



*Reflection by FABEC on interFAB coordination workshop
Amsterdam, 18 and 19 November 2014*

Functional Airspace Blocks: added value with different approach

The Dutch presidency of FAB Europe Central organised an interFAB coordination workshop that brought together State representatives of all nine Functional Airspace Blocks (FABs) to Amsterdam on 18 and 19 November 2014. The workshop created an informal platform to exchange information and share lessons learned. 'We can help each other in finding the best solutions to create efficient FABs, now we are well underway with the implementation of our FABs', explained Rob Huyser acting Director-General Civil Aviation in the Netherlands. Many FAB themes were discussed frankly and in a very positive mood by the nearly fifty participants.

It becomes very clear that all FABs have worked hard to get their FAB running. Each FAB has made progress over the recent years and is showing its added value. While most FABs have set up a similar structure, various successful approaches and gained experience were exchanged and discussed. Broad consensus was seen to strengthen and enhance to share lessons learned (coordination) as well as working together to a specific result at project level (cooperation).

Free route airspace

Cooperation between FABs is already successfully taking place for the implementation of the free route airspace concept. Since every FAB is creating free route airspace, it was seen as the keystone airspace project. FABs judge cooperation in this field as very valuable.

Organisational structure

The organisational structure of each FAB seems to be similar: all FABs have established a State-led council, while operational projects are taken up by their air navigation service providers (ANSPs). Differences in the structure are noted in the way of involving meteorological services as well as how the consultation of airspace users is organised. The culture of cooperation between civil and military parties at FAB state level was seen as very positive in general. Furthermore, the range of themes that are managed at FAB level differs, as for example some FABs have incorporated the future challenge of incorporating SESAR requirements in their FAB organisational structure. Lastly, one FAB established a legal entity to support its activities.

ANSP cooperation

Different ways of ANSP cooperation were briefly considered. Some ANSPs use the same system, work from the same location and/or share one training programme. Other FABs look for a financial system in order to encourage further progress in redesigning the airspace.

Follow-up coordination

InterFAB coordination is beneficial. Different known settings for coordination could be distinguished, like the National Supervisory Authority coordination platform and this interFAB workshop. In addition, ideas for enhanced future coordination were mentioned. FABs talked through the opportunity of taking up an active role to shape the future of FABs. The set-up of an interFAB group at State level will be looked into as well.

At the end of the workshop all FABs very much welcomed the initiative of Danube FAB to organise a follow-up interFAB workshop in Bucharest in 2015.

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