



Joint CANSO - ETF Conference
“FUNCTIONAL AIRSPACE BLOCKS”
Palermo, Italy, 17-18 September, 2004

JOINT STATEMENT FROM THE PALERMO CONFERENCE

SOCIAL PARTNERS: KEY PLAYERS IN THE FABs

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1. The conference considers that safety is paramount. Any changes to the airspace structure will have to be supported by a safety case.
2. The conference recognises that the Aviation industry is one of the drivers for economic growth in all industrial sectors in the European Union, and accepts that there will be a need to develop increased capacity in the ATM system to meet these requirements.
3. The conference recognises that the people best qualified to ensure that ATM capacity is increased whilst maintaining safety are the ANSPs with their highly qualified staff.
4. The conference agrees that it is essential that unions and employers should work together to minimise safety risks, to maximise efficiency and to identify barriers to improvement in capacity.
5. Conference agreed that one model of FABs would not fit all.
6. Due to the changes with SES, the conference identified the need for review of the role of Eurocontrol.
7. The conference accepted that consultation between workers and employers on the development of FABs was essential.
8. Consultation and negotiations on FABs at national level between the ANSPs and trade unions remains vital.
9. European social partners will discuss the development of additional guidelines for consultation according to best practices.

OPERATIONAL & TECHNICAL ISSUES

1. The conference agreed that FABs alone would not deliver the required capacity. The conference recognised that Flexible use of airspace needs to be enhanced and developed.
2. The conference accepted that the primary aim of a FAB is to increase ATM performance and specifically safety, capacity, efficiency and cost effectiveness.
3. The conference agreed that FABs may encompass enhanced cross-border cooperation but would have to deal with the following issues
 - Safety and performance management
 - ATFCM and FUA functional integration
 - Civil/military cooperation & joint planning
 - Common planning and design criteria for airspace and sectorisation
 - Human resources management and training
 - Interoperability, systems development and procurement
 - Organisation, management and financing of services
4. The conference accepted that a FAB does not require the concentration of all ANS functions on one site. Several ACCs from several ANSPs can contribute to one FAB.
5. The conference accepted that different models of FABs will have to be developed on a European-wide basis, reflecting different regional characteristics (traffic flows, airport density, institutional or legal constraints, or even social, cultural and environmental specificities)
6. Taking due account of the contributions made during the proceedings, the conference agreed that further discussions at technical level could help in developing common general principles for FABs towards the harmonisation of the European ATM system.

HUMAN RESOURCES ISSUES

1. The conference recognised the importance of the social dialogue in the future progress of the FABs. The social dialogue can have a dynamic role in order to give a framework of the next development.
2. The conference agreed that the ETF and CANSO should adopt joint framework agreements or joint recommendations in the European ATM working Group of the Civil Aviation Sectoral Committee on the followed issues:
 - Education, Training and Licensing;
 - Work Organisation;
 - Safety and Just culture;
 - Mobility of ATM staff;
 - Impact on Technology;
 - Attracting and retaining staff;
 - Support exchange of information and consultation at national level
3. The conference noted that there would be a number of issues that would need to be clarified. These included:
 - i. Terms and conditions of employment that would be applied in the new FABs
 - ii. Legal status of ATM staff
 - iii. Laws applicable to ATM personnel in the FAB
 - iv. Transfers of personnel
 - v. Resolution of conflict
4. Looking for best practices and using the findings of the study on Impact of SES, social partners are committed to explore best practices with a view wherever possible to avoid enforced redundancies

ECONOMICAL & FINANCIAL ISSUES

1. The conference agreed that FABs should only be established where there was a clear operational advantage.
2. The conference endorsed the cost efficiency through co-operation approach in line with the Lisbon declaration.
3. The conference supported the concept that FABs could be run by one or more ANSPs.
4. The conference agreed that a pragmatic approach to each FAB was more likely to produce sustainable improvements.

ACTION PLAN

Social partners will develop an action plan to take forward the conclusions of the conference.