Commission urges Member States to speed up the construction of a single European sky

This technical annex overviews the ongoing discussions on the establishment of functional airspace blocks, reflecting the state of play mid-March 2007.

1. **Nordic initiatives:**
   - The definition phase of the Nordic Upper Area Centre (NUAC) programme, managed by the Danish and Swedish air navigation service providers, is nearly finalised. The draft report has been made public and has been subject to formal stakeholder consultation. The proposed NUAC Company (2008) and accompanying Danish/Swedish FAB are expected to be fully operational by 2011.
   - At the same time, the six air navigation services providers from Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Iceland and Estonia have agreed on a "Nordic Air Traffic Management Service Concept" which aims at providing harmonized and cost-efficient service provision in the Nordic area. On 16 February 2007, Ireland has joined this initiative.

2. **UK & Eire:**
   - For two years, the British "National Air Traffic Service" (NATS) and the Irish Irish Aviation Authority (IAA) have been discussing on the possibility of establishing a bilateral FAB. The feasibility and options phase supported by a draft business case has been completed and the reports have been subject to user and stakeholder consultation. Present issues being addressed are the scope and the governance of the proposed FAB. Next steps are simulations to validate service quality benefits, while the development and implementation phase could follow from October 2007.
   - The situation is not completely clear now that the IAA has joined the Nordic initiative.

3. **Central Europe**
   - Initial discussions between France and Switzerland on the one hand and the Benelux and Germany, together with the Maastricht Upper Area Centre managed by Eurocontrol, on the other, led to feasibility studies in the period 2005-2006. Late 2006, the six states decided to merge their initiatives in a "Central FAB". A detailed feasibility study was officially launched in November 2006 and should be completed by mid-2008.

4. **Spain & Portugal:**
   - At present the bilateral cooperation and work programme are being reconsidered, following a first “FAB analysis” agreement in summer 2005. A new analysis will start in February/March 2007.
5. **Bulgaria & Romania:**

- Following an initial agreement between State representatives of Bulgaria, Moldova, Romania & Turkey in July 2003, the two air navigation service providers of Romania and Bulgaria, ROMATSA and ATSA Bulgaria, signed “The initiative for creation the pre-requisites for the establishment of a FAB” within the airspace of the two countries. For the moment, the service providers are about to launch an international tender for a feasibility study that will identify options and make recommendations for a **BUL-ROM FAB**. The “Go/NoGo” decision will follow this study.

6. **South-East Europe**

- The South East European Functional Airspace Block approach (SEE FABA) is of a particular nature. It promotes regional cooperation in the Balkan and offers the opportunity to reopen the Kosovo airspace. The Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe and the Commission took the lead and offered the **political framework** in which collaboration between the states could get firm grip.¹

- After a preliminary study phase, the directors-general of the states decided to launch a feasibility phase (February 2006) to seek solutions in the form of integrated management to the forecasted traffic growth of up to 30% a year. The **European Common Aviation Area Agreement** extends the Community aviation market to all partner countries, which will apply the Community acquis, including single European sky regulation. The definition phase should deliver concrete results by 2009, so as to put the countries in a position to decide on the preferred options and start implementing them. The Bul-Rom initiative take place within the wider SEE-FABA project.

7. **South-Europe:**

- In December 2006 service providers of four Mediterranean countries (Italy – ENAV, Cyprus - DCAC, Greece, - HCAA and Malta – MATS) launched a feasibility study supported by TEN-T funding into the development of an FAB named “**Blue Med**”. The feasibility study results are expected early 2008 and may be continued, on basis of political commitment, in definition (2008-09) and implementation phases (2010-12). The service provider of Tunisia participates as an observer. Egypt is still considering its decision.

- In addition to its support to SEE FABA, ENAV of Italy is meanwhile pursuing discussions with the Swiss and French providers to facilitate structured and coherent cross-border cooperation.

8. **East-Europe:**

- Poland and Lithuania notified the Commission on their **Banc** initiative to establish cooperation between service providers of the two member States.

¹ Albania, Bosnia–Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania, Serbia, Montenegro, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia along with the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) are involved with the support of Greece, Italy, Eurocontrol, ICAO and NATO.