



Press release

Brussels, 16 February 2007

Six States and seven Air Navigation Service Providers join forces to create a Functional Airspace Block

International Stakeholder Forum in Brussels

Six European States and seven air navigation service providers have convened the first International Stakeholder Forum in Brussels today to inform all parties involved about a future new cross-border airspace structure in the core area of Europe.

With the Single European Sky, the European Commission has called for the creation of so-called Functional Airspace Blocks (FABs) in order to respond to the challenges resulting from growing air traffic in Europe. These blocks of airspace would be organised according to traffic flows rather than national boundaries. Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Switzerland as well as the Eurocontrol Centre in Maastricht are currently conducting a Feasibility Study to determine how a common airspace block – to be called FAB Europe Central – would meet the goals set by the European Commission.

Consultation of all stakeholders is essential to ensure that the concerns of all parties are taken into account in the Feasibility Study. This mainly concerns the civil and military airspace users but also airports, decision makers, the industry, meteorological service providers, neighbouring States as well as air navigation services personnel.





Air safety, of course, is the top priority but capacity, cost effectiveness, efficiency and last but not least environmental aspects and sustainability are the drivers for all actions. The FAB Europe Central will be realised through a substantial degree of cooperation, across the full range of air navigation service provider activities: operations, technical systems and services, safety, human resources management, economic and financial issues and development of new activities.

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

The participating States are well aware that this project is an enormous challenge and that many aspects will have to be taken into account. This task will be accomplished step by step and the project is expected to extend over several years. It is of great importance to set the stage for these future developments today and to already identify all potential improvement opportunities that can be seized in the short term as “quick wins”.

The links to the other European countries and the consideration of military interests as well as social and cultural aspects will not be neglected. In the end, the Parliaments of the individual States will have to agree on the plan. Once the feasibility study has been completed as planned in 2008, implementation can begin.

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