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Belgocontrol ensures service provision at Ostend airport through collaboration with NATS

For each of the five airports where Belgocontrol manages the air traffic, the company elaborates procedures – a business continuity plan – so as to guarantee service provision in case of technical difficulties or other incidents. Last year such a plan entered into force at the airports of Charleroi and Liège. Up next is Ostend: the new procedure was introduced on 25 May in collaboration with British air traffic controller NATS.

The purpose of a continuity procedure is to make sure that aircraft can still perform landings and take-offs at our regional airports in case of (electrical) failures or other similar incidents. The number of movements however, will be restricted to 6 per hour in such situations.

In order to continue providing its services, Belgocontrol calls on its neighbouring countries' air traffic control services. For departures from and arrivals at Ostend airport such an agreement has been concluded with the British air navigation service provider NATS (National Air Traffic Service). Whenever necessary, the aircraft will be guided by the control centre from Ostend up to the Belgian border, at which point the Swanwick (GB) air traffic controllers will take over in order for them to continue their trajectory. A special emergency file with the modified flight paths and profiles has been drawn up in collaboration with Eurocontrol (Haren). The latter will initiate the procedures at the request of Belgocontrol so that the planned flights can continue to take place.

For Charleroi such an agreement was entered into last year with the French air navigation service provider DSNA (Direction des Services de la Navigation Aérienne), for Liège with DFS (Deutsche Flugsicherung).



About Belgocontrol

Belgocontrol is an autonomous public company, created in October 1998, with the mission to guarantee the safety of air navigation in the airspace for which Belgium is responsible. Its zone of activities extends from ground level (at Brussels Airport and the airports of Antwerp, Charleroi, Liege and Ostend) to flight level 245 (8,000 meters) above Belgium and from flight levels 145/165 to 245 for the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg.

The EUROCONTROL centre in Maastricht is responsible for the area above 8,000 metres, and jointly manages the air traffic of the upper airspace of Belgium, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the western part of Germany.

About FABEC

The restructuring of the European airspace into functional airspace blocks (FAB), in which the European Union member States are involved, is one of the most visible results of the European Single Sky regulations adopted in March 2004. Although Switzerland is not a EU member, the country also participates in the Single Sky project.

Belgocontrol, the Belgian air navigation service provider, as well as its counterparts in Germany, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Switzerland constitute the member states of FABEC, which aims to improve efficiency of air navigation in central Europe. For more information about FABEC, please visit the website www.fabec.eu.

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