

IFATCA

NATO Tiger Meet '09

Beautiful Kos Island

Chicho foundation

N-FDPS: One year on...

REFOCUS

Winter 09



IFATCA Functional Airspace Blocks Coordinator

Dear Members,

In the context of the Single European Sky and the development of Functional Airspace Blocks (FAB), it became apparent that a more structured and systematic coordination was needed between the European member associations of IFATCA in order to establish continuous cooperation links at regional level. Information flows seems to differ greatly from one country to the other. Coordination of ideas at operational staff level and outside official meetings are not yet optimum, if not worse.

Therefore, after the idea of a FAB Coordinator was launched last spring, the IFATCA European delegates were given a small presentation and introduced to this new role during the European Regional Meeting which was held in Kos from the 23rd till the 25th of October.

Once again, EGATS will be in the forefront of the international cooperation!!!

Indeed, **Frederic Deleau**, EGATS board member, volunteered and will assume from now on the responsibility of IFATCA FAB Coordinator, in close coordination with EVP Europe.

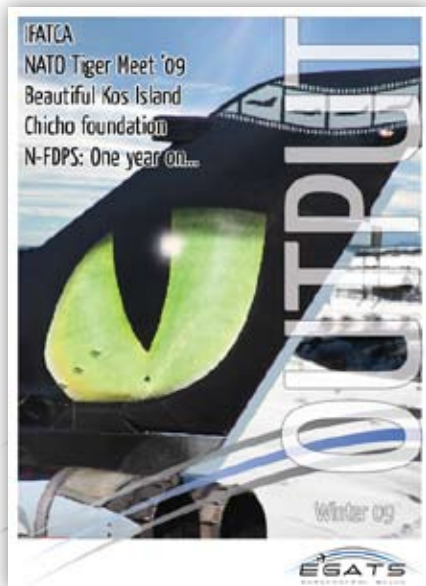
Frederic will first put in place a process to gather and exchange ideas with the member associations involved in the establishment of FABs across Europe before launching initiatives to strengthen the ties between all of them per specific regions. His experience as MOSAIC Focal Point and his involvement in the FAB EC proceedings and Social Dialogue will surely be of great help, even though, he made clear that his ambition at this level was not to promote a certain specific concept but rather to facilitate the exchange, the creativity, and merely, pro-activity of all ideas for the highest benefits of the operational staff.

Looking at the successful continuous cooperation established between various parties involved in the FABEC, one can only hope that this example will help everyone to defend efficiently our ideas, our profession and our colleagues in all FAB projects.

After having successfully supported the EVP Europe post for the last 4 years with Patrik Peters, EGATS looks forward again to exchange the unique experiences and know-how of Maastricht UAC with this new IFATCA responsibility.

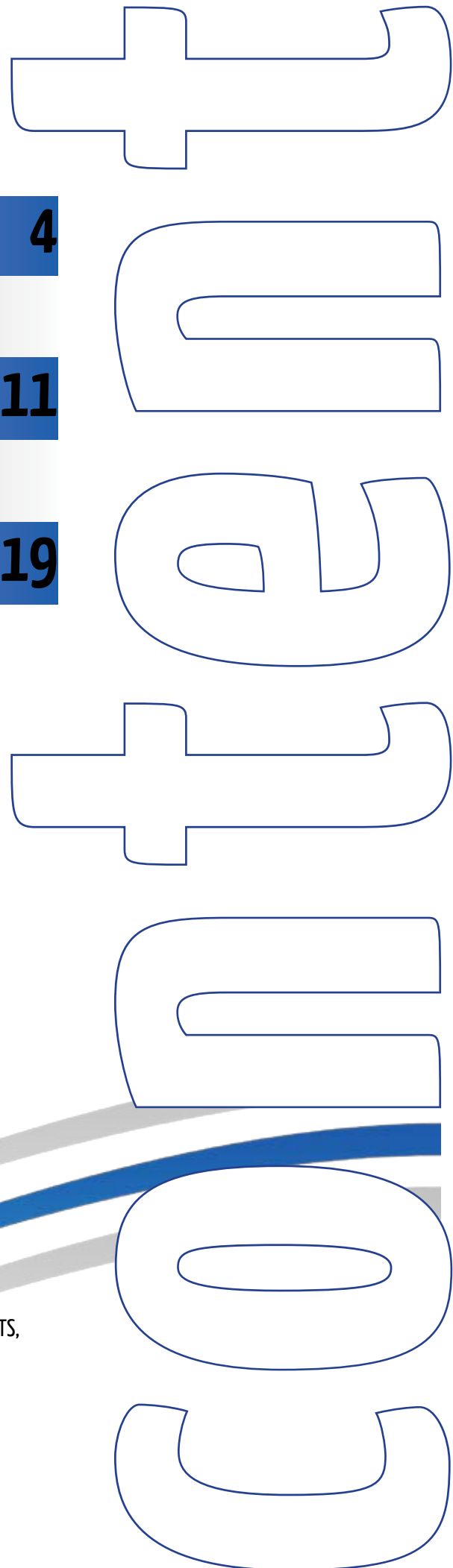
Winter 2009

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All pictures are taken by the authors.



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There you have it; the year 2009 is almost behind us. When I'm writing these words, Sinterklaas has just left for Spain and Santa Claus is preparing for the busiest period of his working year.

With the global economic crisis continuing to run its course, 2009 turned out to be an interesting year to say the least. Several times throughout the year it seemed like the markets started to recover. But every time there was

some bad news to bring them back to earth. The most recent troubles in Dubai are another signal that things are far from back to normal. In our branch the recession, coupled with continuous high oil prices, has kept pressure on all the players. Airlines keep looking at ways to reduce their costs and some, like Easyjet, have resorted to flying at lower speeds to save fuel. This is not really a problem, as long as they tell us on time. But some are also picking the passengers pockets for their survival.

When flying transatlantic it is not a given anymore that passengers are allowed to bring two pieces of luggage for free, like it used to be. On some airlines passengers now have to pay to check-in online and choose a seat. I was personally faced with the fact that, if I wanted to sit next to my wife on a flight to the US West coast, I had to pay for an upgrade to premium economy. Price of the upgrade: almost €100 per person. If we choose not to do so we would have to be content with the assigned seats, meaning 5 rows apart on opposite sides of the plane. I had actually tried to check in online and change the seats, but the system did not allow for this. The lady at the check in was very apologetic but claimed that it was not possible for her either to change the seat arrangement on the plane. Must be an interesting scene when a family with small children shows up and they are told they all have

to sit far apart, or pay the extra expense. One has to wonder how far the airlines can push it before it's costing them clients. I know which airline I will not book with anymore, next time I want to go to the USA. Inside the Eurocontrol

agency, we are continuing to evolve towards a new future. The PC meeting at the beginning of December has shown us the roadmap we will follow in the coming years. It was already clear from previous publications and

statements that change was on the horizon under pressure from the European Commission. It remains to be seen how all these changes will impact us in the operational field, but certainly on some other levels there will be consequences. Together with TUEM we will continue to monitor the situation.

In this edition of Output, you can read about the IFATCA Regional Meeting in Kos and the situation of the Greek ATCOs. There's an article about the NATO Tiger Meet and the new board members introduce themselves. For 2010 are looking for new blood again as some of the people on the board have indicated they would like to step down at the next AGM. If you are willing to invest some extra time, come forward. You can approach any of the board members for more information. I also want to draw your attention to the item about the membership fees. If you are one of the people who closed their Dutch bank account, please pay your membership correctly and on time and you will save our treasurer an awful lot of work.

I would like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year.

May all your wishes come through in 2010.

Professionally Yours,

Ive Van Weddingen,
EGATS President



26th IFATCA European Regional Meeting report

By Ive Van Weddingen

This year the IFATCA ERM was organized by the Greek MA on the Mediterranean island of Kos. The island of Kos is laying in the Aegean Sea and is the third biggest of the Dodecanese's islands. It measures 40 by 8 km and is only 4 km away from the Turkish coast town of Budrum. Due to its 112 km of beaches it's a popular tourist destination. It is also the habitat for several turtle species, including some endangered sea turtles.

The EGATS delegation consisted of Raf Vigorita and myself. It was my first ERM since joining the EGATS board. The meeting started on Friday 23rd October with an IFATCA seminar. For the second year the seminar will be the same at all 4 regional meetings, with a regional block included allowing for content specific to the region to be featured. This year the subject is "Performance". Marc Baumgartner starts off with a presentation explaining exactly what performance is. He explains about metrics,

We also had a look at the IFATCA policies on performance. From that it is clear that controller expertise must be involved at all aspects.

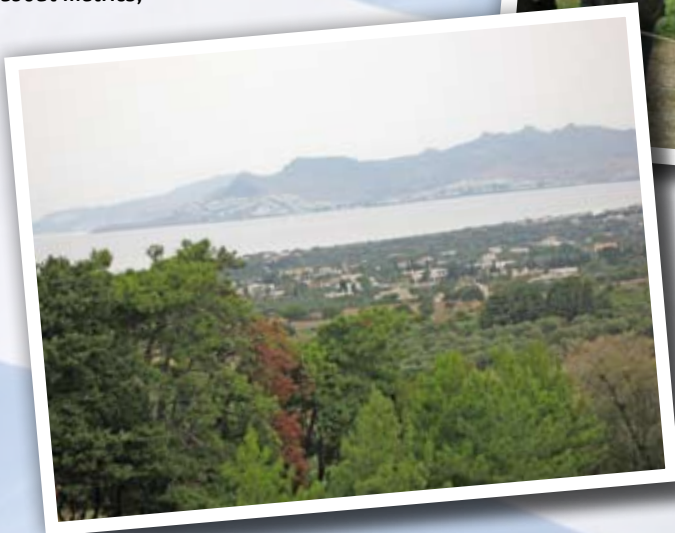
After the morning coffee break we heard from Xavier Fron. He's the head of the Eurocontrol Performance Review Unit and he discussed the position of performance within the SES II package. For SES II performance is considered one of the 4 main pillars. There will be a revised performance scheme, subject to specific Key Performance Area's (KPA) and Key

Environment.

Since the Regional meetings always work on a very tight schedule with little time to relax, Philippe Domogala, Raf and I decided that we would use the Thursday afternoon to take a closer look at the island. Raf arranged for a rental car and with a little guidance from some of the local controllers we took off for our sightseeing tour. Obviously we started at the airport. Not to watch planes, but to see a nice small chapel built on a hill overseeing the airport.



Panoramic views of the beautiful island of Kos



what they mean and how they are used. It is clear that we need to think carefully about the metrics used. Simply looking at figures might not give the result one is looking for; the figures need to be interpreted in the correct way.

Europe. Community targets will be set by the European Commission, National/FAB's performance plans will be set by the states & NSA's. For the first 3 year reference period (2012-2015) the 4 KPA are: Safety, Capacity, Cost-efficiency and

Performance Indicators (KPI), with reference periods (3 to 5 years) synchronized across

Unfortunately a big fence around the chapel prevented us from taking a closer look. We continued on our way and made a stop at a quiet beach close to the Club Med. Here we saw some ancient temple ruins and Raf and Philippe Domogala went for a refreshing swim. We then made our way across the island to a very small fishing harbor at Kefalos, where we found a nice bar/restaurant for a beer. The owner explained

that the restaurant would close after the weekend, and not reopen till April, since hardly anybody would be visiting the island during the winter months. After that we made our way back to the hotel in time for the welcome reception. It seemed all the controllers from Greece had gathered in Kos for the occasion and the question of who was still out there, working the traffic, was asked more than once during the evening. At midnight the terrace of the hotel was converted in a Karaoke bar and the singing and dancing continued into the early hours.

On Saturday the “real” European Regional Meeting started. There were 35 Member Associations present out of a total of 44 for the region. The head table consists of Mark Baumgartner (PCX/CEO), Dale Wright (EVP-Finance), Patrik Peters

(EVP-EUR) and Zeljko Oreski (ERM secretary). Patrik opens the meeting with a welcome word. He reflects on the current situation and the outlook of the near future and invites people to invest some time to think about the future of the federation. In his opening speech, Marc Baumgartner PCX and CEO of IFATCA posed the question if we are watching a Greek drama unfold with regards to SES and what role there is for the controllers to play.

Patrik makes a short statement on the passing away of Mr. Henry Nkondokaya (EVP-AFM) who died suddenly on 6 September from a heart attack. It is clear that the federation has lost an exemplary member, who did a lot of work for the African-Middle East Region and who was much respected within the Federation.

The opening ceremony is immediately followed by

a presentation about just culture and investigation of accidents. It is clear that there is a tension between the recommended practices of ICAO Annex 13 on



accident investigation and the legal investigation, as their goal is almost opposite: One is purely looking at ways to avoid the accident happening again in the future. The other is looking at who is to blame for the accident and which legal repercussions are attached to that. This can put controllers and others in a difficult position, as their statements in an accident investigation could be, and have been, used against them in legal proceedings related to this accident (like insurance claims etc...). It is therefore vital that the necessary protection is written into the law. There need to be strict limits to the sharing of information from the accident investigation. Not having such protection will prevent people from being open and honest during an investigation and could possibly lead to incidents/accidents reoccurring.

Since the meeting in Dubrovnik there have been two IFATCA EB meetings and press releases on the appointment of an IFATCA representative to ICAO and on the relations with ASECNA. The EB calls on more volunteers to take over part of the workload by attending meetings, taking part in development of new systems, etc...In his report, Patrik give an overview of the open positions for IFATCA representatives in the European region. It is clear that with the work on SESAR, SES II and other projects, there are a lot of invitations for controller involvement, but IFATCA simply lacks the manpower to fill all positions. If we want to continue to play a meaningful role, it is vital that interested people step forward and volunteer some of their time. The IFATCA EB is also continuing to explore possibilities for more interaction through technological advances (e.g. online meetings). The MA's are once again requested to declare the correct membership figures, as this has a serious impact on the financial status of The Federation. In the near future the MoU between IFATCA and ICISF will be signed. After that some PR material will be made available to further spread the introduction of

CISM throughout the European region. Some recent accidents, like the THY crash in Amsterdam, have shown the importance of having a good CISM scheme in place.

Philippe Domogala gave an update on the European Support Fund. This is funded by voluntary contributions and exists to help MA's with financial difficulties to attend the Regional Meetings. He thanked the MA's that contributed to the fund in the past year and urged those with financial problems to make use of it when necessary, rather than not attend a meeting. Philippe also gave an update on the controller magazine and once again asked that all associations would subscribe for at least one copy per ATC facility.

The rest of the day was filled with several interesting presentations. Mr. Bengt Collin

gave a presentation on safety, human factors and SKYbrary. Mr. David Hillis (Quintiq) presented the software his company developed for manpower planning and scheduling. Obviously such a system doesn't come cheap but it's amazing to see how easy and user friendly planning can get if you have the right (working) tools in hand. Mr. Joe Sultana spoke about flight planning and ATFCM adherence. You might have seen the leaflets about ATFCM adherence that were distributed recently and this subject will gain more and more importance in the near future. I would not be surprised if the

days of unlimited direct and level requests come to an end. Airlines and ANSPs are demanding that flights stick to the flight plan as much as possible (without compromising safety of course) and this includes only flying those direct routes which are actually filed in the plan. The ANSPs believe this will help them to more accurately predict traffic flows and occupancy levels. Airlines believe that they will be able to save fuel as they will not have to carry fuel for parts of the route which are not flown.

The IFATCA EB is also continuing to explore possibilities for more interaction through technological advances...



They also want to avoid aircraft arriving too early at destinations, with a night curfew still in effect or before a parking spot or handling services are available. The upcoming introduction of the Night Network, with the publication of the most commonly used directs as flight planable routes, must be seen in this context. Philippe Domogala rounded off the day with a presentation on ATCOs and the media. Using material from a workshop and some examples from TV he showed how to bring across your message in an interview and how the media can push somebody in a certain direction.

On Sunday we started the day where we left off and Philippe gave a presentation on downlink of TCAS RAs. IFALPA is supporting the feature but IFATCA policy currently opposes it. We do recognize that under certain circumstances it can be implemented. The Czech Republic has already done so unilaterally and the DFS is looking in to it. EASA is planning to provide regulations, but they are not expected until 2011 or 2012 at the earliest. This can lead to standardization issues: Which RAs are displayed? How is the pilot informed? What about a false RA? There are also legal issues as ICAO doc 9863 says the controller is responsible for separation as long as the pilot does not report the RA on the frequency. There is a real possibility the downlink will reach the controller before the pilot has a chance to react and we must have procedures and legal text in place to protect controllers before this can be widely implemented. There was a show of hands to reaffirm

the IFATCA policy as Philippe would make a similar presentation to other industry staff one week after the ERM. After the morning coffee break we went into closed session. No minutes are kept from this part of the meeting, and only delegates are allowed to be present in the meeting room. This was the time to ask questions about the report each MA had submitted, and each MA had the opportunity to elaborate on any existing or anticipated problems. A wide variety of topics were discussed, e.g. training, staff shortage, rosters, area recordings, consolidation of services, etc... Some MAs made use of this opportunity to thank IFATCA for the help in negotiations or handling of incidents or accidents, and others indicated they expect they might need this help in the near future.

Patrik closed the meeting around 15.30 on



Sunday as the organizing committee had arranged for all the delegates to witness the proclamation of the Hippocrates oath at the Asklepieion ruins. Hippocrates is said to have studied medicine at this healing temple before becoming the personal physician to the Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius. During a small ceremony the original, ancient Greek, text from the oath was proclaimed by an actor and everybody got a nice certificate.

After the ceremony I took the opportunity to visit a little bit of Kos town, but soon it was time to get ready for the farewell dinner. That evening we danced the Sirtaki and said goodbye to all our friends from the IFATCA family. I would like to use this opportunity to congratulate the Greek MA with the excellent organization. I also want to express our thanks to Mr. Kloos and the Maastricht Management Team for their support towards the EGATS delegation.

The next IFATCA ERM will be held in Bled, Slovenia from 22 to 24 October 2010, but first there is of course the Annual Meeting in Punta Cana, Dominican Republic from 12-16 April. More on that in the next Output.



Dear colleagues,

The last IFATCA European Regional Meeting (ERM) gave us the opportunity to visit a small island of the Dodecanese: Kos. Pronounced "Ko" in Greek this beautiful island is located 45 min from Athens by plane and lays at the boundary with Turkey.

Asklipion, home of Hippocrates, father of the medicine, can be found just above the actual city of Kos. This island has all the modern facilities one would like to find for a great holiday and still the quietness required of the Ancient past to relax away from the crowd.

From beach to mountains, from sand to forest, from authenticity to five stars hotels, everything is done to welcome the foreign visitors in a friendly atmosphere.

A trip to Kos is also a good opportunity to look at the eastern part of Europe and discover that, even though we belong to the same European Union, things might not be handled the same way in Greece as they are in most of the countries around us...

Single European Sky (SES)... "Greece, squawk ident!"

Greece Civil Aviation Authority, or HCAA, the Hellenic Civil Aviation Authority, is a full public service. Since the introduction of the SES in 2000 and its first package, our Greek colleagues have been struggling from one government to the other to endeavour to implement the necessary changes. The separation of Regulatory and Service Provision is not yet effective and it leads to practical deficiencies for the Air Traffic Controllers.

To name a few: The licensing scheme is not yet in place, there is no refresher training and competency scheme, the English language testing has not yet started, the appointments at management level are executed based on political choices, etc, etc...

In the meantime, the technical systems are getting out dated to a point that capacity has to be reduced during summer due to loss of radar targets in certain areas or the impossibility to talk to aircraft for more than 10 minutes. On top of this, due to international disputes over allocation of high sea areas, our colleagues are confronted on a near daily base with Turkish Air Force penetration of the Greek FIR. Sometimes up to 15 F-16s are heading towards civilian traffic departing from bordering islands or overflying the territory. The Greek Air Force is therefore scrambling aircraft to intercept the alien fighters, leading to serious safety, and blood pressure



issues, for the civilian Air Traffic Controllers. Notwithstanding repetitive complaints from pilots surrounded by uncontrolled fighters and TCAS screaming in all directions, a few years ago there was a mid-air collision between a Greek and a Turkish fighter. This accident was reported by an Egyptair pilot over flying the scene. We can easily imagine what could have happened to the airliner if not for the few hundreds feet distance.

The situation is unbearable as the pressure put on the shoulders of our colleagues is growing continuously. Not only because of the lack of structural organisation and investment into the technical and human side of Air Traffic Services but also because of the continuous interference of the political instability into a safety critical system.

**Sometimes, it is
wise to turn to the
Ancient part to
avoid modern/future
mistakes...**

So, what is done about what is referred to nowadays as "the Greek situation"?

IFATCA and ATCEUC have interfered several times to denounce the conditions and the lack of solutions. Letters have been sent to the European Commission and to EUROCONTROL to intervene in the process; meetings took place in Brussels and Athens between the Unions and the authorities to find solutions. We, in Maastricht UAC, because of our International involvements in IFATCA and ATCEUC were in the front line.

Despite all these efforts, there is no

real concrete change to be seen yet except that the strain is now on the new government to seriously tackle the Air Traffic Control issue.

The message seems to have been received: Greece is brought in front of the European Court of Justice for non-compliance with the EC directives and regulations!

Since a few weeks, meetings are being organised in order to develop new plans and the Greek Air Traffic Controllers Association (GATCA) is only now heard. Its expertise is finally valued. GATCA has made proposals for several years but was not considered. The involvement of staff is a prerequisite to any deep changes in a system. It is not a matter of “democratia” (democracy); it is just a matter of common sense.

These last words will allow me to close a gap and to bring us closer to MUAC.

The development of any new system in ATM, let it be technical or institutional, requires the involvement, the active participation and the consent of the end users: the Air Traffic Controllers! Any other form of development will lead to confrontation, loss of means and motivation and highly probable failure. This is surely applicable to the Functional Airspace Blocks development.

Greece is involved in a FAB - The Blue Med – but has still a long way to go to solve basic internal issues. We are surely at the centre of FABEC

and we can be lucky that we don't have many of their problems. However, instability can always lay in front of us, political games, power and money ambitions, lack of vision...leading us to a Greek word: ANARCHIA!

A strong institutional platform is always needed to ensure the Safety, Stability and Efficiency in our profession. We can start to read the various messages from EUROCONTROL officials announcing the changes they would like to see in our stable system. Some institutional change proposals might look appealing to a few. The wrapping will be nice or indeed the premises of a Trojan horse... so beautiful; it had to be brought inside. We know where the story ended for Troy; we can not let it happen to MUAC! One can only hope that the message is clear enough.

On this, I shall encourage you to discover a wonderful country, and merely the beautiful island of Kos for your next vacations. Whenever you will go there I am sure you will have a thought for our colleagues who are doing a terrific job with the means they have at their disposal (compared to ours). One hope that we will be successful, all together, to ensure the seamless (and peaceful) airspace so many people are talking about, but not always willing to listen to the professionals having to develop and to work it every day. Sometimes, it is wise to turn to the Ancient part to avoid modern/future mistakes.



NATO Tiger Meet 2009



**From 14 to 25 September,
Kleine Brogel Airbase
in the north of Belgium
was host to the
NATO Tiger Meet 2009.**

The whole thing was started in 1961 by the 79th Fighter Squadron USAF as an informal get together with 74th squadron RAF, as both squadrons featured a tiger in the squadron logo. The next year a few French squadrons joined in and within a few years they were joined by other NATO units which feature a tiger or other big cat in their logo. Currently there are 19 full members of the Tiger Association, 10 honorary members and 3 probationary members.



Over the course of the years force reduction in Europe has resulted in the disbanding of 5 of the member squadrons, including the founding 74th squadron RAF. The 79th squadron is no longer based in Europe either and therefore is now only an honorary member. The objectives of the meet were set out by the then SHAPE Air Deputy, General Anderson: Promoting cooperation between air forces, facilitating a better understanding of NATO objectives and procedures, developing unit interoperability and, last but not least, maintaining strong personal ties. 48 years later the 2009 version was the 43rd edition and the first one to be spread out over two weeks. 65 aircraft with 800 ground and aircrew from 19 nations took part in the exercise which was the biggest of its kind organized in Europe this year. A total of almost 1000 sorties were scheduled over the two week period. Every sortie is carefully planned and executed and points are awarded afterwards.



Of course there is also time for socializing, but current rules call for a complete alcohol ban during the exercise and crew rest times are strictly imposed. Long gone are the days when Champagne was flown in as “exercise supplies” etc.... In order to foster a good relationship with the inhabitants from surrounding villages, a family day was organized on 16 September. This presented an opportunity for people from the neighborhood to witness the action from up close.





On 18 September the base opened the doors to 1000 VIPs as well as over 6000 spotters from all corners of the world. The chance to photograph all those aircraft in their special decorations was one no aircraft enthusiast could pass on. Sunday 20 September a lot of the aircraft participated in the Sanicole airshow in Leopoldsborg. This show is normally organized during the first weekend of August, but was moved back this year, in order to secure participation of the Tiger Meet aircraft. At the end of the exercise a number of trophies were awarded, including to the best painted aircraft,

squadron to best represent the Tiger Spirit, etc... The most prestigious trophy is the Silver Tiger Trophy, awarded to the unit which accumulated the most points over the span of the exercise. This year, the Silver Tiger Trophy was won by 1/12 Squadron "Cambresis" from the French Air Force flying Mirage 2000 and based in Cambrai. If you want to learn more about the NATO Tiger Meet, you can check out their website at www.natotigers.org. The next Tiger Meet will be organized by 313 squadron RNLAf in Volkel from 04 till 15 October 2010







The EGATS

Annual General Meeting (AGM) 2010

Will be held on

15.03.2010

at 20:00 in the MUAC Canteen

We are always looking for people interested to join the Executive Board.

For applications to join, fill out the “Nomination Form” and return it before
03.02.10 to the EGATS locker or directly to the Secretary, Mr. Michael Ott (Team H4).

The Nomination form can be found on the website www.egats.org

or requested from any of the board members.





Chicho Foundation

Charity initiative for Children in Orphanages

It's that time again! Another year has passed and we hope you can spare a few moments from this busy time to think about the CHICHO Foundation's work. We have been busy working for the charity, setting up some very worthwhile long-term projects.

In the past year, we managed to collect and utilize a similar amount of money to that of the year before. We sponsored two children from the surroundings of Varna to travel to Karin Dom and to undergo specialized treatment for cerebral palsy once a week.

majority of children with cerebral palsy are born with it.

We are now looking into expanding our program into sponsoring three children to visit the center twice a week.

We purchased 52,000 diapers (see pictures) from a local factory at a price below manufacturing cost and successfully managed to distribute those diapers between 7 institutions, amongst which children hospitals and institutions for abandoned children.

We've managed to send to the homes all of the clothes, toys and other articles we had been collecting from our colleagues throughout the year and all of these are now distributed among the ones in need of them. However for the moment we shall put collection of used clothes and toys on stand by since we haven't been able to find

reasonable shipping company which will not charge us a lot of money.

As you probably know already, we launched our own program called "Granny and Child" (Baba i Vnuche.) This entails sponsoring pensioners from the nearby communities

to take children during weekdays and show them life outside the institutions. This not only teaches them the simple things in life (nature, environment, society etc.) but also how to bond a close relationship with someone. It benefits the local community too, by giving the volunteers training and employment.



Cerebral palsy is a neurological disorder that appears in infancy or early childhood and permanently affects body movement and muscle coordination but doesn't worsen over time. Even though cerebral palsy affects muscle movement it isn't caused by problems in the muscles or nerves. It is caused by abnormalities in parts of the brain that control muscle movements. The





CHICHO Foundation

Charity initiative for Children in Orphanages

After launching the program in Gorski Senovetz village, we developed a project that will expand to the surroundings of the city of Stara Zagora involving 10 ladies and 20 children.

The ladies will be selected and trained by the Samaritans for free but we will give the ladies approximately 150 euros a month to cover their expenses. Currently we are sponsoring two ladies in Gorski Senovetz and are about to extend the program to two more (far worse) institutions in the villages of Sweet Well and Petrovo.

In addition to working on these new programs, we are constantly following our past projects and donations making sure they are used accordingly.

Please see attached the photos of the ladies and kids already enjoying each other's company.

We ensure our present and future donors that every euro they donate goes directly to helping the children in need and none of it is spent on hotels, travel or other costs involved in performing our volunteer work. All those expenses are covered by our own incomes.

If you would like to donate, please consider a monthly standing order, which will help us with our planning for the future and with sustaining these very important projects. If you have any questions or ideas for the charity, please approach us at any time.

Thank you once again for the generous support of all you individuals who kindly contribute and help our humble cause, and to the generous organizations like TUEM, EGATS and the foundation that Walter van der Molen represents.

Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year from your CHICHO board:
Ilia, Erik and Clare.



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My name is
Ilia Bojilov.

I was born in Sofia, Bulgaria in 1977. I grew up in a family of aviation professionals. At the age of 19 I left home to

study abroad. Three years later, I graduated from Oxford Brookes University in 1999. Since 2001 I have been an ATCO and have enjoyed every minute behind the radar. In 2008 I started a charity initiative called 'Ili's Charity', which later on gained a lot of support and grew into CHICHO Foundation. In 2009 I was accepted in the executive board of EGATS. For two months now I have been enjoying the pleasures of parenthood.

In the near future I will be looking forward to contributing to 'Eurocontrollers' well-being via the work of EGATS.

Ilia Bojilov

Ilia.bojilov@egats.org or
Brussels Team 4, ext 1333



My name is
Jeremiah Smith.

I started working for Eurocontrol with Ab Initio 31 in April 2001 in Luxemburg. I came to MUAC in November 2001 and I have been a fully qualified ATCO since November 2003 working in the Deco Sectors, Team 5. I was born in Göttingen, Germany and I now live in Aachen. I have been married for 2 years and my wife works as a physician at the University Hospital in Aachen. I enjoy all kinds of different sports such as Basketball, tennis or running. In April 2007 I attended the annual IFATCA

conference in Istanbul as a delegate lucky winner and therefore was introduced to some of the day to day work of EGATS. After growing more interested in the EGATS matters I joined the EGATS executive board in March 2009. I am currently working with Cornelia Klee on EGATS membership matters and on creating the new membership IDs with the new Logo. I'm looking forward to serving the EGATS membership as a board member and to representing EGATS and Eurocontrol at the 2010 IFATCA conference. If you have any further questions, do not hesitate to contact me via email or telephone.

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N-FDPS: One year on...



Can it be one year already? As I am writing it is 12th December 2009, not a great day in history, but an important day as it marks one year of operations of our New Flight Data Processing System.

One year ago, we were walking around the Ops room, looking very tired, but proudly wearing special T-Shirts. These were printed with the instructions that were stuck to every console, warning not to use certain inputs as they had undesired effects. These issues led to our first “emergency build” one week later. We didn’t know it then, but we were also only 15 days away from our

first system crash. This turned out to be the first of a series of 3 crashes over the next 4 months. Two of these were flight plan driven, one of which was a flight plan stuck in the system from the day before, just waiting for the unwitting Brussels supervisor to open the sector and crash the system; the other a Lufthansa test flight that also tested our system. The middle of the three crashes has been assigned to the CWP team (though they argue against it), with all the CWPs failing when more than 100 dynamic maps were created. The 101st was created by the DECO supervisor. We then managed a rather peaceful period, until just short of eight months later; the latest system crash was caused by an MTC module crashing and bring down the system. Though not conclusive, it is likely that this

was a Hannover conflict input, though to be fair it could have been anyone. So far the bad news, has there been any good news? Oh yes!! The new system has passed one year of operations. It was never backed out to the old flight server, and never replaced by strips, though there were one or two floating around in the Brussels sector! We have handled over 1.3 million flights, with traffic levels almost

matching exactly the year 2006, with practically no delay. Why is that? Is it due to the system? I have to say, “No!” It is definitely due to the people. The most important of these are the users of the system. The controllers, EOS assistants and supervisors, both civil and military. Each and every user has struggled, in their way, to use and understand the new system. Some have been more vocal than others, but each one has a right to a fully functioning and reliable system that is there to assist them in their daily work of safely controlling aircraft.

I greatly admire the resilience of the ops room, with a system that was both complex and prone to bugs. The users have been patient, trying to understand the new system and providing occurrence reports when understanding and system workings don’t meet.

We have received over 2000 occurrence reports on FDPS related issues. This in turn has led to more than 1000 bug fixes and change requests spread over 5 Warranty builds and some 9 emergency / urgency builds.

This leads us on to the other hero’s of FDPS, the engineering staff. We are fortunate in Maastricht to have engineering staff that care greatly for the system and the users of that system. They have been pro-actively investigating the occurrence reports, trying to understand the users needs and requirements. This is not always an easy task and SMART continues to play an important role in translating the ops room needs into engineering requirements.

On top of FDPS, we have successfully changed all the CWP computers to faster, more reliable Linux computers. We have also been able to integrate Mode-S into the system, improving safety and providing convenient access to the aircraft’s heading. The IAS and Mach No. will follow soon and we hope to have full enhanced Mode-S coverage early in 2010.

So, what is next for FDPS?

This is a system build due to the end-of-life of the old system, but more importantly, it is a system designed by controllers, for controllers. This has greatly helped in the acceptance of the system and will continue to be crucial in ensuring the future of the system. Continue to ask the questions...Is the system behaving as I need it to?... Is there a better way for the system to behave?... Could the system do this for me?... Wouldn’t it be better if ...? Don’t keep the answers to these questions to yourself. Continue to report bugs and other issues, but perhaps more importantly, continue to suggest improvements so that we can help to build a better system for all and ensure Maastricht’s future as a safe, high performance centre.

EGATS Membership

Dear EGATS members,

As 2010 is fast approaching, please keep in mind that your EGATS membership payment is due during January. If you have recently closed your account(s) in the Netherlands, kindly make sure you transfer the fees manually, as our 'automatic incasso' will not work internationally.



2010 Reminder

To retain your membership,
please transfer € 55 to the
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Many thanks !

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