

# The “CO-OP MODEL” for FABs in Europe







# Foreword

**W**e, as **Air Traffic Controllers and ATM personnel** are those who know best the **ATM system**, its technical details, its potential faults and its improvement possibilities. Because of our close contact with pilots from different horizons, and our continuous cooperation with adjacent centres and colleagues from different countries, we have long been accustomed to the international and especially European dimension of our activity.

We are aware of much of the European political work that is taking place regarding the future of our industry and we cannot ignore it. For the ETF, our ambition is to bring the voice of those who are the day to day actors to this forum.

The second Single European Sky (SES) initiative which is now under way will confirm the European Commission (EC) determination to pursue the establishment of 'Functional Airspace Blocks' (FABs).

ETF has sort a better definition of this concept, to make it useful for the future of ATM and acceptable to controllers and ATM personnel. This began with the "Palermo conference" in 2004 and the subsequent FAB report by the European Social Partners (ETF & CANSO) in 2006, which have become references on this subject.

ETF has a determination to bring a proactive guideline to this European concept for the benefit of ATM personnel and the industry. Based on our



professional knowledge, on our European trade-union organization experience, this is a constructive proposal that can be used throughout the EU area and beyond.

The “Co-operation Model” is the ETF Vision in the short and long term perspective, for sustainable FABs both for the Providers and their employees. The Co-op Model is intended to be adaptable to each FAB project. It is a tool for Controllers and ATM personnel but it is also a positive framework which can be used by decision makers at the level of FAB project governance (States and Air Navigation Services Providers). Cooperation and Social Dialogue can lead to a successful outcome.

The present version of the Co-op Model shows a current picture of the consideration conducted so far but it is designed as a living document that can be further amended and should be read as an invitation for YOUR contribution.

The future of European ATM will bring change – it is time to be a part of it!

### **The ETF Team.**

**Jean-Pierre Etienne, Laurence King, Riccardo Rubini, Olivier Joffrin and François Ballestero**





## ► 1. Introduction

The ETF “Co-op Model” is not a new FAB project.

The “Co-operation Model” is the ETF Vision in the short and long term perspective, for sustainable FABs both for the Providers and their employees.

The aims of the “Co-op Model” are as follows:

- to improve safety
- to increase capacity, flight efficiency, cost effectiveness, reducing environmental impact
- to address fragmentation through co-operation
- to address and secure the social consequences of FAB implementation.

## ► 2. The primary aim of FABs is to increase overall ATM performance

Performance is a balance between various objectives such as capacity, cost-effectiveness, flight-efficiency and environmental issues. Safety is a primary and overall objective. Performance of the Air Traffic Management (ATM) system also requires a total network approach since the airspace users involved, Air Navigation Services Providers (ANSPs) and airports, play an important role in the required gate-to-gate perspective.

ETF acknowledges and supports the “quick wins” that ANSPs and their staff deliver on a daily basis and agree that FABs can bring additional improvements over time. Quick wins however should not detract from, or adversely affect, long-term goals.

ETF has decided to take a proactive role at an early stage in FAB development, with a view to identifying and addressing issues before they may become problems.

To this end, ETF has identified the “Virtual Centre” concept and a co-operative model (based on co-operation between ANSPs, and between employers and employees), as the path that gives both the project and the staff the expected added value in the short, medium and long term.

Staff fully supports performance improvement as they consider Air Navigation Services as services of general interest with public service obligations. Such services must not be governed by market laws and competitive rules, as recognized by the Single European Sky (SES) legislation and the European Court of Justice.

### ▶ 3. A consolidation model for FABs implementation is not supported by ETF

The top down approach for FABs implementation based on theoretical ideas is not supported by ETF. The idea of a single ANSP for a FAB, as suggested in some discussions, is not supported either. The analysis of this proposed solution brings no significant evidence that it would enhance safety and/or cost-effectiveness. There is no legal requirement in Single Sky regulations demanding consolidation of service provision. Furthermore, consolidation of service provision (single ANSP and/or reduction of number of ACCs or services linked to ATM) would create new institutional, legal and social difficulties. On the contrary real improvement can be easily reached with real cooperation among the ANSPs involved. The level and the form of cooperation that can be achieved in each domain is something that must be defined in a pragmatic way after the appropriate analysis.



## ► 4. The “Virtual Centre” concept

The FABs should address the requirements for Air Traffic Control (ATC) systems interoperability, the fundamental enabler for the implementation of Functional Airspace Blocks, based on a model of continuous integration of different ATC systems, rather than on the establishment of a single Service Provider across a trans-national area.

The "Virtual Centre" concept consists of a group of Area Control Centres (ACCs) remotely located, but interconnected and operating technically as a single ATM centre. A model based on a single ATM Centre (or a few) controlling a wide, multi-national area, is not feasible, due to the extensive social, military and political impacts, which could jeopardize the success of the SES implementation.

The "Virtual Centre" concept allows the identification of information to be shared between different ATM systems, in particular the Flight Data Processing and Distribution module (FDP) and Surveillance data, as described in 'SWIM' (System Wide Information Management), one of the pillars of SESAR.

The interoperability of the Virtual Centre will enable an aircraft to be managed between two ACCs as by two sectors of the same ACC (radar handover, re-routing, direct routing...).

In addition, the Virtual Centre can provide the basis for a contingency plan.

## ► 5. The FABs should promote cooperation first

The best way to reduce fragmentation is to improve cooperation and strengthen convergence. Problems are complex, interrelated, have long-lead times and involve all areas of the organizations, including public authorities. If changes are applied in a pragmatic cost effective way, benefits will come progressively, taking into account the life cycle of investment.

Addressing fragmentation doesn't necessarily mean consolidation of service provision.

We have identified different kinds of cooperation in defined areas and with different domains of cooperation. For each of them, ETF proposes to develop a pragmatic approach in order to increase performance and safety. Cost benefits analysis, including social costs, have to be conducted in order to determine the best form of cooperation needed in each field to fulfill FABs objectives.

KINDS OF COOPERATION:	DOMAINS OF COOPERATION:
► Information sharing	► Air Traffic Flow and Capacity Management
► Establishment of a cooperation framework defining the areas where joint project management can be foreseen	► Convergence of technical system
► Establishment of an institutional framework where common governance bodies take place	► Airspace and sectors management
► Pooling of resources	► Harmonization of procedures and rules
	► Initial training
	► Airports development
	► Safety management
	► Civil/military
	► Aeronautical and meteorological information
	► Environmental issues

ETF calls for an integration of all the services of the safety chain in ANSPs activities rather than unbundling or the introduction of conflicting market principles. ETF cannot accept that services like training schools, Communication, Navigation & Surveillance (CNS), Aeronautical Information Services (AIS), Meteorological information (MET), ATC for smaller airports etc. will be opened to market laws.



## ► 6. The Public Service role of ANSPs

ATM means more to citizens than a market or a business. Europe is about having a shared vision for Single European Sky development and functioning.

Quality ATM services are key to meeting citizen's fundamental rights within the EU's objectives of safety, cohesion, sustainable industry, full employment and competitiveness.

The principles that underpin ATM – such as safety, continuity, efficiency, democratic political control and user protection – are shared across Europe and are part of our common values. These principles are part of the European Model.

The positive contribution of ATM – as a public service mission – has to be recognized in national and European growth and development.

In other words, ATM is a crucial part of the necessary State duty on safety. Indeed, there is a link between safety and the public service obligations.

It is also paramount that Providers do not compete between themselves and respect the public service obligations of Air Navigation Services with the highest standards of responsibility and competence for all ATM workers. In order to succeed, the ANSPs should cooperate through a cooperation agreement in order to enable the implementation of improvement changes.

EU Regulations on the Single European Sky do not require privatization of ANSPs. ETF insists that all FAB ANSPs should remain under public ownership. This is also important to keep a level playing field among all ANSPs, which will maintain stability and compatibility in the whole area.

ETF insists that all the activities involved in the safety chain remain under the ANSPs competence; even a partial privatization of separate ATC and technical services (unbundling) can not be accepted by ETF since all these services are closely interlinked with the provision of air traffic control services.

## ► 7. Governance: FABs Cooperation Council

The decision making process should be based on consensus, as no entity (ANSP or State) should impose a decision. However, any decision that concerns the sovereignty of a country should be taken unanimously. It should reflect the sensitivity of the different stakeholders and should include consultation of staff and airspace users.

In the functioning of FABs, each ANSP keeps its management structure but coordination is organized at FABs level. Depending on the different kinds of cooperation, various intermediate management structures may be required.

The ETF proposal is to set up a FAB cooperation Council based on the Member States and the ANSPs involved. The Presidency of the Council may be structured on an equal rotation basis. A joint General Secretariat should prepare the decisions of the Council and ensure their follow up. The role of this FAB Council should be:

- to determine the strategic orientations of the FAB, in coordination with Member States
- to determine which issues have to be considered at FAB level and which issues have to be solved at ANSP level
- to take decisions on the FAB level issues. Once again, all decisions should be based on consensus. Mandate project managers and give them authority at the FAB level
- to ensure the appropriate coordination with other FABs, Eurocontrol and National Supervisory Authorities (NSAs)/EASA
- to create more and better jobs as it is foreseen in the Lisbon Strategy
- to ensure a permanent compulsory consultation process with the Trade Unions at all levels and negotiations where appropriate. At FAB level, a Social Forum should be set up.



## ► 8. Financial aspects

ETF does not support financial competition between ANSPs as this will lead to a decline of the social standards, compromise a solid financial base of the ANSPs and jeopardize jobs and safety in European Civil Aviation sector.

ETF strongly supports a cost recovery regime as the best way to finance ANSPs activities.

However the unit rate(s) scheme that will be applied within the FAB is an open issue on which we don't have any predetermined opinion. We will support solutions that will favour operational improvement whilst enabling each ANSP to finance its activities in a proper way.

The “Virtual Centre” concept is able to provide the expected improvements in safety, capacity, environmental impact, focusing the investments to improve the interconnection between ANSPs/ACCs, minimizing additional cost (new infrastructure, mobility cost, social cost...).

The required technical investments are consistent with SESAR.



## ► 9. The States should commit to FABs developments

FAB implementation needs pro-active cooperation between States, ANSPs and employees. It is important that they share common objectives and develop a common vision agreed at a sufficiently high political level.

ETF encourages all the States to ensure that National Supervisory Authorities are sufficiently developed to undertake their tasks and that they are properly funded and resourced.

Military activities remain one of the most delicate issues that could provide the expected improvement for capacity and flight efficiency and that need direct involvement of States.

Therefore, the ETF urges States to clearly commit towards the implementation of FABs by removing identified political, institutional and legal hurdles. To this end, the States should create an institutional cooperative framework in a FAB agreement enabling convergence of the different ANSPs.

## ▶ 10. The necessity of the “bottom up approach” at each step

Whilst every effort should be made towards greater convergence of consultation arrangements, in line with the “bottom up approach” it is recognized that “one size does not fit all” and that should be flexibility to reflect and accommodate different cultural needs.

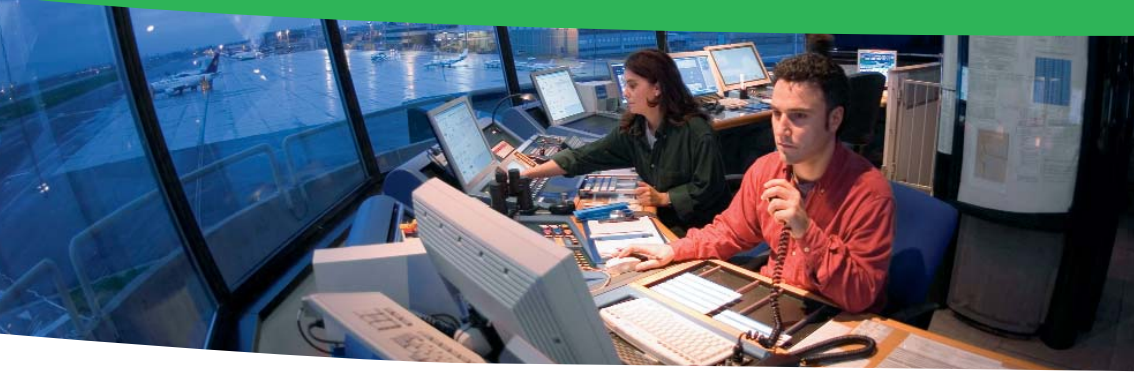
## ▶ 11. ETF considers that Social Dialogue will be the key to success

It is recognized by CANSO (the international Civil Air Navigation Service Organization) and ETF that consultation between Social Partners and involvement in the decision making process is central to the development of FABs. ETF wants the recognition of this consultation process to be implemented at every level and stage of FABs.

The establishment of FABs and the changes involved are more likely to be accepted by employees if they are involved from the early stages. Employee commitment to change is best achieved through involvement, where employees know what the FAB is attempting to achieve and how then they can influence decision-making.

The early involvement of employee representatives in the decision making process is vital. To this end management should seek and take account of the views of employees before making a decision on FABs.

ANSPs together with employee’s representatives should agree consultative arrangements that provide for involvement at such a stage that influence on the decision making process is secured. A social dialogue at national and at FAB levels should be established at an early stage to ensure effective participation on the decision making process.



## ► 12. Social aspects

The main goal of any Trade Union is to protect and promote the interests of employees and its members.

In a medium/long term vision, it is also important to consider the continued health of the activity to guarantee a sustainable future that will lead to long-term, stable and consistent working arrangements.

ETF wishes FABs to be multinational projects that secure and even create jobs in the ATM industry and open up a long-term perspective for the personnel in all concerned ANSPs.

Through the “Co-op Model” FABs can increase the performance with positive social consequences.

Additional social aspects must be considered if the mobility of workers has to become a reality within the framework of FABs. ETF will only accept voluntary mobility and urges ANSPs involved not to use mobility as a tool for social dumping. In line with our policy regarding mobility aspects within the licensing scheme (particularly the Air Traffic Control Officer (ATCO) licence), we call for equal social treatment between staff. Mobility must not lead to the circumventing of existing national provisions governing the rights and obligations applicable to employment relationship between employer and employees.

In FABs implementation where ANSPs with different cost structures and countries with different social and legal standards take part, ETF strongly recommends that ANSPs shall ensure the proper application of Community and of their national social legislation and collective agreements in order to avoid social dumping. Special efforts in social dialogue at national and at FAB levels shall be undertaken to find solutions to tackle this issue.



## ► 13. Environmental Impact

Aviation has two main environmental effects: **aircraft noise** and **aircraft emissions**. The former largely affects areas at and around airports, the latter can have both local effects on air quality and global effects on climate.

Notwithstanding that aviation's impact on climate is quite modest, it is growing rapidly and these problems are becoming more serious as aviation continues to grow at rates that outstrip the ability of technological and operational improvements in environmental performance to keep pace.

In this scenario, the FABs role is to increase the flight efficiency in a gate-to-gate perspective, reducing the holding time on the ground and when airborne.

It is recognized that beyond any efficiency gains that may be realized in terms of service delivery, additional investment may be needed to allow ATM systems to help address the challenges posed by climate change and aviation emissions.

# Historical background

- Oct 2002:** ETF Joint Air Traffic Management Working Group (JATMWG) organizes a conference in Rome on the Single European Sky project.
- May 2003:** the European Social Partners ETF and CANSO write a letter to Transport Commissioner requesting that Functional Airspace Blocks (FABs) are initiated under the bottom-up approach.
- June 2003:** ETF-JATMWG organizes a conference in Toulouse which focuses on safety chain and on the role of the FABs.
- March 2004:** adoption of the Single European Sky (SES) legislative package. One of the main provisions of the legislation is the reconfiguration of European upper airspace into FABs (article 5 of the airspace regulation). The “bottom-up” approach even if not explicitly mentioned in this regulation is clearly favored.
- Sept 2004:** ETF & CANSO organize a conference about FABs in Palermo (Italy). As a result, the European Social Partners ETF & CANSO adopt general principles for FAB establishment. Those principles remain nowadays a reference for all.
- Feb 2006:** ETF & CANSO adopt their **“report of the Social Dialogue ATM Working Group into the implications of FABs”** which is the outcome of the work they had conducted in the 15 meetings of different sub-groups in 2005.
- May 2006:** the ETF-JATMWG sets up the “FAB coordination and monitor Working Group” led by Riccardo Rubini.
- June 2006:** the Italian Trade-Union FIT-CISL, member of ETF, organizes a conference about FAB establishment in Rome. President of European Parliament Transport Committee participates in this Conference.
- Jan 2007:** ETF & CANSO organize jointly a press conference in the building of the European Parliament in Brussels and they give a presentation of a common statement about FAB establishment. Jean-Pierre Etienne states that **“Social Dialogue is the key to success”**.



- July 2007:** ETF-JATMWG conference in Southampton calls upon the European Institutions and the Member States to give full support to the **“bottom up approach”**.
- July 2007:** ETF & CANSO publish “Guidelines for Consultation arrangements for Functional Airspace Blocks”.
- Oct 2007:** European Social Partners ETF & CANSO second conference held in Paris (France).
- Nov 2007:** the plenary session of the ETF-JATMWG held in Brussels decides to expand the scope of their draft COOP MODEL originally designed for the FABEC to all FABs in Europe. Olivier Joffrin emphasizes the **public service role of the ANSPs**.
- Jan 2008:** at the EU conference held in Brussels on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of January, President of the ETF-JATMWG Laurence King states that **“defragmentation should be addressed through cooperation”**.
- Feb 2008:** Commissioner Barrot, Vice-President of the European Commission, holds a meeting with an ETF-USF-EPSU delegation about future of ATM. ETF expresses its view about the FAB establishment process and gives a short presentation of the “COOP MODEL”.

# Acronyms

<b>ACC</b> : Area Control Centre	<b>ETF</b> : European Transport workers' Federation
<b>AIS</b> : Aeronautical Information Services	<b>FAB</b> : Functional Airspace Block
<b>ANSP</b> : Air Navigation Services Provider	<b>FDP</b> : Flight Data Processing
<b>ATC</b> : Air Traffic Control	<b>JATMWG</b> : Joint Air Traffic Management Working Group
<b>ATCO</b> : Air Traffic Control Officer	<b>MET</b> : Meteorological (information)
<b>ATM</b> : Air Traffic Management	<b>NSA</b> : National Supervisory Authority
<b>CANSO</b> : Civil Air Navigation Services Organisation	<b>SES</b> : Single European Sky
<b>CNS</b> : Communication, Navigation & Surveillance	<b>SESAR</b> : Single European Sky ATM Research
<b>EPSU</b> : European federation of Public Service Unions	<b>USF</b> : Union Syndicale Federale



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[www.etf-europe.org](http://www.etf-europe.org)

**The European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF)** is the only pan-European trade union organization embracing transport trade unions from all geographic Europe: from Albania to United Kingdom. The ETF has its seat in Brussels.

The ETF has affiliated 223 unions organizing workers in railways, road transport, maritime transport, ports and docks, inland navigation, civil aviation, fisheries and tourism services. The ETF represents some two and a half million workers from 40 European countries.

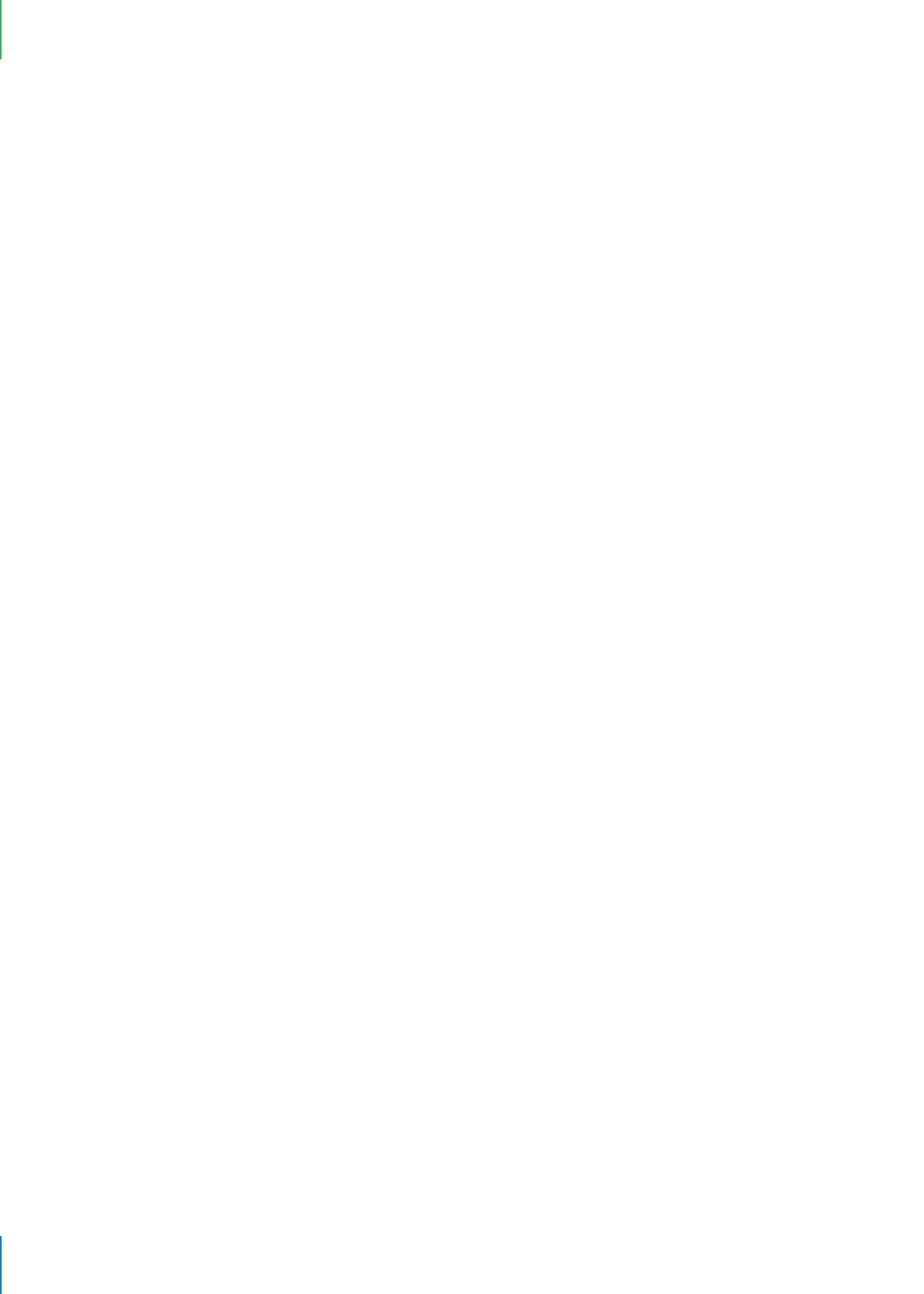
The ETF is the recognized Social Partner in the European Social Dialogue in the transport industry and in fisheries and represents the interests of transport workers across Europe vis-à-vis the European Commission, the European Parliament, the Council of Ministers, and the other institutions of the European union.

The ETF Joint Air Traffic Management Working Group (JATMWG) is the trade union body, from the Civil Aviation Section, that co-ordinates and represents the views of trade union members working in Air Traffic Management Services and related bodies throughout Europe.



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[www.jatmwg.org](http://www.jatmwg.org)





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