

## **Volcanic contamination**

### **FABEC Air Navigation Service Providers developing a common approach for central Europe**

To reduce the impact of the volcanic contamination crisis of the airspace on the passengers and the airlines while maintaining the high safety level, air navigation service providers (ANSPs) from Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Switzerland together with their military partners – associated in the so-called Functional Airspace Block Europe Central FABEC – are cooperating in a common approach to improve the current situation. In particular, the FABEC partners agreed on a concept which includes common definitions and procedures about how contaminations caused by volcanic eruptions will be handled in the future. In addition, the above mentioned ANSPs are using the FABEC platform to share data and experiences made during the volcanic contamination crisis.

- The FABEC partners – civil and military – discussed in regular telephone conferences the actual situation in the different countries. This enabled the ANSPs to learn from the experience made so far, to take on best practices and to harmonise their activities if possible.
- Test flights have been conducted in the whole FABEC airspace after the volcanic eruption. The results will allow future decisions on air traffic restrictions to be taken on a more solid basis.
- The information provided by the responsible organisations indicates that in central Europe the current contamination level allows safe flight operations.
- Currently, all FABEC airspace is accessible to IFR traffic.
- A common cross-border reporting system between the FABEC ANSPs is currently being set up. As a consequence, in the future investigations and analysis of volcano contamination will speed up.
- Based on the decision by the Ministers of Transport, FABEC ANSPs developed a detailed concept which defines 3 types of zones of contamination (temporary dangerous zone, areas with expected contamination and non-contaminated areas) as well as the way air traffic has to be handled in the respective zone.





The FABEC ANSPs support the initial measures taken by the States with respect to safety in air traffic. The air navigation service providers (ANA Luxembourg, Belgocontrol, DFS Deutsche Flugsicherung, DSNA France, ATC the Netherlands, Eurocontrol/Maastricht UAC and skyguide) associated in FABEC used their cooperation initiative to help to solve this unexpected crisis.

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