

# THE EURO CONTROL GUIDE

**IFATCA** Report of the 49th Annual Conference

**EGATS stronger than ever**

**EUROSS, Background & Method**

**Island Hopping** with Travel Service

Summer 10

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Another year is rushing past and I'm writing these words with the World Cup in South Africa in full swing on the background. It seems only yesterday the football world was converging on Germany, but that's really already 4 years ago. They say time seems to move faster when one gets older, and I'm afraid I have to agree.

2010 so far has been a year with ups and downs. Bob Willis, former operations manager at Dan-Air, friend of many controllers and a true aviation person, passed away earlier in the year. Even closer to home was the loss of two colleagues from the Maastricht ops room. Early in the year Mike Ramus lost his battle with a long illness. Just last month we heard the sad news about the glider accident which took the life of Bert Verstappen. These events serve as a reminder of how quick it can all be over. Our thoughts go out to their families, and we wish them strength in these difficult times.

Another low point was the volcanic ash crisis. Just when the aviation industry was showing signs of recovery after the economic downturn, Mother Nature served notice that she is still in charge. We can pretend we've got everything under control, but when events like this happen, we're all just helpless bystanders. Whether the crisis was handled in the most appropriate way is open for debate. One thing is certain: if it would have been handled any differently and things would have gone wrong, the airlines would have blamed the authorities for not taking the necessary action. Unfortunately, even some people from within the industry seem to forget that safety needs to come first in all things aviation related.

I want to take the opportunity again to thank Cornelia Klee for her work on the board. Cornelia served for several years as membership secretary, but did not put herself forward for re-election at the last AGM as she wants to devote more time to her family. Her role as membership secretary will be taken over by Raf Vigorita. At the AGM we welcomed Alessandro Mercati on the Executive Board. Alessandro is Italian and a controller from

Brussels sectors Team 4. He will take over the task from Cornelia Klee as INREP trustee and will also be responsible, together with the webmaster, for the running of the new EGATS forum. The forum will be open to EGATS members only and you will need to register in order to post or read items on the forum. We hope this forum will be a place for people to discuss all possible matters, both professional and less professional. Maybe some will question the need for another forum, since all of us are already using facebook and other social media. Still we regularly notice that people seem to have difficulties getting in touch with the EB, as well as with other members. We (and others) also believe that some things simply should not be discussed in an open environment like facebook. For those matters, we hope the EGATS forum will be ideal. The EB members (only!) will act as moderators. You can find the forum at: forum.egats.org (no www!)

In this edition of Output, you can read about the IFATCA Annual Meeting in Punta Cana and the position of EGATS within IFATCA. The results of the EUROSS pilot study are presented and there is a very interesting article from Viktor Koren about a trip with Travel Service.

I would like to wish you all a great summer, hopefully undisturbed by any volcanic ash clouds!

Professionally Yours,

Ive Van Weddingen,  
EGATS President

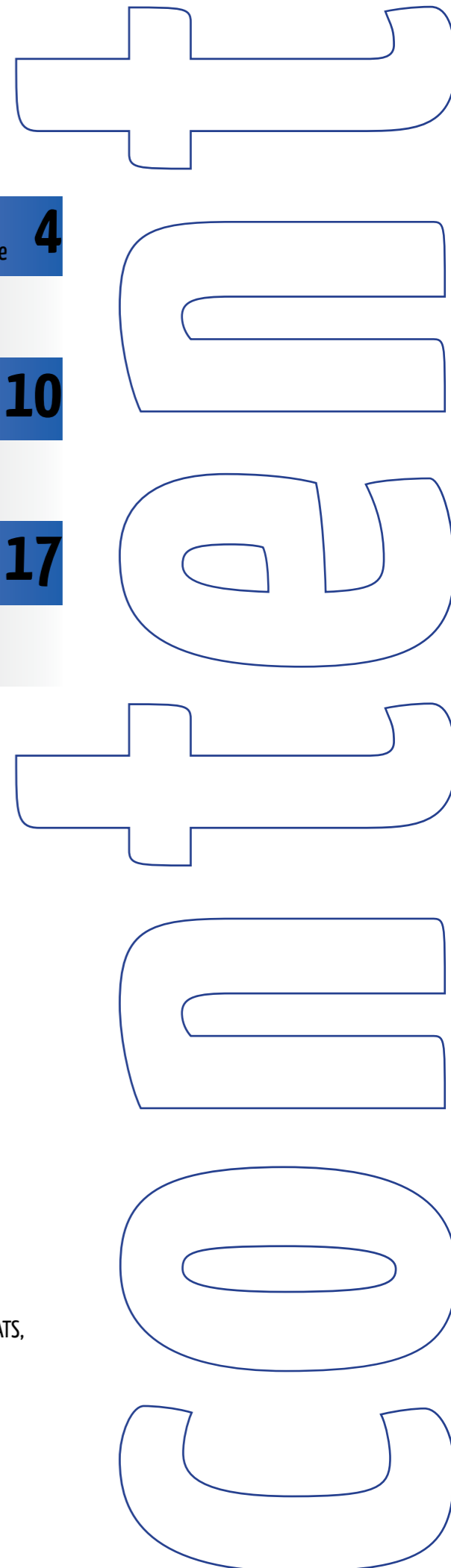
# Summer 2010

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All pictures are taken by the authors.





# Report of the 49th IFATCA Annual Conference in Punta Cana

by Michael Ott - This years IFATCA annual conference was held from April 12 to 16 in Punta Cana, Dominican Republic.



Because it was quite difficult to get the days blocked in the roster and because of the high costs of the conference hotel and the flight, the EGATS board decided not to take a newcomer this year. So we planned to attend the meetings with 4 board members only. We hope to be able to change this and that it will be possible to take a newcomer again next year. Unfortunately I've, who as our president was supposed to attend Committee A had to cancel the trip at the last moment because of some personal matter. So it was only Jerry for Committee B, Frederic for Committee C and myself left. I tried my very best to replace I've and take the right decisions in Committee A. Many people asked me about I've, so I realized very quickly how many connections and contacts I've has made with the other representatives of the 135 membership associations of IFATCA. Of course Patrick Peters as board member of the IFATCA EB, Philip Domogala and Philip Marien as editor of the Controller magazine were present as well during most of the sessions of Committee A. At the opening ceremony 67 membership associations (MAs) were counted, but because many MAs were holding proxies for others we easily reached a quorum. Let's have a look now at the work we did this year in Committee A, which is mostly dealing with organisational and financial matters of IFATCA: As a first decision the directors accepted the applications of Columbia and Papua New Guinea to become members, but on the other hand the membership of Guatemala, Peru, the Philippines and Mauritius were terminated, because they failed to pay their membership fees for two years already. Djibouti, El Salvador and Ecuador were suspended as they failed to pay for one year. Some interesting developments were presented by Marc Baumgartner the President of IFATCA until this conference. IFATCA signed a contract with Eurocontrol for more than 250.000 Euros over the next two years. The money will

be used to pay for expenses of IFATCA delegates participating in the different working packages of SESAR. IFATCA is still looking for interested ATCOs willing to participate in this work, so if you are interested just talk to one of the members of the executive board or Patrik Peters. Afterwards the Executive Vice Presidents (EVP) of the different regions presented their reports about the work they did in the last year. I found it very interesting that China is in the process to form a professional association by the end of this year and will most likely join IFATCA afterwards. It is very important to get some information about this fast growing ATC region and influence their development by adapting IFATCA policies. The EVP for Africa and the Middle East, Henry Nkondokaya, suddenly passed away in September of last year. Henry, who lived in Tanzania did a lot of work for

IFATCA in his function as EVP and managed to improve the working conditions of ATCOs in his region significantly. He was planning not to stand for re-election this year because he wanted to take care of his family and focus on his upcoming retirement. Voluntary financial contributions were collected during the conference, which will be given to Henry's family. We contributed as well to help his family to overcome this difficult situation in a country with hardly any social security system. The finances of IFATCA remain strong and the newly elected EVP Finance Darrell Meachum will do his best to continue the good work done by Dale Wright in







the last 7 years. The annual subscription for the year 2010/11 for us as Category 1 MA is 17,88 USD per declared EGATS member. This means we will have to pay over 5000 USD, which is a substantial part of our budget. Philip Domogala presented the report of the editor of the Controller Magazine. Only 58 of the 135 MAs presently subscribe to the magazine which is already 4 more compared to last year. The number of subscriptions went up as well from 2550 in 2009 to 2700 in 2010. Together with the 900 individual subscriptions there are currently about 3600 copies printed. At the moment EGATS is getting 40 copies, which we partly send to our outside stations and partly make available in the OPS-room. Some EGATS members get a private copy delivered in their locker. If you would like to get your own private copy as well, just contact one of the EB-members. Committee A voted as well on the confirmation of the conference venue for 2011, which will be Amman in Jordan. The delegates were worried about the high costs for the hotel and the registration. The organizing committee

explained, that it is difficult to find the right balance between a representative venue for the 50th conference, which as anniversary conference should be something special,

and the costs. The organizing MA of Jordan was asked to look into reducing the registration fees for the poorer class 3 MAs. For 2012 the directors voted for Kathmandu in Nepal, which still needs to be confirmed next year in Amman. An update on the situation for the Soccer World Cup in South Africa showed that they expect quite some delays due to the insufficient staffing for the expected 30% traffic increase. Especially the bigger units like Capetown and Johannesburg have problems and can only offer 100% capacity for a few hours every day. Afterwards they will have to restrict the traffic to assure ATCOS get their breaks and safety can be maintained. For this and to spread the traffic more over the whole day a new Flow Operation System will go operational very soon, just in time for the start of the World Cup. Very worrying is the situation in many of our neighbouring countries: In Iceland the controllers were negotiating with the state to raise their

salaries to an acceptable level again, because it was lowered substantially during the banking crisis. This was not successful and they planned to have an industrial action. But because the government basically forbade other unions to go on a strike by law they changed their decision and will only go on an overtime strike, now. According to them this will lead to heavy delays very shortly and they hope the government cannot force them to work overtime. The situation in Spain is even worse: The royal decree has become a law recently and for the moment there is no hope for any fast improvement for Spanish controllers. Their working hours have been changed from 1200 hours per year to 1750 compared to 1400 we do in MUAC. Their roster is published only 10 days in advance when they were used to 90 days, like us. On top of that according to our Spanish colleagues AENA has the freedom to order any controller in for any extra duty at any time. As well in other countries around us controllers are facing deterioration of working conditions like in Greece or Ireland. In Russia controllers decided to go on a hunger strike, which traditionally in Russia means you can eat one meal per day. They will soon be too weak to work the traffic. We really hope this trend does not continue and cross our fingers for our spanish

colleagues to succeed and regain their rights. Alexis Breathwaith from Trinidad and Tobago was elected as President of IFATCA and our colleague Patrick Peters as Deputy President of the organization. Philip Marien was elected as Editor of the Controller magazine. Congratulations again to both! Marc Baumgartner the President of IFATCA until this conference was awarded the IFATCA scroll of honour, which is the highest award of the organization for his outstanding work in the last years. Marc was a member of the EB for 12 years of which the first four he was the EVP Europe and the next eight he was the President of the organization. So much about the official report of this conference, but as everybody knows by now, our trip was made a bit more interesting by the volcanic ash erupting from the volcano in Iceland. Hardly any delegate from Europe was able to fly back on their planned date, and only due to Volker Dick's relations to Air Berlin we were able to return relatively early, only two days later than we originally planned. I would like to thank Air Berlin for their assistance. On top of that there was an earthquake in Punta Cana strength 5.1 on the Richter scale. Even when we could hardly feel it, we can honestly say: „We survived IFATCA 2010!“ As well I would like to thank Eurocontrol for the support by granting us missions to be able to attend the conference.





EGATS is pleased  
to announce its

# 2010 Photo competition



This year's subject will be:

## THREE (3)

Attractive prizes to be awarded  
for 1st, 2nd and 3rd places.  
Closing Date: October 31, 2010

Open to all EGATS members, their direct family members  
and all EUROCONTROL staff members.  
Further information and competition rules can be obtained by  
emailing Paul Hooper at pauljay@home.nl



## EGATS stronger than ever in IFATCA

By Michael Ott - During the 49th Annual Conference in Punta Cana our colleague Patrick Peters was elected as Deputy President of IFATCA. We are very proud to have one of our members in such an important position, being able to influence the development of worldwide ATC. It is a reward for his work as Executive Vice President Europe he has done in the last four years. The Executive board will continue to support Patrick as good as possible and we hope his work will not only be successful, but as well enjoyable for him! As well Philip Marien was elected as Editor of the Controller Magazine and Philip Domogala will continue to support him as deputy editor. Philip Domogala has done a great job in the last years and the quality of the magazine was improved remarkably. As well it is finally making a little profit again. We are sure Philip Marien will do his best to maintain or improve the quality even further. If you are interested to receive your own private copy of this magazine please don't hesitate to contact the board. We have a standing order of 40 copies and are happy to deliver it to you. Our board member Frederic Deleau who is already the FAB coordinator since last year was elected to become a member of the Professional and Legal Committee of IFATCA. We will support Frederic as much as we can and I am

sure we all can benefit from his work and experience in Professional and Legal aspects. This shows how active EGATS is in IFATCA and even if this work is not always immediately visible to you in your every day work many of our rules and procedures are in line and based on IFATCA recommendations. It is very important to give our input and steer the future of ATC - our future! All this work would not be possible without the continuous support of our employer Eurocontrol.

We all are very grateful and do our best to be a great representative for MUAC. If anybody is interested to do some work for IFATCA, there are still different positions vacant and they are looking for input. You don't need to be an EGATS board member and you don't need to have

any special experience. EGATS and IFATCA will take over all your expenses, so all you need is some interest, time and dedication. For more information on this you can talk to the Executive board or to Patrick Peters, who has the best knowledge on all these matters.





This year the IFATCA World Conference brought us to Punta Cana in the Dominican Republic. This popular holiday destination for European, but also North American, travellers has wonderful beaches, perfect weather and very nice hotels, offering all the facilities, relaxing moments and the services you might expect. However, to hold a conference in such venue is not as easy as one might believe...

The Committee "C" took place between the 12th and the 14th of April 2010, with a joint "B" and "C" session on Tuesday the 13th.

Under the chairmanship of Bert Ruitenbergh, the debates were conducted, as usual could we say, in a orderly and friendly atmosphere in order to go through a (reasonably) light program. After more than 30 years in ATC, Bert will retire in the coming months from his duties as Supervisor at EHAM Tower and as Human Factor specialist for IFATCA. The Committee "C" thanked him for all he did during his involvements for the Federation.

This year, EGATS was elected to participate in the IFATCA Professional and Legal Committee (PLC). This committee meets several times per year in order to prepare the work program of the next IFATCA World Conference and to make proposals for new policies and/or to amend previous ones. Needless to say that it is yet, again, an honour to be able to actively participate in the developments of some aspects of our profession in various parts of the world and also a recognition of our positive contribution towards the ATC community. MUAC experience is unique and shall be shared (and defended) at all levels.

Please find below the major items dealt with during the Committee "C". Note that some pure technical and administrative items have not been included and that the joint Committee "B" and "C" items neither. For further details, please do not hesitate to contact me and/or to check the IFATCA website and/or the minutes of the various events.

## 2- The items on this year's agenda:

- Report of the Executive Vice-President Professional, Scott

### Shallies.

EVPP highlighted the continuous focus on Just Culture, the legal issues which are still pending in several countries, particularly in Japan and Romania (court cases involving ATCOs). He also mentioned that IFATCA will be presenting several papers at the ICAO Assembly 37 in September/October 2010. Report accepted

- Report of the Professional and Legal Committee Chairman, Marjolein Hooijboer.

Report on the meetings of PLC and the development of the work program. Report accepted.

- Report of the Technical and Professional Secretary - item covered during the "B" and "C" meeting.

- Report of the IFATCA Human Factor Specialist, Bert Ruitenbergh.

Two items were added: A visit to the Minister of Transport in Luxembourg regarding disciplinary measures taken against two tower controllers following a runway collision in Luxembourg in January 2010. ( While landing in poor visibility (fog), a Cargolux B747 landing gear touched a car which was still on the runway. The car was destroyed - nobody injured). Secondly, the drafting of a press release concerning a court case of controllers in Cagliari, Italy, following an accident in 2003, where the controllers were sentenced to two years of imprisonment.

Bert reported that he was retiring as operational controller and felt that being an active controller was important in his credibility as Human Factor specialist. He suggested that the HFS role should, in the future, be replaced by a safety panel. Report accepted.

- Report of the EATMP - HRT representative, Geert Maesen.

The usual March meeting was cancelled due to organisational issues and a future meeting is scheduled for October 2010. Report accepted.

- Report of the EATMP - TFG representative, Paul Neering.

There is uncertainty regarding the future of the Training Focus group due to organisational issues as mentioned by the EATMP- HRT representative. Report accepted.

- Report of the Editor of the Information Handbook (IHB), Geert Maesen.

The 2009 IHB and the E-questionnaire can be found on the IFATCA website. An update by region is provided and Europe is by far the most up-to-date. Report accepted.

- Human Factors case, Marjolein Hooijboer (on behalf of Barbara Baltes)

The paper reviews and explains EUROCONTROL Human Factors Case. It compares the HF case to current IFATCA Policy and suggests adding some in the manual. The paper stresses the importance of Human Factors in the aviation world and points out the lack of time and money invested when designing and implementing new procedures and systems.

EGATS commented that even though SESAR is mentioned in the reference material, the project has no reference in the executive summary or the content. HF experts were involved at the very beginning of SESAR definition phase e.g.

A first draft recommendation was proposed and accepted: "Human Factors are described as the human aspects of the working environment"

A second recommendation (final following several discussions related to "as early as possible"- see below): "The Human Factor case is a tool to provide a process to address HF issues for a project. Its functions is to identify and mitigate HF issues from the beginning of any new project."

EGATS expressed its surprise that a phrase such as "human centred" was not included in the draft recommendation. EVPP was of the opinion that the recommendation covered the EGATS comments even if not specifically discussed.

A third recommendation: " Human Factors issues shall be accounted for in each phrase of the definition, development, and deployment of new and existing ATM systems and into operational training. Human Factors should be integrated into Safety Management Systems (SMS). Controllers should be involved as early as possible".

### Several reactions.

EGATS suggested that the words "as early as possible" were too vague and would leave a lot of interpretations. These should be replaced by "at the earliest stage of project development" to insist on the importance of end-users practical involvement to all stage of development.

Several discussions and amendments were then discussed to finally read: " Human Factors issues shall be accounted for in each phrase of the definition, development, and deployment of new and existing ATM systems and into operational training. Human Factors should be integrated into Safety Management Systems (SMS). Controllers and Human Factors experts shall be involved from the beginning of any new project".

- Detecting Personal Impaired Performance, Udi Zaga

Very interesting item and an attempt to define and highlight impaired performance and safety aspects. Detecting personal "system downgrade", body alerting symptoms, is key to avoid certain incidents/accidents. The example of the "pressure chamber exercise" for pilots is given to explain the need to train to create awareness of problems and "degraded human mode" appearance. The paper is accepted and further work needs to be done. This item will be put on next year program.

- Ageing Controller, Petra Reinecke.

An interesting reflexion paper looking into the influence of ageing on skills and performance of an ATCO, and how to decrease the negative effects on mental and job performance.

Israel suggested to involve the manufacturers of equipments, to consider these aspects when developing ATC equipment.

EGATS wondered whether some factors described in the paper could not be seen as incompetence due to the effects of age. The answer given is clear. The competency schemes should capture the incompetence situation and make a clear differentiation between "ageing effects" and incompetence.

Further, EGATS suggested that this paper is another example to be used to defend the introduction of Early Retirement Scheme for ATCOs. Even though it was not the purpose of this paper, and considering that the negative effects of age are somehow counterbalanced by some positive aspects (experience e.g.), it is recognised indeed that it is some more evidence to the arguments regarding Early Retirement.

Draft recommendation 1: "ANSP should offer career development plans as medium-to-long term alternatives to the operational job"

EGATS expressed concern about this recommendation as it might actually prevent Early Retirement schemes to be enforced based on the very same argument that there are alternatives to operational jobs.

EGATS abstained and the recommendation was accepted.

Draft recommendation 2: "Training courses for ATCOs regarding the issue of ageing should be made available"

Recommendation accepted.

Draft recommendation 3: "ATCOs with the age of 50 years or older shall be entitled to abstain from nightshifts on their request"

EGATS attracted attention to the practical problems this might bring. If the pool of available staff is diminished, the burden is higher on another category of staff (younger ones), leading to eventual earlier problems for



this group. The answer given to this aspect is that a mix of personnel ages would mitigate such problem and Unit Management Work Planning should take into account the requirement when setting staffing levels.

There is scientific evidence of the negative effects of night shift work, particularly among males.

The recommendation was accepted.

Draft recommendation 4: "Ageing ATCOs should be entitled to additional short breaks to assist in their performance with short-term memory"

EGATS proposed an amendment to the recommendation and to replace: "additional short breaks to assist in their performance with short-term memory" with "specific break plans related to deteriorating short-term memory performance". It would not just "give more breaks" but tailor made them to the "needs" brought by individual situation without, again, putting extra burden on other groups.

After some discussions, the new draft recommendation 4: "Ageing ATCOs should be entitled to specific break plans, in particular additional short breaks, to assist in their performance with short-term memory"

The recommendation was approved with 2 abstentions.

Draft recommendation 5: " Ageing ATCOs should be entitled to reduce the number of their ratings and/or endorsements to a reasonable minimum. Such a reduction shall have no detrimental impact on the individual ATCO"

Once again, EGATS intervened to point out that "detrimental effects" should include ALL aspects, not just financial ones (career promotion, leaved entitlement, e.g.)

The recommendation was accepted with one abstention.

#### - Guidelines on chemical dependency programs (CDP), Felice de Lucia

This paper gives guidelines to Member Associations (MAs) about the implementation of chemical dependency education and rehabilitation programs in those countries where it is not yet available.

Poland pointed out that it is not only drugs and alcohol, but also prescribed medicine.

A previous paper has called for a list of approved medicines for aviation personnel, and ATM in particular.

EASA is planning to introduce compulsory testing.

This paper was accepted and there will be a link on the IFATCA website to provide more information on this topic.

#### - Review Policy on the Information Handbook (IHB), Geert Maesen.

Various amendment to the current set-up and wording .

Recommendations accepted.

#### - Review Policy on Privatization, Geert Maesen.

Some policy statements needed to be deleted in the IFATCA database as this subject is monitored for many years.

Recommendations accepted with 2 abstentions.

#### - Review policy relating to Industrial Relations, Peter Van Rooyen.

This paper is an attempt to give some examples of current Industrial Relations situations experienced by MAs around the Globe and to see if IFATCA Policy is still valid compared to current situations experienced by MAs.

EGATS expressed some concerns on one part of the Conclusions regarding Minimum Service Agreements. A Minimum Service Agreement should be clear and very limited to certain categories of flights (emergency-State e.g.) in order not to reduce the right to and the impact of an Industrial Action but also to preserve Safety aspects and to keep these actions as short as possible. This conclusion could also lead to the introduction of Minimum Service Agreements in States where there are none at the moment. The paper was accepted.

#### - Evaluating recent trends around the world and presenting best practices on CISM, Kendall Scott Mann

This paper looks into several Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) programs around the world and investigate the availability of CISM among Member Associations. A survey was conducted.

The paper was accepted.

#### - Update on the English Language Proficiency Requirements implementation, Eric Risdon.

This paper provides an update on the implementation of English Language proficiency requirement and highlights the process in various countries. EVPP stated that the number of States which are not yet compliant and were unlikely to meet the deadline was a worry. IFATCA plans to communicate with ICAO to determine what their intentions are. EVPP asked the MAs that had controllers disciplined for failing an English test to contact IFATCA.

EGTAS asked who checks the quality of the testing. EVPP replied that it was a State responsibility but that ICAO was working on certifying assessors. IFALPA (Pilots association) indicated that compliance for pilots is worse than for controllers. A liaison between IFATCA and IFALPA on this issue could be initiated.

Several discussions and examples of testing and experience were debated. Mexico, for i.e., had 8 controllers dismissed for failing the English test while pilots not meeting the requirements, cannot fly international routes.

EGATS described a situation in Europe where ATCOs were not tested but evaluated in order to develop a continuous individual training scheme planned on several years.

#### Work Program for the Professional and Legal Committee for 2010-2011:

1. Safety Management Systems (SMS)
2. Team Resource Management
3. English Language Proficiency
4. Detecting Impaired Personal Performance
5. FAA Investigation into "Professionalism"
6. Diabetes
7. Professional aspects on the use of Datalink
8. Review of ICAO "State Safety Oversight" instead of ICAO Global Aviation Safety Oversight.

EGATS proposed to add the Cross Border Legal issues, but as this was already dealt with earlier and due to the huge number of local issues, this topic was not retained.

The work program was accepted.

#### - Election of standing committee PLC:

EGATS was elected this year together with Belgium, Croatia, Germany, Hong Kong, Italy, South Africa, Switzerland, The Netherlands and the United Kingdom. EGATS will be responsible to develop the paper and presentation on: "Professional aspects on the use of Datalink"

#### - ATCO Staffing Shortage, EVPP Scott Shallies.

EVPP presented this paper regarding ATCO staff shortage. He reported that CANSO had recently conducted a survey on this issue which indicated a global shortage of 3500 controllers in 2009 (compared with IFATCA figures of 5000)

EGATS reported that Maastricht UAC uses historical data to predict the number of staff required to operate the opening of sectors. As a result of the crisis, these figures had to be revised several times, however still leading often to too many staff rostered on specific days. There is a lack

of predictability at the moment. EGATS therefore asked whether different scenarios were considered when assessing staffing concerns for the future. The various situations combined with the effects of the crisis have an impact on the credibility of figures presented. EVPP responded that the previous surveys had indeed not captured enough details to obtain the full staffing picture. He agreed that there was a need to expend future surveys to address this issue.

The paper was accepted.

## Conclusion:

Once again, the debates motivated by some items and topics of this year's working programs were extremely interesting. Some recommendations deemed too general, not strong enough and/or leading to practical constraints already experienced by MUAC were brought forward to the attention of our colleagues.

On a personal tone, I shall express my utmost gratitude to EGATS and its members, to allow me to not only to attend but merely to take an active part in such event. My future participation in PLC will allow once again the presence and participation of EGATS in a group where many aspects of our profession will be discussed, leading to some worldwide recommendations. It is an honour and my highest motivation to represent my colleagues, to promote their experience and interests, in any possible ways.

This concludes my report of "Committee C" for the 49th IFATCA Annual Conference held in Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, between the 12th and the 16th of April 2010.



By Jerry Smith - This year was the first time that I attended the annual IFATCA Conference as an EGATS Executive Board member and a Deputy Director in one of the Committees, my trip to the IFATCA Conference 2007 in Istanbul having been

as a delegate only.

Since our president Ivo van Weddingen was unable to attend the conference and Raf Vigorita had stepped down as the IFATCA Liaison, it was my turn to represent EGATS and Eurocontrol in Committee B (Technical Issues) of the Conference.

As is the case every year, the majority of the subjects discussed in this committee, such as go-round and missed approach procedures, and installation of stop bars to prevent runway incursions, mainly concern tower and approach controllers. However, there were still many subjects of interest to us as en route controllers in the heart of Europe.

One of those subjects is of course CPDLC. There were presentations on datalink communications by working groups specifically developing and discussing the technical advances and capabilities of CPDLC. These working groups have met several times since last year's conference and introduced features that will be implemented in the coming years, such as controller uplinks of 4D trajectories (4D TRAD) or text and graphical messages (D-TAXI). Also, activation of military areas could be uplinked while pilots were downlinking the more reliable weather radar information from the airplanes to the ground.

They are also working on standardising CPDLC globally, in hopes of fulfilling this task by 2020. Furthermore, one additional issue was raised with reference to CPDLC: Some countries (Hungary, Czech Republic, Japan) stipulated that TCAS Resolution advisory information be downlinked to the ANSP and also displayed on the Controller CWP. IFATCA has voiced its concern as this not only increases workload, but also puts additional stress on the controller since more than 96% of all TCAS RAs are false alerts. Therefore, in the countries concerned the information is presently no longer being displayed, but there are still some countries, such as Germany, that intend to implement this CPDLC feature into their system.

ICAO suggested merely collecting the information but not displaying it to the controller as MUAC is already doing.

IFATCA and ICAO acknowledged and recommended that radio communication still be available at all times due to the possibility of emergencies and time-critical clearances - even if the reliability and technical capabilities of CPDLC advance.

Another interesting technical presentation by the NATCA representative Bill Holtzman highlighted the increasing implementation of Mode S used for aircraft identification in North America. NAVCANADA implemented Mode S as the sole means of identification in the so-called „ADSP Hudson Bay Project,“ meaning that for aircraft entering the Hudson Bay, AOR with incorrect Mode S ids ATC Service will be denied. As part of the NexGen technology implementations in the United States vehicle transponders will be installed in ground vehicles.

There was also an interesting presentation by the ICAO Chief of ATM about various subjects. He explained some of the projects of ICAO's "ATM Operations 2020 and Beyond" program aiming at standardizing operational improvements. One of these improvements is the standard „World Wide Flight Plan“ to be implemented in 2012.

By 2020 ICAO expects many areas of the world to be short of staff in all parts of ATM (controllers, pilots, engineers etc.) because of the growing amount of air traffic, especially once the current crisis has passed.

Due to growing tourism and upcoming international sporting events, some regions (Africa, Middle East, and South America) as well as individual countries such as South Africa (World Cup 2010) and Brazil (World Cup 2014 and Olympic games 2016) are already vastly understaffed and are advertising through various channels in order to cope with the coming demands.

In several developing countries such as Afghanistan it has become increasingly difficult to keep controllers in their position, because after being taught to speak English during their ATC training, they realize that they would be able to make 5 times more money as an English-speaking taxi driver or tour guide. So they quit! ATC staff would have to earn a higher salary than the current one drawn by the Director General of the Afghan ATM in order to keep them in their positions.

Although these problems remain a concern in many countries, there have also been several positive developments, such as countries moving from procedural control to radar systems, changing to new and improved systems or implementing advanced technological features into their existing systems.

Generally speaking, many of the discussions, recommendations and working papers dealt with international problems that also concern MUAC and Eurocontrol, and therefore EGATS' input and voting rights were necessary and very much appreciated. Various ambiguous ICAO phraseologies and other safety hazards that have led to incidents were discussed and changes were recommended; stress and fatigue surveys were also presented.

It was very interesting to come into contact with controllers from all over the world and to hear what kind of problems they face. We had the chance to get in touch with and listen to representatives of the pilots association IFALPA as well as corporations for designing technology for ATM systems.

The overall tone of this year's conference was clearly that controllers worldwide, and specifically IFATCA as the International federation, have to be prepared for future challenges such as the ever-growing traffic and the related environmental problems, standardization and harmonization of procedures, phraseologies and systems as well as general movement toward low-cost ATS providers and increased automation.

Fittingly, on the last day of the conference the volcano in Iceland erupted, paralyzing much of Europe's air traffic for the next week. Naturally this was more or less the only topic of discussion from that moment on as more than 300 controllers were stuck on the island trying to find a way home.

I want to thank Eurocontrol and EGATS for giving me the opportunity to attend the IFATCA conference, and I'm looking forward to next year's conference in Jordan.

Jerry Smith  
EGATS Executive Board and IFATCA Liaison  
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# IFATCA 2010 Committee B Report



# EUROSS

## (EUrocontrol Routine Observation Safety Survey)

### Background & Method - by Christiane Fricke-Ernst

EUROSS (EUrocontrol Routine Observation Safety Survey) has been designed as a means for measuring that part of safety culture which is directly observable: the safe behaviour. Usually, safety is measured by its absence, for example by incident analysis, by voluntary reporting systems or even more proactively by safety culture questionnaires. In contrast to these existing common methods, the idea of EUROSS was to measure the positive aspects that contribute to remain a safe system and keep you safe at the sharp end.

Therefore we were looking for observation criteria which were assumed to have a positive safety enhancing effect on your work. This was discussed mainly by controllers and supported by safety management. The observation criteria were derived from existing observation tools like NOSS, which is promoted by ICAO, D2D safety measure from NATS, BOOM, which observes non technical skills during training and from the MATCOM. At the end, these criteria were discussed with a few controllers so as to define the best and - as a counterpart - the worst practice. The 20 observation criteria, which are all listed in the results-part, were grouped in the following 4 categories:

1. Team Interaction
2. Environment
3. Information acquisition
4. Procedures

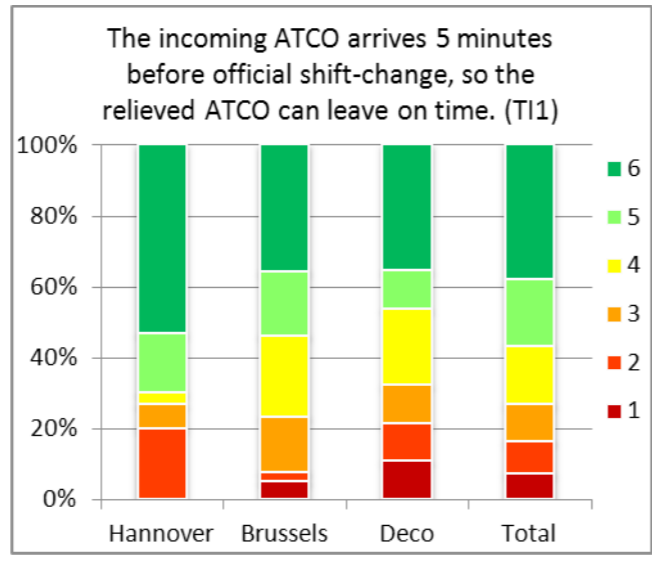
Some questions or criteria may seem ridiculous on the first view. However, it is exactly the little things nobody thinks of, that cumulate to an incident in the end. Therefore especially these topics need to be investigated and were observed in EUROSS.

Two observers were observing at the same time to ensure an objective measurement of the way controllers in Maastricht tend to work during regular operation. Observations by two independent observers allow reducing the risk of a biased interpretation of the observed performance, which is not avoidable due to individual experience, opinion and perception. Sometimes such a biased perception is not possible to be controlled, however, as soon as it is detected, the results can be interpreted with more care. We were not interested in a single performance, but were aiming at the way the system as a whole (both for the whole ops-room as well as for the single sector groups) was functioning. Unfortunately it was not possible

to develop a thorough training before the observations started, therefore some observation criteria were not observed sufficiently objective. Such a lack of objectivity will be pointed out for the single results.

### Results

The observation criteria were developed by controllers and safety management with support of the University of Duisburg. At the end the 22 most important criteria were grouped in four categories by the controllers. The results are presented accordingly. Each criterion was rated on a scale from 1 (bad) to 6 (best practice). A 7<sup>th</sup> box "not observable" could be ticked in case a criterion could not be observed, e.g. when no handover took place.

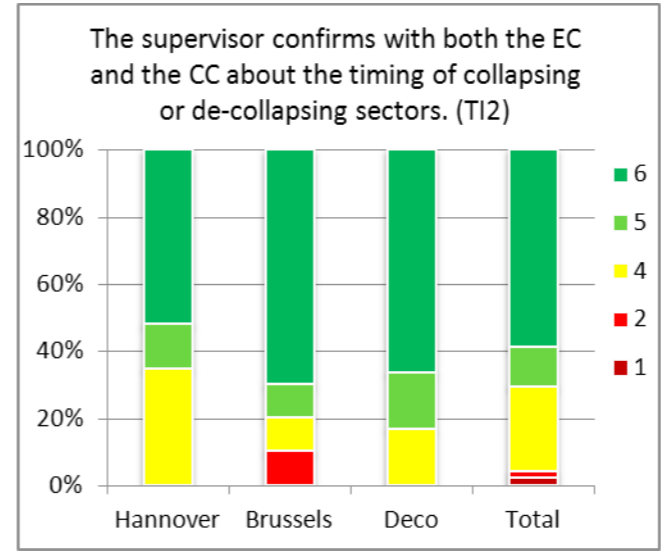


### Team Interaction

**TI-1: The incoming ATCO arrives 6 minutes before official shift-change so the relieved ATCO can leave on time.**

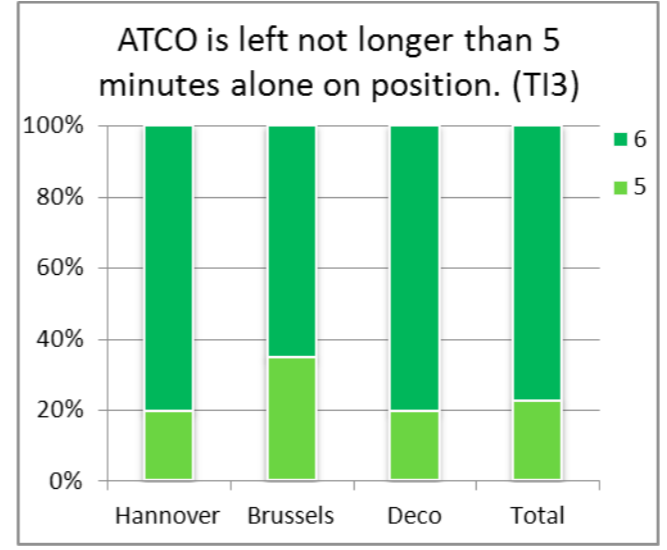
In general, in more than half of the observations, the incoming ATCO arrived at least 5 minutes early, 25 % arrived less than 2 minutes before their start of shift. This means that on average (Mean = 4,4, SD = 1,6) most ATCOs arrived a little late.

The two observers agreed with their rating to a very large extent. No significant differences could be found between the 3 sector groups.



**TI-2: The supervisor confirms with both the EC and the CC about the timing of collapsing or de-collapsing sectors.**

Most of the time (60 percent) it was observed that the supervisor consulted the timing of collapsing or decollapsing the sector with both controllers. The Mean of 5,15 (SD = 1,18) is a good result. However, very seldom it was observed that no consultation was done at all. It has to be considered though that this criterion has been observed hardly objectively.

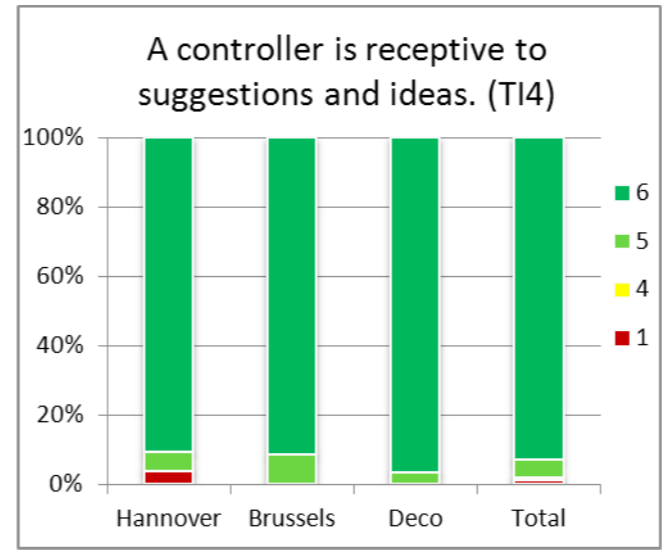


**TI-3: The ATCO is not left longer than 5 minutes alone on position.**

The observees left their colleague alone on position seldom. Only in 20 percent of the observations they left for a short time, which was defined by less than four minutes. The mean of 5,77 (SD = 0,42) shows a very high compliance with this criterion.

Even though the chart shows a higher percentage for being alone on position in the Brussels sector, these results do not differ in a significant way from the results of the other sectors.

This criterion has been observed sufficiently objective, therefore the results can be interpreted reliably.

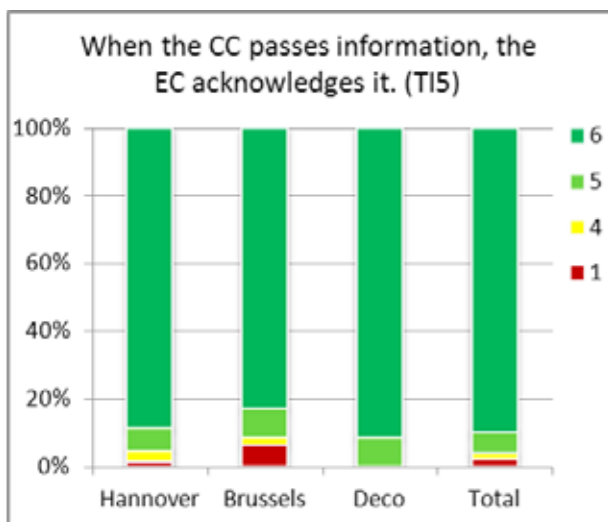


**TI-4: The controller is receptive to suggestions and ideas.**

Almost all the time (in more than 90 percent of the cases, with a Mean of 5,87, SD = 0,72) the controllers were receptive to suggestions and ideas of their colleagues.

Only in the Hannover sectors a very small percentage was observed to not being receptive at all. This difference does not differ significantly from the other sectors, meaning that the difference might have been a coincidence. The observers have observed this criterion highly objective.



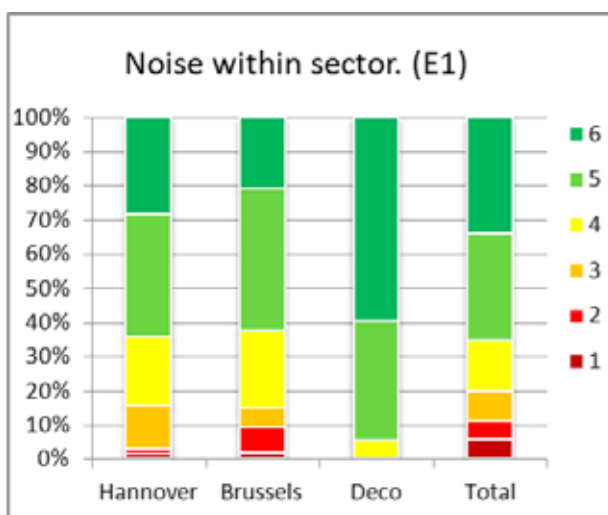


**TI-5: When the CC passes information, the EC acknowledges it.**

In 90 percent of the observations this criterion has been observed with the best rating (M = 5,79, SD = 0,83).

Only a few times no acknowledgement could be observed in the Brussels and the Hannover sectors. However, the difference did not occur on a significant level.

Since this criterion could not be observed in an objective way, the results have to be interpreted carefully.



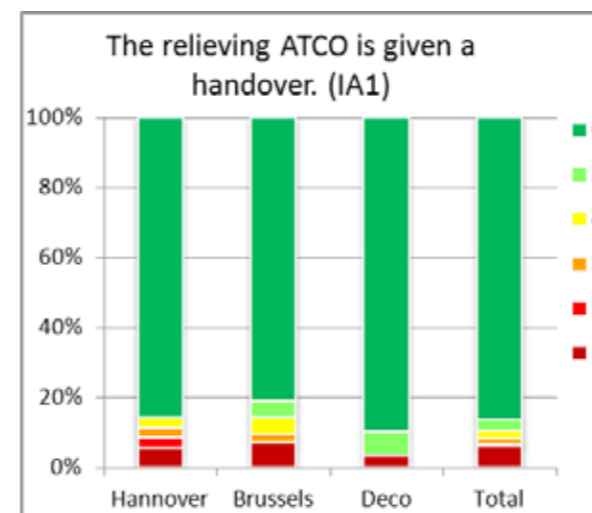
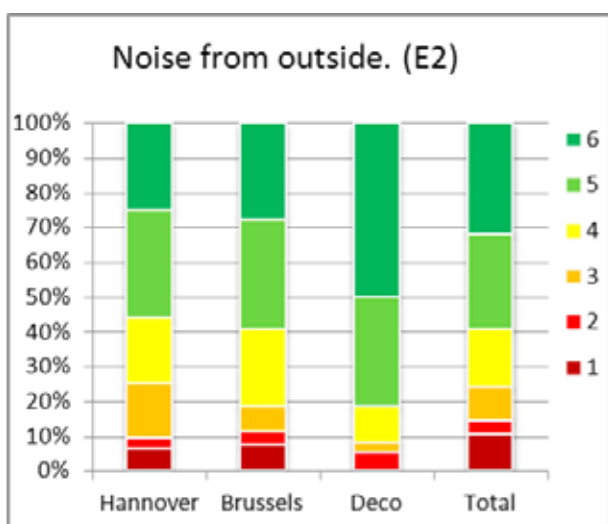
**Environment**

**E-1 Noise within the sector/ E-2: Noise from outside**

In general the means for noise from within the sector (M = 4,62; SD = 1,45) and from outside (M = 4,42; SD = 1,6) are very good, meaning that there is not too much noise in the ops-room.

Significant differences could be found between Deco and the other two sectors for noise within the sector and a significant difference was observed between Deco and Hannover regarding noise from outside. However, this criterion has been misinterpreted by some observers according to the rating. Therefore the results cannot be analysed reliably. It can be assumed that the noise level is indeed much better than the results suggest.

In addition it was difficult for the observers to rate these two criteria objectively, because of the difficulty to estimate if noise comes from within the sector or from outside. As a consequence these two criteria were not observed unambiguously.



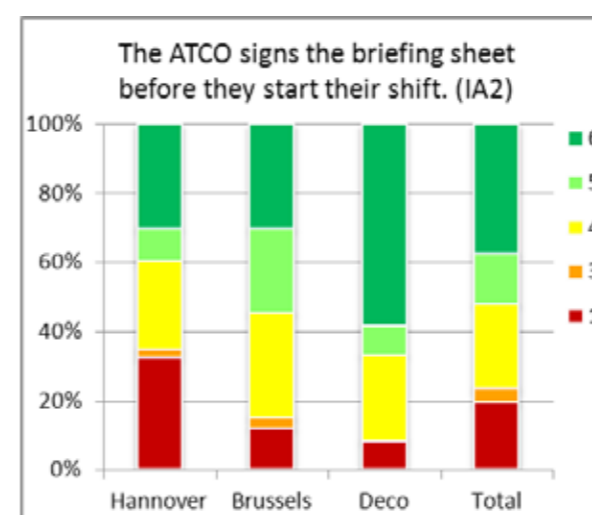
**Information Acquisition**

**IA-1: The relieving ATCO is given a handover.**

In general in more than 85 percent of the time a handover could be observed. The mean of 5,53 (SD = 1,32) is very high. However, in some situations no handover took place at all.

The three sector groups do not differ.

This criterion has been observed objectively to a very large extent.

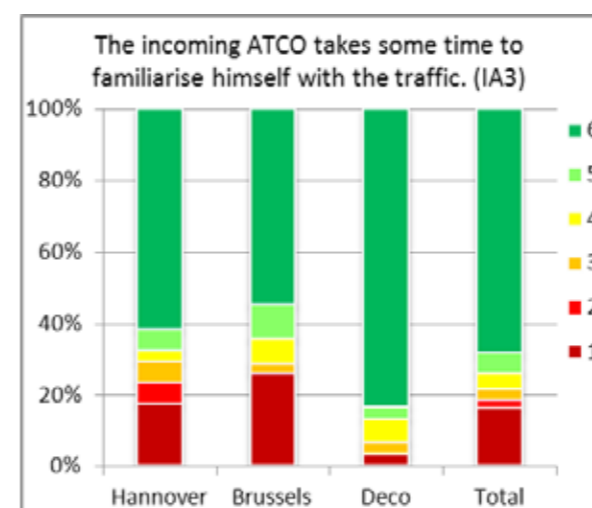


**IA-2: The ATCO signs the briefing sheet before they start their shift.**

Over all sectors the briefing sheet has been signed before the start of the shift not even in 40 percent of the cases. In 20 percent it has not been signed at all until the observation had been finished. The mean of 4,14 (SD = 1,87) suggests that on average most of the controllers sign the briefing sheet some time during their shift.

The mean of Hannover of 3,58 differs significantly from the mean of Deco (M = 4,88) Brussels' mean of 4,27 does not differ significantly from the other sectors.

This criterion has been observed to almost a perfect extent objectively.



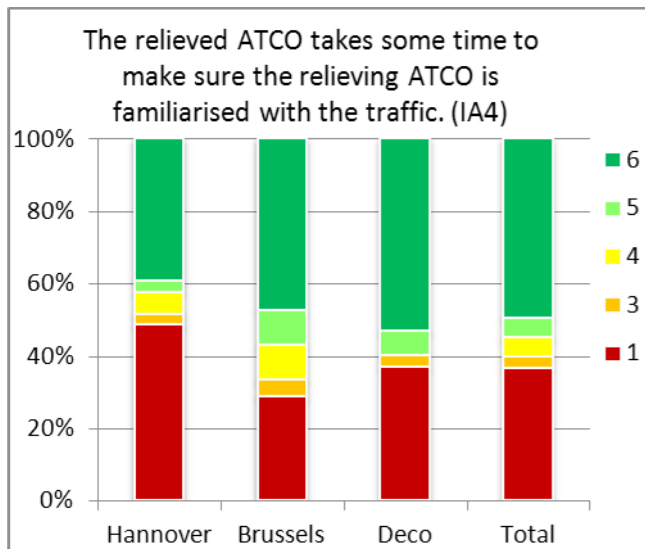
**A-3: The incoming ATCO takes some time to familiarise himself with the traffic.**

In almost 70 percent of the observations it was observed that the incoming controller took sufficient time to familiarise with the traffic. In 20 percent of the observations no familiarisation was observed. In general the mean of 4,84 (SD = 1,92) was reached.

Deco reached the highest rating with a Mean of 5,57 and differs significantly from Brussels (M=4,34). No significant difference could be found for Hannover (4,57).

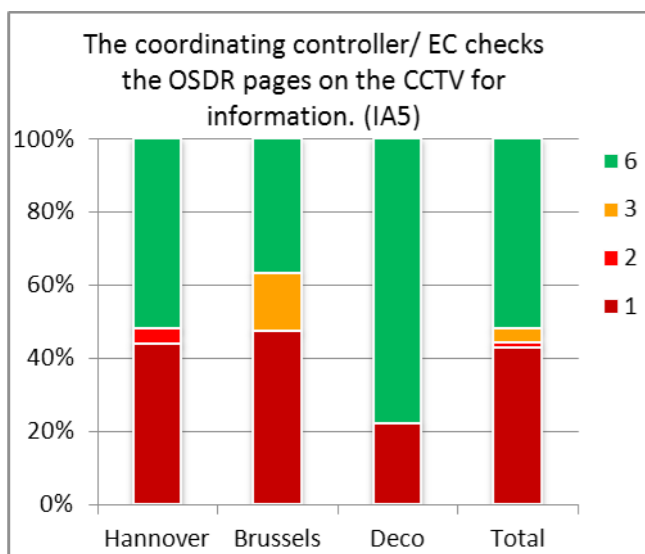
This criterion has been observed not objective enough to be able to interpret the results with certainty.





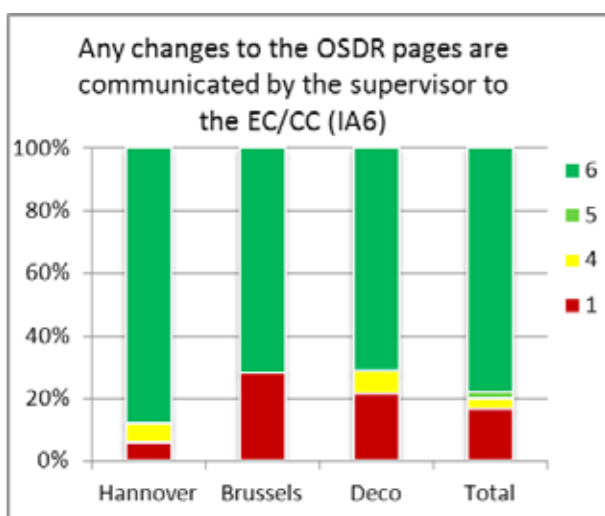
**IA-4: The relieved ATCO takes some time to make sure the relieving ATCO is familiarized with the traffic.**

Only in half of the handover which have been observed it was observed that the relieved controller took some time to assure that the relieving controller was familiar with the traffic. Almost 40 percent did not take care at all. The mean of 3,9 (SD = 2,32) is rather low. The results are similar in all three sector groups. This criterion was observed to a sufficient level objectively, therefore the results can interpreted seriously.



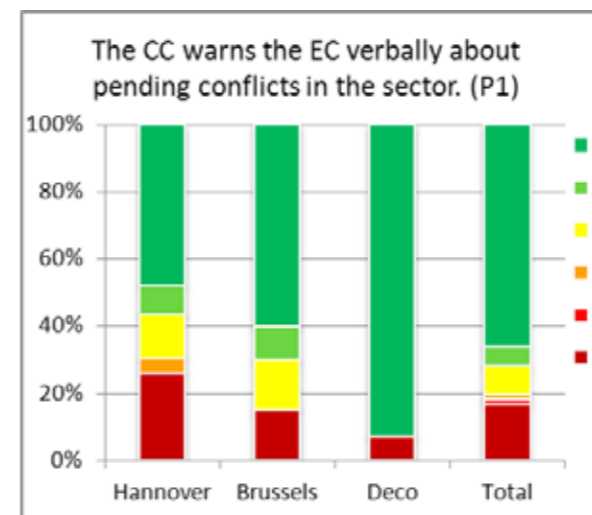
**IA-5: The coordinating controller/ EC checks the OSDR pages on the CCTV for information.**

Only in half of the observations it was observed that the controllers were checking the OSDR pages either directly after the handover or at some time during the 30 minute observation. If no handover took place this criterion has been rated as not observable. The mean of 3,62 (SD = 2,42) suggests that most of the controllers do not check the OSDR pages. Out of 87 observations, where a handover took place and therefore this criterion was observed, only 40 times the checking of the OSDR pages was observed. There are no differences between the three sector groups. This criterion has been observed sufficiently objective.



**IA-6: Any changes to the OSDR pages are communicated by the supervisor to the EC/CC.**

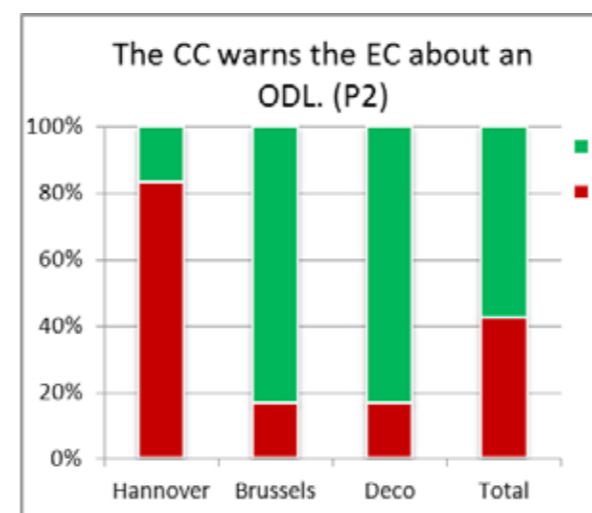
Most of the changes to the OSDR pages were observed to be communicated by the supervisor. The mean of 5,09 (SD = 1,87) is rather high. However, almost 20 percent of the changes have not been communicated by the supervisor. Even though it seems that supervisors of the Hannover sectors communicate more changes than Brussels and Deco on the first view, the differences are not significant and might be a coincidence. The rating of this criterion was highly objective.



**Procedures**

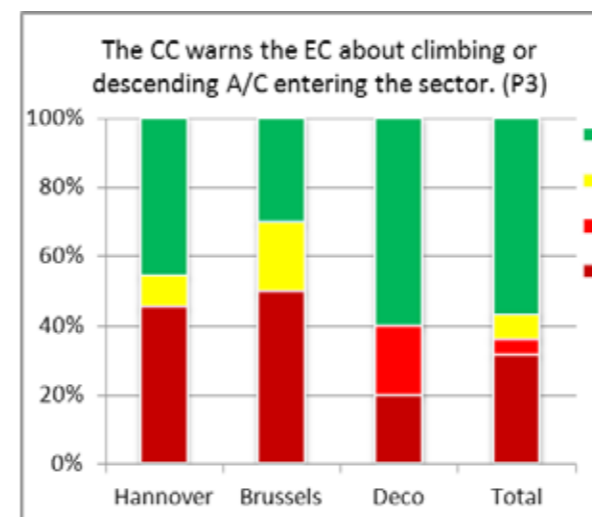
**P-1: The CC warns the EC verbally about pending conflicts in the sector.**

In more than 60 percent the CC told the EC about pending conflicts. Almost 20 percent of the conflicts were not mentioned. Even if it looks as if controllers of the Deco-sectors pass on more conflicts than the controllers of the other two sectors, this difference is not significant. The objective observation of this criterion is very high, the consensus of the two observing controllers is almost perfect.



**P-2: The CC warns the EC about an ODL.**

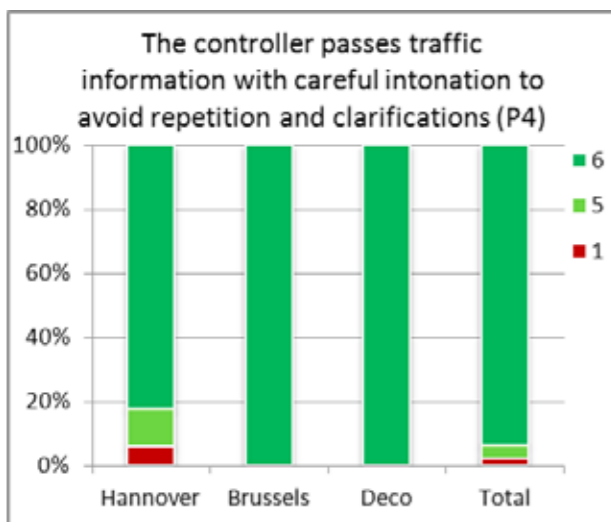
The CC warns the EC about an ODL in almost 60 percent of the cases. The overall mean of 3,88 is rather low. Both, Brussels and Deco have a significantly higher Mean of 5,17 than Hannover with a mean of 1,83. The rating of this criterion can be seen as completely, in each single observation the observing controllers rating showed complete consensus.



**P-3: The CC warns the EC about climbing or descending A/C entering the sector.**

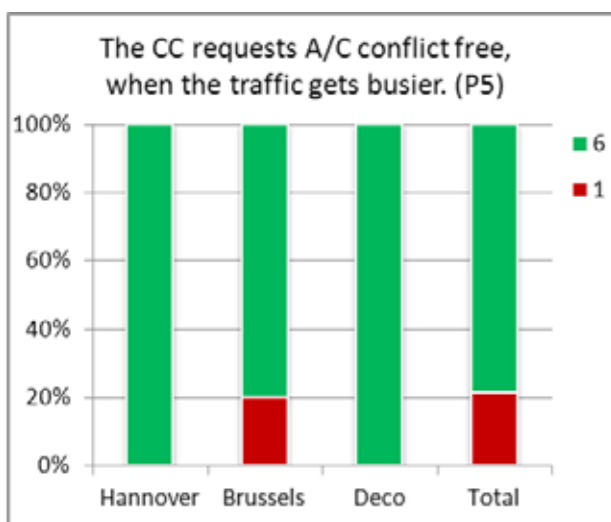
In more than half of the cases, the CC warned the EC about climbing or descending aircrafts entering the sector, however, in more than 30 percent no warning was given. The mean 4,06 (SD = 2,37) is rather low. The results do not differ significantly regarding the three sectors. This criterion has been rated by the observers highly unambiguously.





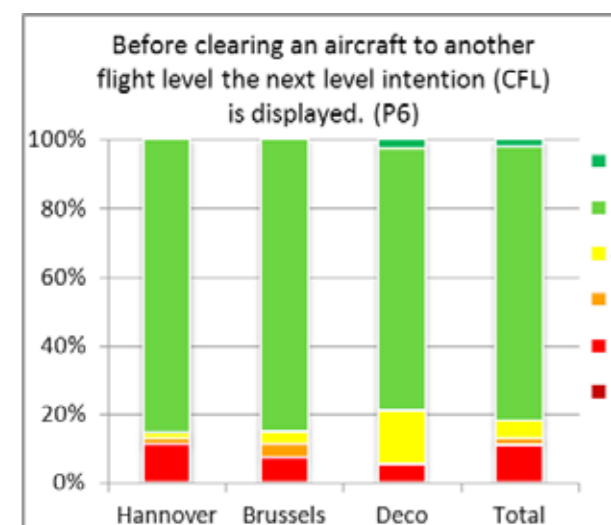
**P-4: The controller passes traffic information with careful intonation to avoid repetition and clarifications.**

Nearly all the time traffic information have been passed with careful intonation, which results to an almost perfect mean of 5,84 (SD = 0,75). Even though a few exceptions were found in the Hannover sector, the results are comparable in all sectors. The observing controllers agreed in their rating with perfect consensus.



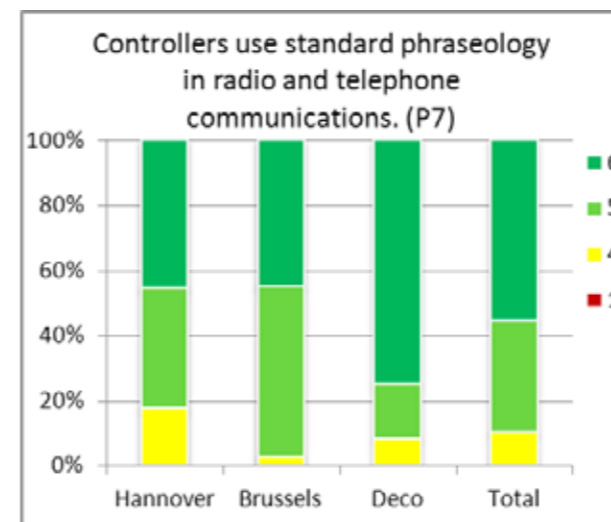
**P-5: The CC requests A/C conflict free, when the traffic gets busier.**

When looking at the three sectors combined, in 80 percent (M = 4,93; SD = 2,13) of the relevant situations the CC request the aircraft conflict free. However, only very seldom this criterion could be observed at all, presumably because the traffic was rather low during the observation interval. Over all sectors, only eleven ratings were available. As a result, the 20 percent negative rating in the Brussels sector is in fact one single observation. The criterion has been rated without exception unambiguously. Due to the little available data, these results should not be taken too seriously though.



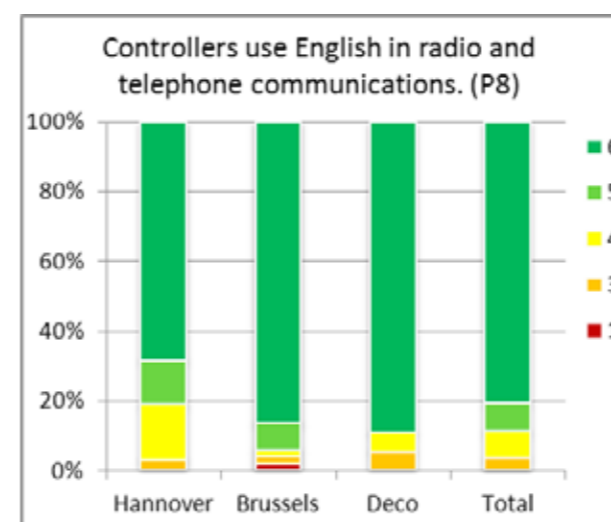
**P-6: Before clearing an aircraft to another flight level the next level intention (CFL) is displayed.**

In more than 80 percent the observers rated this criterion positive, even though hardly any observation received the best rating. This was just rated four times, for only one of those the sector was noted. This resulted in a mean of 4,59 (SD = 1,02). On average, the results are the same for all sector groups. Objectivity of this criterion is not given though. When this criterion was discussed it became apparent that some observers had ambitious benchmark than others.



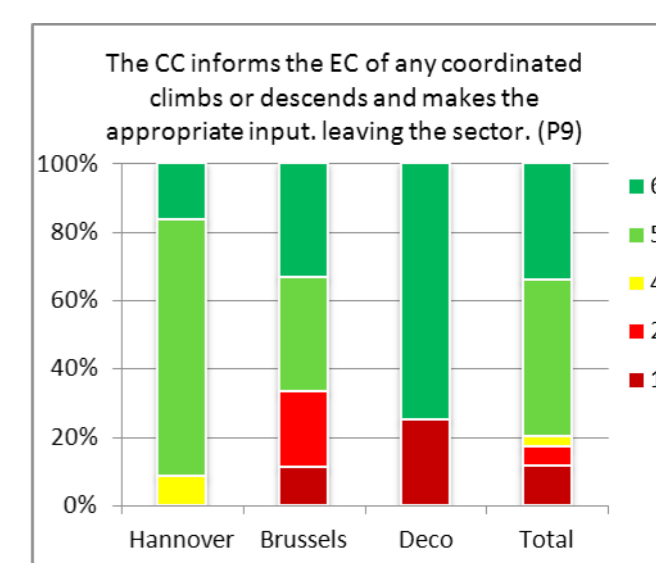
**P-7: Controllers use standard phraseology in radio and telephone communications.**

In general half of the time (M = 5,42; SD = 0,84) the correct standard phraseology is used. The worse rating is still a four (on the rating from 1-worst to 6-best practice), therefore, on average, the use of standard phraseology was never rated in the lower half. No differences between the sectors have been observed. The objectivity of this criterion is rather low.



**P-8: Controllers use English in radio and telephone communications.**

Almost always (M = 5,68; SD = 0,84) English is used in all communication. No differences could be found. Surprisingly the objectivity of rating this criterion is not guaranteed.



**P-9: The CC informs the EC of any coordinated climbs or descends and makes the appropriate input leaving the sector.**

Most of the coordinated climbs or descends are communicated to the EC, even though sometimes without the appropriate input. The mean of 4,67 (SD = 1,63) suggests that on average most of the time no input is made. There are no significant differences between the sectors. The observing controllers observed this criterion with perfect consensus.

**What's happening next?**

EUROSS was meant to be a method from controllers for controllers, to give you an idea how safe you really are, respectively what cultural aspects need improvement concerning safety. The improvement can take place in three different ways: First of all, you can question your own working attitude: Are you really working as a team? Do you try to start your shift on time so that your colleague can leave punctual? Or do you really try to support your colleague as much as possible? I am sure that you can answer most of the questions positively, according to the data we received from the observations there are only a few exceptions. The other two ways to use the data for improvement will be decided in a few workshops in which one controller of each sector group will represent your opinion. In these workshops, the results will be discussed and the representing controllers decide whether the rules should be changed, since the actual working practices are experienced to be safer, or whether it is perceived to be safer that you work according to exactly these rules. Keep in mind that EUROSS is in no way another competency assessment tool, but a project "by controllers – for controllers". All decisions are up to you, and your input is required to keep the project going.



# Island hopping with Travel Service

by Viktor Koren

Summer months are of crucial importance for all airlines but they are even more so for those in the charter business. Output was happy to accept the invitation of one of those charter companies, Travel Service Hungary – an affiliate of its owner Travel Service A.S. (ICAO callsign: Sky Travel) - to check how their operations are conducted from their Budapest base.

The Czech company was founded in 1997 and became one of the fastest growing Central European charter operators. In 2008 the company transported 2.8 million passengers using a fleet of 18 aircraft. The company has 2 Boeing B737-500, 12 B737-800 (of which OK-TVJ and OK-TVK were delivered brand new) 2 Airbus A320 and two B737-800 on wet lease. They have been present in Hungary since 2001 and operate about 20 medium and long haul flights a week from Hungary while employing 22 full time pilots at that base.



On a beautiful Sunday morning in July at Budapest-Ferihegy (ICAO:LHBP, IATA: BUD) Terminal 2B I met one of the airline's young captains Peter Buliczka and his crew getting ready for an interesting trip. The flight's first stop will be at Heraklion, Nikos Kazantzakis airport (ICAO: LGIR, IATA: HER) Crete then we will fly on to Rhodes (Rodos) Diagoras (ICAO: LGRP IATA: RHO) before heading back to Budapest. Some time ago the airline would have operated two separate flights to these two destinations, but because of the falling demand this summer travel agencies struggled to fill these

flights every week. Captain Buliczka introduced me to the entire crew: the captain will be assisted by First Officer Attila Lanc in the cockpit, while in the cabin the usual crew of four will be supplemented by two young trainee flight assistant colleagues under the supervision of Purser Zoltan Koltai. In the company operations briefing room we met Zoltan Balazs and Andras Pozsgai. These two gentlemen are responsible for running the smooth operations and synchronised fleet



management including preparations of pre-flight briefings. They started the briefing with the bad news: our flight, TVL404 had been allocated a departure slot time (CTOT – Calculated Take Off Time) in other words its departure time was delayed by about 20 minutes, due to ATC (Air Traffic Control) capacity restrictions in Greek airspace. They also handed over all the relevant material – METAR-s (actual aerodrome reports) the weather forecasts for our destinations and alternate aerodromes (Chania Souda military airport ICAO: LGSA, IATA: CHQ on the first leg and Kos – Ippokratis, ICAO: LGKO IATA: KGS on the second hop and Bratislava, ICAO: LZIB, IATA: BTS for our final leg) and also for all aerodromes that could serve as potential diversion airports at any time along our flight, should we encounter any problems that would necessitate an unscheduled landing. The meteorological briefing material also includes charts showing significant weather systems and upper winds and temperatures at different pressure levels. The forecast folder also contains the TAF-s (Terminal Aerodrome Forecast) and SIGMET-s as well. TAF messages describe the forecast prevailing

conditions at an aerodrome and usually cover 9 to 24 hours, while SIGMET-s (significant meteorological reports) show any significant weather that may affect the safety of flight operations. The criteria for raising a SIGMET include active thunderstorms, tropical revolving storms, a severe line squall, heavy hail, severe turbulence, severe airframe icing, marked mountain waves, widespread dust or sandstorm. A quick analysis confirmed that luckily our flight would not have to face any of these conditions as weather looked perfect along the flight plan route. Besides meteorological data the briefing also covers NOTAM-s (Notices to Airmen – messages that contain information on any aeronautical facility, service, procedure or hazard) issued to any of our aerodrome of interest. Satisfied with all documents the captain briefed the senior members of the cabin crew briefly explaining what he requires from the crew to execute the flight as smooth as possible.

Having finished the briefing the crew bus took us to Ferihegy's stand 60. Our aircraft was HA- LKC (C/N 248 MSN 27991) a Boeing 737/800, one of Travel Service's 2 Hungarian registered jets. This winglet equipped aircraft was formerly operated by TUI Fly of Germany as D-AHFK and originally delivered to Hapag-Lloyd. Captain Buliczka did the walk-around checks while F/O Lanc who was going to be the pilot flying (PF) set out to prepare the FMC by entering our flight plan route which would take us via southern Hungary to Sairspace. He also obtained our ATC clearance







On this Boeing 737 the captain is the sole person who can steer on the ground as the aircraft only has a tiller on the left side of the cockpit.

Being cleared for take-off by the tower and entering Ferihegy's 3010 meter (9875 feet) long "old" runway 31 Left the heavily laden Boeing accelerated rapidly to the prescribed V1 speed and departed the ground effortlessly. Positive rate of climb was noted then gears and flaps were retracted and passing 1700 feet in the climb the captain checked in with Budapest Approach who cleared our flight to 7000 feet initially than gave us step climb in several increments. The SID also includes the noise abatement

and reported our vertical and geographical position to Belgrade Radar which, in turn sent us direct to RAXAD, a waypoint on the UL617 airway. When we were within 1000 feet of our assigned FL 350 F/O Lanc reduced the rate of climb not to trigger any TCAS (Traffic and Collision Avoidance System) reaction in case there is another aircraft around. Following the captain's requests for the final cruising level FL370 again, the controller assured the crew that it will become available in a few minutes. When asked about the penalty those 2000 feet difference in the cruising level would mean, Peter quickly calculated that if we were stuck on FL350 for the remaining flying time which was a bit more than an hour we



from Delivery which indicated the planned Standard Instrument Departure (SID) PUSTA3D, the QNH 1015 and allocated our transponder squawk 2607. In the meantime the crew had been handed over the load sheet and our take off data had been quickly calculated by the F/O using the Take-Off Data Calculator. Meanwhile Peter filled in the Journey log: we had 179 adult and 4 infant passengers on board. Travel Service operates its 189 seat 737/800-s in a layout that could be flexibly configured in 2 classes. The tanks had been filled with 9800 kg-s of fuel (of which we would later burn 200 kilograms during taxi to the active runway RWY31 Left) which gave us the total take-off weight of 62.8 tonnes. Having listened to the ATIS the crew had to take a number of factors into account: the aircraft's weight, the actual wind which was from 300degrees at 16 knots, the temperature of 21 Celsius, the QNH 1015 hectopascal and dry runway conditions. All these considerations and the decision by the crew to de-rate the CFM56-7B26 engines - which can deliver originally 26 K pounds of thrust on each sides - to 24K of thrust (to treat the engines with care and subsequently extend their lifespan) would result in the following take off data: V1 and VR will both occur at 144 knots while V2 at 148 knots with optimum flaps setting as F1. The briefing also included the procedure to be followed in case of an engine failure on take-off. Calculations were followed by the "Pre-flight checklist" in a challenge-answer fashion, (F/O reads and the Captain checks and answers) when Purser Koltai reported that all passengers were boarded and seated and also the doors closed. It was time for the "Before Start" checks after which the Ground Controller gave permission to start the push-back of the aircraft then also to start up the engines. Number 2 engine was started first then number 1 followed. Having checked the items on the "Before Taxi" checklist, Peter asked and got clearance to taxi the jet to the holding point of RWY31 Left.

procedure hence it does not allow any turns below 7000 except for ATC separation reasons. When passing this altitude the Approach controller radar vectored us towards the South. Accelerating to 280 knots by the indicated airspeed and calling in with Budapest Radar (the callsign of the Area Control Center=ACC) on 133.2 Mhz our flight was re-cleared to climb to Flight Level 310 on a direct course towards KEROP waypoint which is the border point between Budapest and Beograd FIR-s. The captain requested Flight Level 370 (the most economical calculated cruising level) and using the aircraft's climb profile feature he reported our probable crossing level at the Serbian boundary. Captain Buliczka is no stranger to the lion's den called ATC: for years he's been a regular guest in ATC simulators as a representative of the "other side". He knows the Letter of Agreements between ATC units by the word and he knew that Budapest ACC is not allowed to climb LHBP departure traffic above FL 310 without prior coordination. Following our planned route via the airway UL616 he called in



would burn approximately 2 % more trip fuel. Sometimes of course the crew have to accept the traffic situation and safety always comes first as in a situation like this ATC will have the final word. But our ATC man was right: being switched to the next channel on 127.365 we could see the restricting traffic - a Thomas Cook Airbus A320 both visually and on the TCAS display as well, crossing about a mile in front of us 2000 feet above. Once our paths crossed and the distance on the radar indicated more than 5 nautical miles ATC instructed us to climb to Flight Level 370. Settling into the cruise in ideal circumstances as the autopilot maintained the target speed of Mach 0.787, (in accordance with the company's cost index, which is set at 40) Peter addressed the passengers. He gave a very comprehensive description of the flight conditions which even included traffic information. We entered Skopje Radar's airspace and to keep the operations running efficiently the F/O started to prepare the Load Sheet Information for the second and third leg too, using the aircraft's own DOW/DOI (Dry Operating Weight/Dry Operating Index) Data sheet. HA-LKC has the maximum take-off weight set at 78244 kg-s and the maximum landing weight at 65317 kg-s. The company calculates with an average weight of 83 kg-s per male 69 kg for female and 35 kg-s per child on charter flights. In the meantime ATC had us turn to SKP (Skopelos) VOR and transferred TVL404 to Macedonia Radar which allocated a new squawk 1417 to be entered on the transponder. Our slightly modified route clearance was from SKP to KEA VOR then directly to XAVIS waypoint which was our planned IAF (Initial Approach Fix). The cockpit crew kept the operational flight plan up-to-date for operational and legal reasons the whole time. This document is an important record in case something should be investigated or looked into as the smallest details of the flights are recorded on it. Peter checked in with ATC at the Greek boundary: "Kalimera, Athina Radar Travel Service

four zero four, maintaining Flight Level Three Seven Zero on course to Kilo Echo Alpha."Kalimera, TVL404 radar contact, proceed direct to XAVIS! " came the answer in the form of a new clearance.

At this stage TOD (Top of Descent) was calculated by computer and crew. The computer calculates the descent profile to have the aircraft reach 50 feet over the runway threshold. Company policy advises pilots to actually start the descent with 1000' feet per minute 20 NM before the calculated TOD to perform an early descent and whenever possible to allow engines decrease power gradually and to conserve engine life time consequently. This procedure avoids the so-called engine-shock, when Exhaust Gas Temperature (EGT) suddenly decreases from about 730 degrees to 400 degrees Celsius.

Attila started the before descent briefing which included the normal and missed approach procedures. The crew planned a flaps 40 landing with auto brake set at 2 and the use of thrust reverse as well on touchdown. In the meantime the crew monitored Iraklion's ATIS on 127.55 which gave the following information: This is Iraklion Information "Foxtrott": at time 1050 wind 320 degrees 17 knots visibility more than 10 kilometres clouds, few at 2000 feet temperature 29, dew point 19, QNH1007, transition level 75, RWY 27 in use. Athina Radar gave the clearance to start the descent to FL170 initially. During the descent Peter checked in with Iraklion Approach on the 123.975 and inquired if the traffic situation allowed for a "visual" approach. Below FL100 Attila reduced the speed to IAS 250 knots to comply with the company's operations manual: this limitation is widely accepted worldwide as below this altitude is the risk the highest to suffer a bird strike and the windshields of the jet is calibrated to successfully withstand such impact at or below 250 knots speed. In these weather conditions





to the filed flight plan the aircraft will change its callsign to TVL405 and follow the LABUX SID to fly on the V57 airway for a short time to join the LOKNA2S arrival procedure to Rodos Diagoras airport. Walk around checks were carried out once again by the captain to verify that the airplane was in a satisfactory state for the next leg of flight. Peter made sure that the surfaces and structures were clear, not damaged, there were no missing parts and there were no fluid leaks, the tires were not too worn or damaged, and there was no tread separation. Moving on to check the undercarriage he examined that the gear struts are not fully compressed then checked that engine inlets and tailpipes were clear, their exterior was not damaged, and the reversers were stowed. He also took a look at the doors and access panels to make sure that the ones not in use were latched and that the

probes, vents, and static ports and antennas and light lenses were also clear and not damaged. In the meantime the F/O entered the take-off data. Based on the loadmaster supervisor's report the aircraft's take-off weight will be 63110 kilograms. We received our initial clearance via the LABUX1G

departure route and the initial vertical clearance limit was Flight Level 100. When we started to move on the taxiway the ground controller informed the crew that they were number 4 in the departure sequence. Our departure was further delayed when we had to hold short of runway 30 to give way to a landing Piper Arrow. Then we followed the previous departing aircraft a Sky Express British Aerospace Jetstream 41. In the meantime flaps 5 were selected for take-off. 19 minutes later, following the landing of an Aegean Airlines A320 we were cleared for take-off from the 2687 meters (8800 feet) long runway 27. Back on Iraklion Approach's frequency we got the air traffic controller's approval for a visual departure to LABUX point. The flaps were gradually retracted upon passing 1500 feet and Boeing continued its climb to FL130 while Peter increased its indicated airspeed from 180 to 250 knots. At the transition altitude of 6000 feet the crew switched to the standard pressure of 1013 hPa - which was carefully cross-checked on both sides of the instrument panel - to be able to use Flight Levels as a reference to our height after crossing the transition layer. Switching to Athina Radar again the crew received no answer to the initial call so



the aircraft had to level off at the cleared Flight Level 130. The controller finally identified us and cleared to our requested level of FL190 as opposed to flight level 230 filed in the flight plan. This level would have been too close to the Top of Descent point resulting in a sort of "ballistic" flight. During the short cruise phase Rodos ATIS was monitored: the weather was very similar to that on Iraklion with ILS operations to runway 25. Calling in on Rodos Approach frequency on 127.25 MHz and in VMC (visual meteorological conditions) the crew requested a visual approach on the right-hand traffic circuit. The controller's answer was affirmative preparing the crew for a direct course for the right hand downwind of runway 25 and clearing us to descend to 7000 feet. After an aircraft passed us on the opposite direction we got further descent clearance to 3000 feet using the local QNH as reference but the controller's sequencing plan seemed to have been changed: due to another arrival aircraft we received several radar vectors and speed reduction to end up on the 11 mile final of runway 25 to intercept the localizer of the ILS. We had time to identify the nearby Rodos-Maritsa airfield which is located just a few miles north of our destination. On the arrival charts the pilots are specifically warned not to be misled by the close location and similar runway. Before landing checks and approach briefing were performed while the flaps were extended gradually from position 5 through 25 to the final position of 40 for a stabilized situation on the final approach. An artificial voice reminded the crew when passing 1000 feet altitude. Autobrake 2 was preselected by the flight crew following another announcement by the synthetic voice at passing 500 feet: "Approaching minimums". The captain already made his decision to land the aircraft in these perfect meteorological conditions. This aircraft and crew is able to land in CAT IIIA conditions (when the Runway Visual Range is down to 200 meters and the Decision Height is only 50 feet above the runway



anti-icing was not necessary. Icing conditions usually exist if the outside air temperature is below 10 degrees Celsius accompanied by any of the following meteorological phenomena: visible moisture (clouds, fog with visibility of less than 1 mile, rain snow, sleet, ice crystals) or ice snow, slush or standing water is present on the ramps, taxiways or runways. Luckily none of these conditions were observed today. The controller cleared us for a visual approach pointing out that there is one landing aircraft is about to land in front of us. The quality of the radio transmissions on this frequency was clearly not as good as on the previous stations and the crew had to struggle a bit to understand everything but they acknowledged the descent clearance to 2500' and the same time had visual contact with the restricting traffic. The crew analyzed the preceding aircraft's position and decided to reduce to the minimum clean speed of 210 knots to help the controller achieve the necessary spacing between the 2 landing aircraft. Descending to traffic pattern altitude, the crew was fully aware of the steeply rising terrain immediately south of the airport while turning right onto the prescribed 3.33 degree descent angle final approach path. As soon as the previous aircraft vacated the runway the tower controller cleared TVL404 to land on Runway 27, giving a last wind check just before landing. Conditions were becoming fairly windy at 20 knots but that was nothing unusual at this airport by the sea. Peter acknowledged the clearance and Attila put the jet down onto the touchdown zone.

At Iraklion airport part of the passengers disembarked the aircraft and another group of holidaymakers occupied the seats to the full capacity: HA-LKC had 189 passengers for the short hop which would take approximately 30 minutes. The remaining fuel is enough for this leg so there is no need for additional refuel. According



threshold) and the announcement is used to remind crew to their legal minimums in adverse weather conditions. Our aircraft and crew were not to be tested today though as we landed nicely on the 3305 meters (10844 feet) long runway 25. HA-LKC followed the preceding De Havilland Dash8 towards our assigned parking at stand number 9.

Preparing the last leg of the day the cabin crew supervised the boarding: the result of the head-count is 174 Budapest-bound passengers. Taking a total of 9220 kg-s of jet fuel on board gave a take-off weight of 65.8 tonnes. The flight kept the call sign TVL405 on this leg. Start-up clearance had been followed by taxi clearance clearing the aircraft to proceed to the holding point of RWY 25 via Taxiway A. Peter decided to perform the take off and flying to the cruising level then "share" the flight with F/O

Lanc giving him the P/F title and landing at LHBP. To get airborne the plane needed 149 knots for V1 and Vr to be quickly followed by V2 of 152 knots at flaps 1 configuration. Once airborne, Peter manually flew the VANES2A SID procedure, requesting to continue the departure visually. ATC gave their permission and Peter soon turned right towards VANES waypoint, maintaining own terrain separation until joining the airway M601 climbing Flight Level 120 initially. When calling Athina Radar for the last time that day, a route clearance was received to AKINA then KOROS and to climb to Flight Level 300, 360 and finally to our requested FL380.

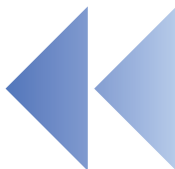
Attila took over the control of the aircraft. He's been with Travel Service for 5 years and he is member of a real aviation family: his father and brother both flew for MALEV Hungarian Airlines and his mother used to be a recreational pilot too. Attila, who is married to a flight attendant, used to

fly LET L410 aircraft for Farnair Hungary. He and Peter both started their flying career at Dunakeszi airfield (LHDK) near Budapest by flying gliders. Peter started to fly jets following his training at GECAT training centre in Crawley. He first flew Boeing 737 Classic types: the 500 and 300 versions for Sky Europe. He completed his first flight as captain on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2007. He has been with Travel Service since December 2007.

In the meantime the crew said goodbye to Greek ATC and Macedonia Radar cleared us to GIKAS then SIN VOR, located at bit south of Pristina airport (BKPR) and followed by a direct route issued by Skopje Radar towards VAGEN a waypoint on UL617. Our Boeing maintained the TAS 465 knots which gave the jet 439 knots speed above the ground. Entering Belgrade FIR we received the clearance to PARAK, the entry point on our way to Budapest

FIR. We had to start our descent 65 NM before PARAK to reach the cleared level FL300 by PARAK. That was about 8 minutes before the calculated ideal Top of Descent point but we had to comply with ATC restrictions. The captain called the handling company to pass on the necessary details and obtain our expected stand number at the destination. From the Hungarian FIR boundary Budapest Radar cleared TVL405 direct to ABONY, start of the standard arrival procedure which we did not have to complete as we received another direct track to BP532 waypoint and a descent clearance to FL110. Finally a radar heading given by the approach controller guided the aircraft into a position from which intercepting the glide slope of the ILS on runway 31R was possible: this happens by maintaining 2500 feet until catching the signal of the glide slope from underneath. Attila performed a textbook landing in great weather: no clouds, visibility well

above 10 km-s and winds from 290 degrees at 13 knots. Having vacated RWY 31R, a short taxi followed to our stand. Shutting the engines down a quick look at the data showed that the jet burnt 5.4 tonnes of fuel during a flight of 2 hours 10 minutes. A long working day was nearing its end and it was time to say goodbye to the crew: they were already planning the next flight. Attila was scheduled to fly to Hurghada, Egypt the next day while Peter was about to start another challenging ACMI contract: he'll spend the following month in Saigon, Vietnam flying one of Travel Service's Czech - registered Boeing as part of an international crew.



The author would like to thank the entire crew of TVL404/405 for their kind hospitality. The shortened version of this article appeared in the March issue of Airliner World.





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