



One Europe, one sky

Improving Europe's air traffic management system is a priority

The European Union, with the support of Boeing and the commercial aviation industry, is working intently to address the challenge of fragmentation of its air traffic control network.

While the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration has the advantage of controlling air traffic within the boundaries of one geographically large nation, Europe is divided into many nations that have independent air traffic control systems.

The European Union's Single European Sky initiative has been working to transform the air traffic control system. Boeing and Airbus are jointly supporting the timely implementation of global interoperability in air traffic management (ATM).

The European Commission created a program called SESAR, short for Single European Sky ATM Research. "SESAR's goal—like that of our FAA counterpart, NextGen—is to develop air traffic control systems that establish a homogenous air traffic system, with the technology and systems needed to increase safety and efficiency," said Patrick Ky, executive director of the SESAR Joint Undertaking.

In addition to building a more efficient commercial air system, the network is being designed to allow NATO and other military training exercises to operate more

safely in restricted airspace, away from commercial flight paths.

"It's really important for our customers that SESAR succeed," said Neil Planzer, vice president, ATM Transformation, Boeing Commercial Airplanes. "We need an interoperable system between the U.S. and Europe. If we can cover these two regions—roughly 80 percent of the world's air traffic—we're on our way to interoperability worldwide."

Mike Lewis, director of Aviation Infrastructure for Commercial Airplanes, said Boeing has been a strong advocate for bringing continuity to air traffic management systems.

Growth of the airline industry to accommodate greater traffic depends on the implementation of global interoperability. Improvements in air traffic management also represent the best short-term opportunity to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by jetliners.

Paco Escarti, managing director of Boeing Research & Technology, Europe, said the company's research facility in Madrid is working on aircraft guidance technologies to allow continuous descent landing approaches at highly congested airports.

"This is a project we're very excited about, because of its possibilities for enhancing airport operations," Escarti said.

— Bill Seil

EU

in practice



The European Union is a unique economic and political partnership between 27 democratic European countries.

How does it work?

Three primary institutions produce the policies and laws that are enforced widely throughout Europe:

- The European Parliament represents the people of Europe.
- The Council of the European Union represents national governments.
- The European Commission represents the common interests of the union and proposes legislation.

Source: *Europa*

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