

Performance

FABEC ANSPs control all-time high – Aviation remains safe and punctual

13 February 2017; In 2016, air traffic controllers guided 5.79 million flights (+ 3.2 percent) safely and punctually through the FABEC airspace. This was an all-time high for traffic volume, topping the historical peak reached in 2007. The main cause of this development was the overarching positive trend on the aviation market, which continued for the third consecutive year. A further influential factor was the volatility of tourism due to the geo-political situation. Thus, the popularity of holiday destinations such as the western Mediterranean and the Canary Islands increased the number of flights in FABEC airspace. Despite this overall trend, there are significant variations between control centres and individual sectors. The bandwidth of growth for FABEC ANSPs varies between 0.1 and 4.9 percent. Individual growth rates at the control centre or sector level can be significantly higher. Additional positive results were noted at the 83 airports in the FABEC area. The number of arrivals grew by 2.0 percent in 2016.

“These figures demonstrate that European aviation is a growing market. We as ANSPs are happy to provide the infrastructure needed to ensure safe and punctual flights,” said Klaus-Dieter Scheurle, CEO of DFS, who is also responsible for performance in FABEC. “To safeguard this in the future we will increase our efforts to improve our capacity performance.”



Air traffic punctuality remains good. In the first half of 2016, 94.1 percent of all flights experienced no delays caused by air traffic control (ATFM en-route delays). 97.5 percent arrived at their destination airports on time, i.e. within 15 minutes of the scheduled time. Nevertheless, the average delay due to ATFM measures en-route



increased from 42 seconds to 64 seconds per flight. The main reasons for delays were a lack of capacity at the control centres of Brest (implementation of the new ERATO ATC tool) and Maastricht, adverse weather in the airspace controlled by Maastricht and Karlsruhe, industrial actions in France and staff shortages in the centres of Brussels, Langen and Karlsruhe. It was the first time that the weather – particularly the severe thunderstorms in the second quarter of 2016 – had such an enormous impact. At the 83 FABEC airports, punctuality remained excellent. Delay related to air traffic control was negligible. Most of the delay occurred (57 percent) at airports was due to adverse weather.

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 5.8 million flights per year – 55% of European air traffic.

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