

Performance first half 2017

Above-average traffic increase affects punctuality

19 September 2017 – Even with unexpected high traffic growth and high traffic volatility, FABEC ANSPs improved their operational performance in the first six months of 2017 in comparison to the mid-year values of 2016. Nevertheless, adverse weather conditions, staffing issues and insufficient ATC capacity led to results below target values. Traffic in the first six months of 2017 increased by + 3.9 percent to 2.86 million safely controlled flights (January to June 2016: 2.75 million). Although this growth is significantly above the STATFOR baseline forecast (published in 2015), there are sizeable differences between FABEC ANSPs ranging from Belgocontrol with + 7.0 percent to skyguide with + 2.7 percent traffic increase. Furthermore, some control centres and sectors reported a local traffic boost. Today, air navigation service providers have to cope with unpredicted changes in traffic flows in terms of quantity, routings and time, which makes capacity planning in the frame of a rigid regulatory system a serious challenge.

Traffic volatility adversely affects ATC capacity

Despite the unexpected increase in air traffic demand, punctuality continues along a favourable path. In the first half of 2017, 94.8 percent of all flights in the FABEC area experienced no delays caused by air traffic control (ATFM en-route delays). 98.1 percent arrived at their destination airports on time, i.e. within 15 minutes of the scheduled time. The average delay due to en-route ATFM measures was roughly 50 seconds per flight (0.83 min./flight), significantly less than during the same period of 2016 (74 seconds or 1.23 min./flight). The primary causes for delays were ATC capacity, adverse weather, industrial action and staffing shortages. Despite this positive trend, FABEC ANSPs will most probably not reach the capacity target for 2017.

A comparison between the delay situation in 2014 (end of RP 1) and today shows that the core area has registered an above-average deterioration in punctuality. This can partially be explained by the unexpected traffic growth after almost ten years of stagnating traffic as the industry has pushed for cost reductions. In light of the unexpected high traffic demand, this strategy may be questioned as it shows that the related underinvestment is now resulting in capacity shortfalls due to ATCO availability and system implementations.

Airport punctuality remains excellent

In the first half 2017, airport punctuality developed positively: the number of take-offs and landings at the 83 FABEC airports rose to 1.26 million (+ 2.7 percent). At the 83 monitored FABEC airports, punctuality remained excellent and slightly improved from 48.6 seconds/flight (0.81 min.) in the period from January to June 2016 to only 46.8 seconds/flight (0.78 min.) in the same period of 2017.

If you are interested in the overall aviation system and how passengers are impacted by traffic growth and punctuality, the Central Office of Delay Analysis (CODA) can provide



more detailed information based on feedback from pilots. You can find the June report [here](#).

More detailed information on the performance of air navigation service provision can be found under: www.fabec.eu, www.ansppperformance.eu and www.eurocontrol.int/network-operations.

The airspace of the six FABEC States of Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Switzerland is one of the busiest and most complex in the world. The majority of major European airports, major civil airways and military training areas are located in this area. FABEC airspace covers 1.7 million km² and handles about 5.5 million flights per year – 55% of European air traffic. The seven civil air navigation service providers are ANA (Luxembourg), Belgocontrol (Belgium), DFS (Germany), DSNA (France), LVNL (Netherlands), MUAC (EUROCONTROL), and skyguide (Switzerland).

For more information, please contact:

Roland Beran, FABEC: +49 171 2139896
Yves Soumer, ANA: +352 4798 22010
Nadine Meesen, Belgocontrol: +32 2 206 2023
Kristina Kelek, DFS: +49 6103 707 4161
François Richard-Bôle, DSNA: +33 1 5809 4815
Linda van Dort, LVNL: +31 6 53 24 22 32
Mireille Roman, MUAC: +31 43 366 1352
Vladi Barrosa, Skyguide: +41 22 417 40 08

