 583 (which didn't make it any easier to stop laughing)...

Approach: "United 583, descend to Flight Level 220."

United 583: "United 583, down to Flight Level 220. We don't have a hotel room, either."

Now That We've Got That Straight...

Tower: "November 2115L, are you a Cessna?"

2115L: "No, sir...I am a male Hispanic."

Some People Just Never Listen

ATC to Flight 123: "Slow to 300 knots please." After several moments, it was apparent the crew had not complied with the first speed reduction and was overtaking the inbound plane ahead of them.

ATC to Flight 123: "Slow to 280 knots."

This was soon followed by a request for 250 knots from ATC when the crew still had not slowed the airplane.

Finally, the now-frustrated controller ordered, "Gentlemen, the number is 250. Either slow to it or turn to it!"





**Merry Christmas
& a Happy,
Healthy and Safe
New Year
for you and your
loved ones.**

**The Executive
Board of EGATS**

**FEES for
2005!**

Your membership fees are due in January 2005 again. Please make sure you have your bank transfers or "machtiging" forms arranged.

For more information, - please consult our website (FAQs) or email to treasurer@egats.org.

For membership issues - contact: membership@egats.org

AGM 2005-Invitation

You are invited to the
Annual General Meeting 2005
of EGATS
the EUROCONTROL GUILD of
AIR TRAFFIC SERVICES

It will be held in the
MASUAC Canteen
on the
15th March 2005 @ 19:30 hrs.

The agenda will be published in due time.
For questions, please E-mail to: execsec@egats.org

CU there!