

## *More challenges ahead*



ATCEUC grew bigger last April. In Bucharest we welcomed on-board BHATCU from Bosnia and Herzegovina and ACV/Transcom CSC/Transcom from Belgium. The more the merrier, hence the big smiles!

Dear members and colleagues,

After our meeting in Bucharest last April the EB intensified work in preparation for the Performance Plans for RP2 with the aim to assist ATCEUC members. In this context, we organized an ad hoc workshop in collaboration with the PRB Chairman Peter Griffiths, available to all ATCEUC members. It was held on July 1<sup>st</sup> and was attended by more than 30 representatives on behalf of 17 unions members of ATCEUC. At the workshop Mr Griffiths invited ATCEUC unions to express openly their concerns regarding the submitted Performance Plans during a meeting to be held on 3 September with state representatives. More details for planning purposes on this meeting will be disseminated as they become available.

The Performance Plans were prepared both at national and at FAB level and delivered to the European Commission in June for evaluation. However, in many countries there was no prior consultation with national stakeholders, including ATM staff representatives. We are one of the pillars of the Single European Sky but we were openly ignored. This was brought to the attention of the EU social dialogue bodies as a clear violation of the EU legislation. We expect from the PRB Chairman to take action against the responsible state authorities, as he declared and promised during the ATCEUC Committee Meeting in Malta in October 2013.

In the second half of 2014 the new Single European Sky legislation SES2+ remains a priority in the agenda of the Italian presidency. It is of vital importance to ATCEUC members to intensify lobbying governments and ministries at state level, to show them that SES2+ serves only the profit interests of airlines, at the expense of valuable economic resources necessary to continue to guarantee safety and efficiency in ATM all over Europe.

At the same time we are looking into ways to improve the structure and organization within ATCEUC to enable us to better manage our limited resources and to provide better representation of our members in the Executive Board and the Committee Meeting.

During the Bucharest Meeting the need to amend again the Statutes, Rules and Standing Orders and Financial Rules of ATCEUC became evident, especially concerning the representation of unions from the same country, voting rights and financial transparency. A working group was established to study and propose changes to reform ATCEUC in order to enable all of us to face the challenges ahead with confidence and efficiency.

For comments, opinions and suggestions regarding this Newsletter please send an email to [board@atceuc.org](mailto:board@atceuc.org)

## *Aviation on remote control*

We have all heard of UAV or UAS before, but what about RPAS? Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems is the new ICAO acronym that describes what most people simply refer to as “drones”. ICAO distinguishes between RPAS and autonomous aircraft, but for now only RPAS are being discussed. The EU is trying to find ways to achieve the safe integration of RPAS into non-segregated ATM environment as part of SESAR. According to Eurocontrol, “The overall approach towards integration is that RPAS will have to fit into the ATM system and not that the ATM system needs to significantly adapt to enable the safe integration of RPAS. RPAS will have to prove to be as safe as current manned operations, or safer. RPAS behaviour in operations will also have to be equivalent to manned aviation, in particular for the air traffic control (ATC), as it will not be possible for the ATC to effectively handle many different types of RPAS with different contingency procedures.” For the regulatory part there are only a few changes to the scope of ICAO Rules of the Air which EASA is transposing through an amendment to the Regulation 923/2012 - Standardised European Rules of the Air.

Another novelty that will affect the way ATCOs work is Remotely Operated Towers (previously known as Virtual Towers) or Remote Tower Services, the new name adopted by SESAR JU. As one manufacturer describes it, “Cameras and sensors are strategically placed at the airport and everything they register is linked in real time to air traffic control and projected on 360 degree screens. Rather than looking through the window at the aircraft, you see them on the screen. At air traffic control, the air traffic controller controls and steers air traffic just like in the tower.” The concept is supposed to provide cost effectiveness and the ability to operate for longer periods. As SESAR JU puts it, “The Remote Tower concept enables Air Traffic Control services (ATS) and Aerodrome Flight Information Services (AFIS) to be provided at aerodromes where such services are either currently unavailable, or where it is difficult or too expensive to implement and staff a conventional manned facility.”

ATEUC follows closely the developments by participating in the SESAR WP 6.9.3, with a recent workshop organized in Dublin in June 2014. The three main roles of RTS are

- Single Tower, where one aerodrome is controlled by one remote tower
- Multiple Tower, where more than one aerodromes can be remotely provided with ATC service by one “remote” controller at the same time
- Contingency Tower, a concept defined to substitute local contingency Towers by remote ones, in medium to large airports.

It should be noted that Multiple and Contingency Towers constitute a radical and unprecedented change in ATS provision.

ATCEUC is following the SESAR developments but we will not accept the provision of air traffic control service to more than one airports at the same time. ICAO PANS-ATM clearly states: "Aerodrome controllers shall maintain a *continuous watch* on all flight operations on and in the vicinity of an aerodrome as well as vehicles and personnel on the maneuvering area".

## **EASA**

EASA continues to be a major focus of ATCEUC effort. Our Working Group follows several EASA proposals affecting ATCOs and ANSPs. The ATCO Licensing Regulation draft was submitted to the European Commission and is now under review by the “comitology process” (Single Sky Committee and EASA Committee).

The EASA Committee delivered a positive vote on the regulatory proposal and we may now expect its adoption by the Commission. The rule is expected to become applicable on 30 June 2015 and a transition period will allow Member States and stakeholders to gradually introduce the requirements to be fully aligned with the new system by 31 December 2016. We will be able to provide further input on the acceptable means of compliance (AMC) and guidance material (GM) just before its publication. Regarding the ANSPs and their oversight we are still working on the publication of EASA’s answers to the public consultation, with a deadline set in mid-August.

The public consultation on the amendments of SERA (Standardised European Rules of the Air) and on the Safety Performance Indicators (SPI) has now concluded. We are waiting for the EASA Opinion along with the proposed draft that will be forwarded to the EC, and also for the Executive Director Decision on the SPI. Currently we are dealing with the proposed SERA amendments on the remotely operated aircraft systems (RPAS) and the consultation on the changes of the basic regulation. The latter is very important because it concerns the future of EASA. It is focused on how stakeholders envision the regulatory system and the EASA governance updates. The future of civil aviation in Europe in this aspect is being discussed until mid-September.

The publication of a proposal for the safety assessment of changes in ATM/ANS functional systems and two new rulemaking tasks on ATS requirements and Remote Towers are still pending.

On 11 June 2014 ATCEUC EB members and our EASA Team participated in a workshop in EASA’s headquarters in Cologne on the Rulemaking Procedure and Rulemaking Plan for the next four years. The meeting was fruitful and will increase our capacity to better follow developments and provide comments during public consultations.

It is also important to underline the coordination of our EASA Working Group with CANSO and ETF. We were able to reach common positions on several pending issues and this cooperation will continue.



**The next Committee Meeting will be held in Sarajevo on 1-3 October 2014. Note that again the meeting will last for three days and will end by 13:00 on Friday.**