

Summary

1. BLUE MED Route Network Catalogue vers. 4.0
2. Summer 2015 – BLUE MED ATFCM Task Force activity
3. Safety performance monitoring within BLUE MED
4. E-eTOKAI implementation: pilot case in Blue Med FAB
5. BLUEGNSS: improving the BLUE MED performances!
6. Striving for professional excellence in Human Resource aspects through synergies and harmonisation
7. BLUE MED joined for the One Year Old Platform...

1. BLUE MED Route Network Catalogue vers. 4.0

The BLUE MED Route Network Catalogue is a catalogue of routes that is coordinated through a collaborative planning process to deliver airspace design improvements in BLUE MED FAB. The latest version of the BM Route Network Catalogue was released with the beginning of the BM Implementation Phase.

Route proposals are evaluated for flight efficiency and capacity with the scope of meeting the objectives set by EU Performance Indicators for Capacity and Environment under the RP2 criteria. Each route is evaluated for feasibility and savings and a recent airspace simulation analysis [using Network Manager tool NEST], produced the potential global savings for the route proposals in RNC Version 4.0:

Daily distance saving	63,036.14 NM
Daily time saving	8,446.59 Mins
Daily fuel saving	396,067.45 Kg
Daily CO2 emission reduction	1,251,556.39 Kg

1. BLUE MED Route Network Catalogue vers. 4.0

>> [From the previous page](#)

The registered savings were calculated for the 47 route proposals, most of which will be implemented in within the 2016 / 2017 timeframe. One might observe that the number of route proposals, compared with the previous releases of the Route Network Catalogue, has reduced drastically. This is due to the introduction of the Direct Route Airspace scenario in preparation of the BLUE MED Free Route Airspace.

The Route Network Catalogue is managed and maintained by the members of the BLUE MED RNC Task Force who meet up every 6 months to review the proposals and coordinate implementation dates. Furthermore, the RNC is presented as a deliverable and is presented in June and December respectively.

ROUTE PROPOSAL									
Identification	BM45 (METS to LIS)								
Registration date	17/05/2016 10:10								
Description	PRG - PNC - PEG								
Potential flights: (zone or missed)	AZ01 started route assignment 17								
Potential savings:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>PL_2016 distance saving</td> <td>-107 50 km</td> </tr> <tr> <td>PL_2016 time saving</td> <td>-01 Hour</td> </tr> <tr> <td>PL_2016 fuel saving</td> <td>-4882.50 kg</td> </tr> <tr> <td>PL_2016 CO2 emission reduction</td> <td>-1877.67 kg</td> </tr> </table>	PL_2016 distance saving	-107 50 km	PL_2016 time saving	-01 Hour	PL_2016 fuel saving	-4882.50 kg	PL_2016 CO2 emission reduction	-1877.67 kg
PL_2016 distance saving	-107 50 km								
PL_2016 time saving	-01 Hour								
PL_2016 fuel saving	-4882.50 kg								
PL_2016 CO2 emission reduction	-1877.67 kg								
Remarks	12 proposed routes to LIS (code: MGS/PRG/PEG) - PNC - PEG Added to process 201617								

How does it work?

When a route is designed and considered for implementation, it is circulated within the RNC Task Force for evaluation. The route proposal's eligibility is considered on the basis of flight efficiency as well as the possible extension across FIR borders.

Upon validation by the RNC TF, the route proposal is inserted in the catalogue and a unique BM Identification Number is allocated.

For monitoring purposes and ease of reference, proposals are coded as follows:

- Green for implemented proposals
- White for pending proposals
- Red for deleted proposals

In view of the fact that most of the route proposals have now been implemented or deleted because the routes are no longer feasible, the version 4 of the RNC has been divided into 3 parts - Route proposals, Implemented proposals and Deleted proposals.

In the RNC layout, the characteristics of the route are documents together with a map which gives the reader a graphical representation of the route proposal, danger area activity (as this will affect the route availability) as well as the total savings over existent routes in the network.

Differently from the previous editions of the RNC, the current route proposals were evaluated on a 7 day traffic sample within the route network traffic simulations in ECAC states. The traffic sample contained a significant sample of mixed planned traffic integrating the daily planned traffic jointly with the holiday planned traffic. In turn, this produced a realistic assumption of the traffic figures expected on the route proposals during peak months and better calculation on savings.

The Route Network Catalogue and Free Route

Within BLUE MED, the process to shift from a Route Network Airspace to Free Route airspace has started with all BLUE MED states implementing the first set of Direct Routes to create a Direct Route Airspace.

In order to achieve a Cross Border Free Route Airspace, the changes to the airspace infrastructure will be executed in phases as shown below:

- Phase 1: Direct Routes - INTRA FIR
- Phase 2: Direct Routes - Cross Border FIR
- Phase 3: Cross Border Free Route Airspace

For this purpose, a Direct Route Catalogue has been created as a repository for the Direct Routes implemented for this new concept. The Direct Route Catalogue will be issued as a deliverable together with the Route Network Catalogue and will be circulated twice a year.

2. Summer 2015 – BLUE MED ATFCM Task Force activity

The Summer season just ended was characterized by the study and promulgation of alternative scenarios including routes normally flown in BLUE MED Area and particularly in Greek airspace where, a gap between the increased traffic demand and available capacity, was identified.

The BLUE MED ANSP Committee has promoted the deployment of all possible measures to mitigate the impact to users and to other ANSPs as a result of the delays produced by the Greek ATC sector regulations.

Under this consideration, the Committee has assigned to the ATFCM Task Force the task of the daily flows monitoring in the FAB area with the aim to offer the AOs shorter routes within BM area, with no delays. Thanks to the efforts of Greece, Malta, Cyprus and Italy specific flows on specific routes were identified within the Greek airspace, that could be excluded from the ATFCM regulations.

The choice of routes to be excluded was driven by two factors: overflight traffic not interacted with traffic to and from Greek airports and the limited time of flight in the regulated ATC sector. Using these two criteria, some AOs were able to conduct their flights across the FAB Area without delays.

Specifically, flights via (a) LEVDI-ARLOS-SALUN and (b) METRU-ARLOS, have not been affected by Greek ATFM regulations.

(a) LEVDI-ARLOS-SALUN: Flights that could be benefit from the specific route, have been identified as follows:

departures from France, Belgium, UK, Switzerland and Italy to Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia or otherwise scheduled to eastern countries with initial routes planned across the FAB area.

(b) METRU-ARLOS: only applicable to flights departing from Egypt to all destinations.

The tool used to inform and attract the AOs to use these routes was the issue of finalised AIM and in particular:

- daily AIM published from August 1st 2015;
- an AIM explaining the entire procedure named "Greece – Kefalinia-Paleohora (KFPL) Exclusions" published in September 2015.

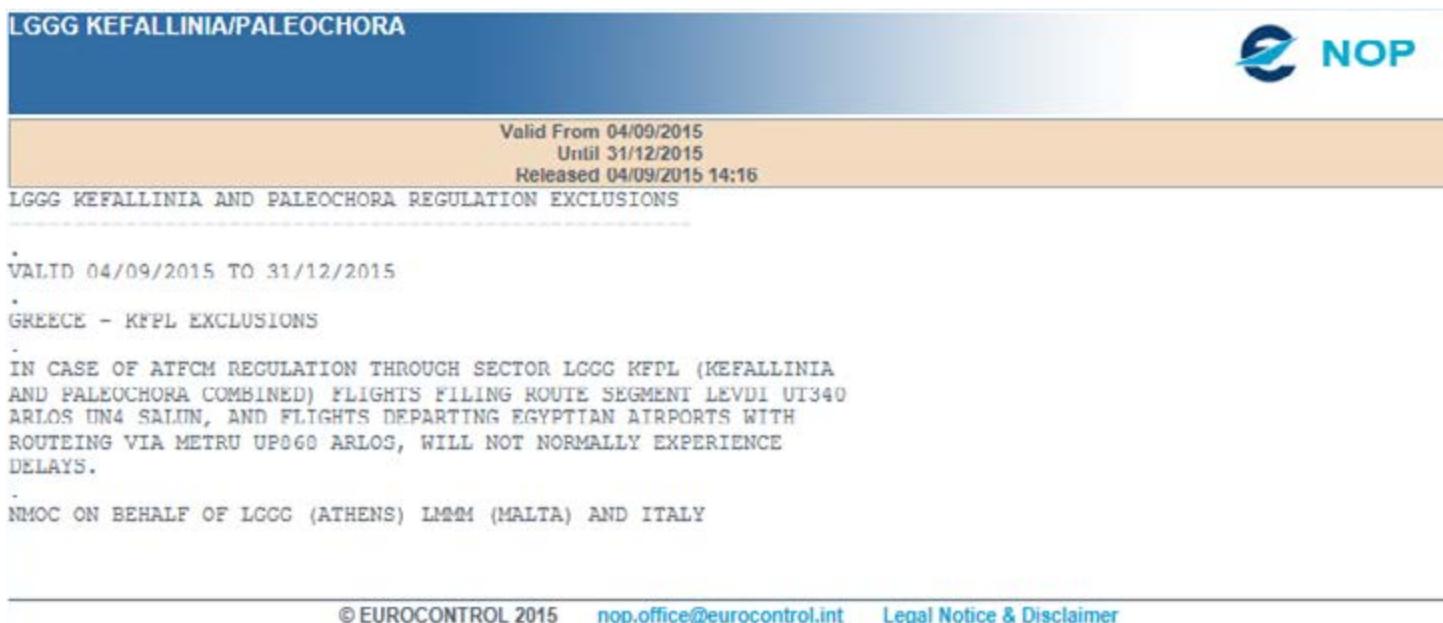


Fig. 2 - AIM

In conclusion, the successful results, achieved thanks to the joint efforts of all BLUE MED partners, can be summarised as follows:

- increased traffic (about ten daily flights)
- reduced delays
- more routing options, offered to AOs

The procedure applied in Summer 2015, gives rise to further explore "best practices", in the spirit of BLUE MED partnership, with the aim to maximize our contribution to the Flight Efficiency in the European Network.

This procedure can be further refined in order to be systematically used in the coming seasons.



Debora Palombi ENAV – En-route Operations - Italy Network Manager



3. Safety performance monitoring within BLUE MED



The BLUE MED ANSPs Safety working group jointly defined a Safety performance procedure that will provide evidence of where the safety of air traffic control operations within BLUE MED is, what are the downsides, what are the positives, where we need to improve and what we can consolidate and make better. This was the guiding testimonial that provided the ground work for the procedure that was developed by the BLUE MED Safety Working Group and is now being implemented within the BLUE MED FAB.

The BLUE MED ANSPs will jointly monitor the safety performance of the FAB using a number of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs); each KPI will be associated with a measurable Performance Target (PT). Where a KPI is not associated with a specific PT the additional KPI will be monitored with an option to set a Target at a later stage. The Safety working group agreed that the KPIs to

be monitored will be, as a minimum, the ones mandated by the SES Performance Regulation (EU) 390/2013 and in line with the overall FAB Performance Plan.

The Performance Targets will be monitored at regular intervals, as defined by the agreed procedure (SAF-D4.1: FAB Safety Performance Monitoring). To ensure that the agreed procedure offer resilience and credibility Alert thresholds were factored in, which, if reached, will trigger corrective actions on behalf of the ANSPs. The necessary action will then be decided by the ANSP(s) concerned and will include, as a minimum, the details of the corrective action/s required.

Where appropriate, target setting will be done in line with the relevant pan-European targets. In all cases, the provisions and obligations contained in the BLUE MED Performance Plan (FPP) in force shall apply, these are being considered as prime objectives of the procedure. To facilitate this important requirement the applicable procedure was designed to be consistent and complementary with the BLUE MED FAB Performance plan. The reports generated through the application of the process will then be submitted to the FAB BLUE MED ANSP Committee (ANSPC) annually or as agreed.

The BLUE MED FAB Safety Performance aggregation of results is planned to be implemented as explained here under.

The results of the monitoring procedure will be extracted from the data supplied by each BLUEMED FAB and will be consolidated in accordance

with the method adopted in the BLUE MED Performance Plan in force. During RP2 (2015-2019) the aggregation method for the three mandatory KPIs and their associated PTs will be as follows:

- EoSM – the lowest score among the BLUEMED ANSPs will be considered as the “ANSP FAB BM EoSM score”
- Percentage of main occurrence classified/analysed for the component of “ATM-ground” using RAT - the simple average of the score of the BLUE MED ANSPs will be considered as the “ANSP FAB BM percentage occurrence RAT classification score”
- Just culture - the lowest score among the BLUE MED ANSPs will be considered as the “ANSP FAB BM Just Culture score”

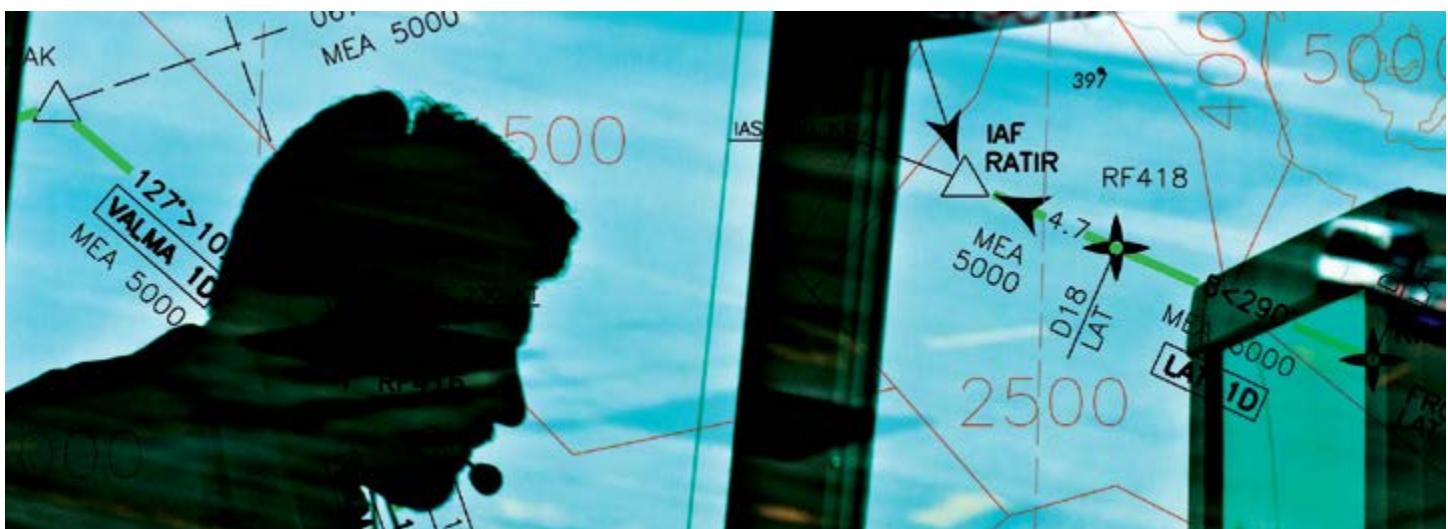
The aggregation formula for the additional Performance Indicators (PIs) will be the simple average of the four ANSPs recorded value. The procedure delves deeper, and, the performance monitoring mechanism is also expected to monitor and identify trends and/or areas of particular concern in the ANSPs safety performance. In addition to the regular reports that will be produced, the SAF WG may identify urgent issues with FAB BM wide relevance which may require specific actions. To achieve the objectives of this procedure BLUE MED ANSPs are encouraged to share openly and transparently their relevant SMS processes and supporting procedures.

In a nutshell the implementation of this procedure within the BLUE MED FAB is being considered as the first concrete step to start measuring the safety performance within the FAB. It is the process that will provide us with important data facilitating the measurement of safety performance. The information gathered will provide a periodic snapshot of the FAB safety performance. Based on the landscape that evolves, measurements can be taken and used. The safety working group can then propose mitigation measures to correct identified deficiencies that may be detrimental to the safety performance of the FAB.

Measuring can also be an important tool to understand what we are doing well, why we are doing it so well, thus, gathering information that can be used for initiatives that will make our operations safer is also a step in the right direction. When data gathering and measuring is only used to find needles in hay sticks it can easily be labelled as waste of vital resources. On the other hand when we use the data to understand what, how, and why we provide ATC services day in day out in a safe and efficient manner, we can improve constantly what is already good, thus in this way we will be delivering what is expected by our customers. One can also declare that indirectly we will be reducing those underlying concerns that give us anxieties; this way of doing things can easily be attributed to what nowadays is being marketed as SAFETY II.



Francis Bezzina – MATS Senior Head Safety, Quality and Security



4. E-eTOKAI implementation: pilot case in Blue Med FAB

The idea of implementing a software that could support the reporting and investigation of safety occurrences is, for ENAV Safety Unit, something that dates back to many years ago. In the last period, several attempts were carried out in order to create a centralised repository where all data could be stored and analyzed with successful results, but with an associated limitation: the systems were always kept at central level, with no possibility for the local investigator to access and directly populate them; the central Safety Department was responsible for both insertion and revision of data. Moreover, the regulatory framework is now imposing to ANSPs a more precise and effective measurement of the performance; in this perspective, the need for the Safety Department to focus more on the revision and monitoring than on the insertion of the data became urgent. This issue turned more challenging when the BLUE MED FAB Safety WG, with a view to ensuring a maximum improvement of Safety Performance, defined as its own main goal the implementation of a common Safety Tool able to share, among each ANSP's Safety Departments and Operational Directorates, the safety information reported and collected at local level.

The entry into force of the Regulation (EU) No 376/2014, was considered by the BLUE MED FAB Safety WG as an opportunity to make this radical change and EUROCONTROL's eTOKAI was identified as the tool to reach the common goal.

The eTOKAI implementation in ENAV was identified as "pilot case" for BLUE MED FAB and all the experience will be shared with all others BLUE MED FAB ANSP. The implementation of E-eTOKAI (ENAV-eTOKAI) started at the beginning of November 2014, when ENAV was provided with an access to a "test area" hosted by EUROCONTROL on their servers. This first phase was useful to familiarize with the tool and get a first "feeling". In parallel with the test phase ENAV's Safety Department attended a first EUROCONTROL introductory meeting (4th and 5th November 2014) during which the tool and its functionalities were presented in detail.

In mid-December 2014 a first meeting with the Italian Competent Authority (ENAC) was organized by ENAV to present the tool and get the endorsement that the deployment of E-eTOKAI will meet the EC376 requirements.

The ENAV Integrated Project Team (IPT), established in March 2015, was composed of representatives from Safety, Operational Directorate, Security, IT, Quality, Investigators from ENAV. In June 2015 a first training session to the IPT people was provided by EUROCONTROL and, with the installation on the ENAV's servers of the new version (2.0) of E-eTOKAI, the customization phase began with the definition of the structure organization and the modeling of the templates.

Concerning the structure of the Organization, to keep the reporting process simple and well defined, ENAV decided to "split" each Unit in 3 "sub-units", one containing the OPS people that are identified as mandatory reporters (376/2014 Art. 4 - ATCOs and FISOs), one with the TEC people (376/2014 Art. 4 - ATSEPs) and the last one with all the voluntary reporters (all others ENAV's personnel). In this way, 3 different templates (ATS Mandatory Notifications, TEC Notifications and Voluntary Notifications) with diverse types of information were defined. Working with roles and permissions inside E-eTOKAI, all notifications produced by the 3 sub-units are collected by one Safety Responsible that can create an occurrence file, send it to the competent authority within the 72 h deadline and start performing the investigation. Beside the Safety Responsible, a number of investigators were identified in each ATS Unit (or cluster of ATS Units) who can perform investigations, if required.

The Safety Department acted as a supervisor for all the ATS Units. People working in the Safety Occurrence Management Office in ENAV's HQ could see all the occurrences created by the Safety Responsible, review them, perform the quality check and send the preliminary and final investigations to the Competent Authority.

All the data sent to the Competent Authority are in the .e5x format (compatible with ECCAIRS) and exported directly from E-eTOKAI, except for the remedial actions taken if a safety deficiency is identified following an occurrence analysis; the remedial action monitoring is, indeed, not covered yet by E-eTOKAI and it is managed, for the time being, outside it with a commercial application (OTRS) which could be easily used by others BLUE MED FAB partners.

Knowing that the impact of the change is very high, in particular for the reporters, it was decided that the notification templates should be kept as simple as reasonably possible: they are similar to the templates used in existing reporting process.

An organization-wide training was carried out in two phases: the first one was a joint training by EUROCONTROL and Safety Department to the predefined number of investigators and safety experts who have to train all personnel involved, both in ENAV and Techno Sky (the CNS Maintenance Company full controlled by ENAV); the second phase was performed by the "trainers" of all ATCOs, FISOs and ATSEPs through specific sessions of the continuous training at ATS/CNS Units level.

One of the major issues that came across during the customization, was the need to be compliant with the security rules in terms of users ID and password management. With one of the latest releases, a connection with ENAV's LDAP was implemented and now all users within the Organization (included the Techno Sky involved staff) can access to E-eTOKAI using the same credential (User ID, password and rules) used to access to ENAV's intranet;

As a result, since last 15th November, according to Regulation EU n. 376/2014, reporters feed ENAV Occurrence Management System using E-eTOKAI and ENAV Safety Department feeds the Italian Mandatory Occurrence Repository (eEMOR – electronic ENAC MOR) using E-eTOKAI.

Although the process is still “young” and the test phase continues “on the job”, after a few weeks form the official deployment of E-eTOKAI in ENAV (15th November 2015), we have satisfying responses from the community of users; as they gradually acquire familiarity with the tool, the quality of the data also increases, as a result of a constant learning process. With the implementation of the functionalities that are still missing at the moment (we are constantly collecting feedback on HMI and usability from the users) and improvements to what it is already implemented (usability), we can say that E-eTOKAI is becoming “something” we are waiting for long time.

We are sure that ENAV experience will be useful for the next eTOKAI implementation within BLUE MED FAB and we hope that the tool will be improved and tailored according to users' needs shortly at FAB level .

Tony Licu – EUROCONTROL – Head of Safety Unit

Rodolfo Volpini – ENAV – Safety Dpt. - Head of ENAV Occurrence Management

Francesco Maria Giustizieri – ENAV – Safety Dpt. - Occurrence Management System Expert



5. BLUEGNSS: improving the BLUE MED performances!

In the framework of the Horizon 2020 Research and Development activities (H2020), at the end of 2014 the European Commission launched financial incentives for projects related to European GNSS (EGNSS) applications, to which EGNOS and Galileo belong to. Projects had to demonstrate the contribution to the growth and enhancement of European GNSS market, showing also the efficiency of European investments on GNSS. As complementary factor, it is worth to remember ICAO Assembly Resolution A37/11 and European Regulation on Pilot Common Project (Reg.716/2014) which asks States to implement RNP APCH being GNSS an essential navigation infrastructure enabling it.

BLUE MED PBN Task Force, established on December 2014, has been pivotal for the preparation and execution of an innovative proposal, challenging and compliant with relevant aeronautical standards.

The BLUEGNSS project has the main objective of Promoting EGNSS Operational Adoption in BLUE MED implementing RNP PACH (based on satellite navigation infrastructures such as EGNOS, GPS and the incoming Galileo) on airports belonging to the BLUE MED area, training airspace procedure designers, and implementing the first regional GNSS Monitoring network. This last point is the key innovation topic of the project, based on a regional implementation approach that allows economic savings for States that want to implement GNSS monitoring for formal GNSS acceptance, sharing information at FAB level. The project proposes a complete integrated approach that cover all the areas and requirements for RNP APCH implementation including validation by flight inspection.

BLUE MED governance will allow for a comprehensive monitoring of the evolution as well outcomes of the project and coordination with National Supervisory Authorities so as to make possible the publication on the respective AIP approach charts. The airports chosen are: Malta, Cyprus as well as four strategic airports in Greece and three in Italy, having challenging operational environment and with some limitations on the classical precision approach (ILS) availability for all runway ends. The implementation of approaches based on GNSS will also demonstrate the safety benefits (such as vertical guidance) and the capacity improvements.

It is worth noting that such approach is taken at FAB level for the very first time . The project has been selected among 91 proposals received by GSA (European GNSS Agency) and was kicked off in mid February 2016 with 30 month-duration involving ENAV (Project Coordinator), HCAA, MATS, DCAC and IDS as an industrial partner.

6. Striving for professional excellence in human resource aspects through synergies and harmonisation

The implementation of the BLUE MED FAB is a great opportunity and challenge for the contracting states. BLUE MED FAB is at the crossroad of three continents, merging a diverse cultural heritage and this creates an extra and unique challenge to achieve its successful implementation and extending the seamless traffic operations throughout the eastern Mediterranean and beyond. The BLUE MED FAB HR aspects and Social Dialogue working group is part of this effort, continuing on the work carried out in the preparatory phase of BLUE MED. The Group has reunited recently for the implementation phase of the project and has held three meetings, one in Athens July and one in Nicosia October 2015 and recently another one in Athens March 2016.

The HR aspects and social dialogue group is an anthropocentric group focusing on people who either provide the services or support them. It comprises a professional group of people who will dynamically enforce and empower the role of the FAB by utilizing their high levels of motivation, professionalism that will not only be focused on the implementation of the requirements of relevant Regulation EU340/2015 but will extend far beyond this level through cooperation, teamwork, harmonization and synergies. The group is striving for excellence by bridging procedural and operational differences, the result of which will be the provision of high quality services to users. In this turbulent period, stigmatized with economic anemia in the European area, the HR aspects and Social Dialogue working group is called upon to increase economies of scale in this part of Europe with an equal level of respect to the social issues that may arise.

The group is currently focusing in developing the necessary documentation so as to harmonize to the maximum extent possible all the procedures in the training area both for ATCOs and for ATSEPs in accordance with the existing regulatory framework (Commission Regulation (EU) No 340/2015 and EUROCONTROL's Specification for the ATCO Common core content Initial Training, Ed. 2). This documentation is expected to be completed by the first half of 2016 and then the group will continue to the second phase of its action plan which is Unit and Continuation training: convergence towards a BLUE MED standard including Assessor/Examiner competence requirements, the methodology to develop Unit training plans and Competency Schemes, Refresher and Emergency training etc. The necessity to coordinate the work done with other BM working groups was identified from the first meeting of the group and it is expected that after the first quarter of 2016 the HR deliverables will be shared with the relevant operational and technical working groups for discussion and comments.

As a practical example of the outcome of the work so far is the idea of virtual examination centers, based on the creation of a central database that can be used to increase the professional knowledge of the personnel involved. The concept of a virtual center (for training or more) will also alleviate any problems resulting from forced personnel mobility and will eliminate any possible worries by the staff.

Finally, the HR working group will focus on the challenging area of the Social Dialogue - manage the interaction with social partners, and identify, through fruitful discussions, all relevant issues that need to be tackled. The group is aiming for consensus, respecting the staff and professional associations' rights and priorities as a prophylaxis from unnecessary logomachies and disputes. A synopsis of the groups' action plan is summarized below:

- Synchronize the tactics, practices, working conditions and methodologies in working practices -set the objectives clearly-design an action plan with timetables for the work to be done and work hard for their achievement
- Yield where necessary- Consider the work done in the definition phase
- Note the differences in our respective areas of work - the several demands resulting from brainstorm meetings with other working groups-bridge the gaps in a harmonized and democratic approach
- English language requirements to be considered through a fair transparent and commonly acceptable procedure- check available options in the market-examinations currently being used by participating states
- Recruitment procedures to be also transparent fair and harmonized -their development should be the product resulting from social dialogue giving fair opportunities to interested parties from all contracting states to express their opinion via the use of the available technologies
- Group meetings with other working groups and social partners at frequent intervals-share with them the work done- agree on the action

plan of what is to be done- everyone should feel that is a shareholder of this project and everyone's contribution is a step towards final success

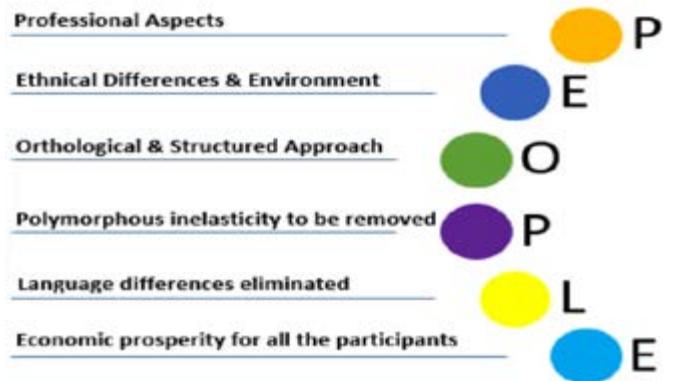
- Integrate the work done after the meetings, innovate from the comments received and provide synchronized results
- Environmental issues and other factors that may affect the implementation of the FAB to be considered at early stages
- Social dialogue with all partners to create solid structural foundation for the FAB



As mentioned before the approach of the work in the HR aspects and Social Dialogue working group is anthropocentric. It is designed by people for people taking into consideration:

- Professional aspects –harmonization with the existing regulations
- Ethnical differences and environment –consider competency and development issues
- Orthological and structured approach to a productive dialogue
- Polymorphous inelasticity in working practices to be removed and be synchronized in an anthropocentric way
- Language differences to be eliminated through procedures
- Economic prosperity for all the participants overcoming economic anemia from which our area suffers the last years

The definition of Synergies is the interaction or cooperation of two or more organizations, substances, or other agents to produce a combined effect greater than the sum of their separate effects. This is what the HR aspects and Social Dialogue working group is called to transform into practice with synergies with people, professionals, and other working groups. The Social Dialogue will inevitably bring into the surface plethora of problems, puzzles, polymorphous ideas and worries that may probably be beyond the imagination of the working group. It is essential that every aspect will be considered and resolved thus minimizing any agonies resulting from the implementation of the project. The necessity for establishing structured social dialogue will inevitably avoid or at least minimize the possibility of tracking into a labyrinth of agonies and melancholies.



As Pythagoras said: Friends are as companions on a journey, who ought to aid each other to persevere in the road to a happier life.

 Athena Meletie Panayide DCAC – BLUE ED HR&SD Working Group Leader

7. BLUE MED joined for the One Year Old Platform...

When a child turns one, the parents hold a celebration to mark this event, eagerly looking forward for their child's first steps, first words and other important milestones. A day which, although we don't recall as we grow older, we still recognize its importance.

2015 will be remembered as the year when the platform for the Inter-FAB cooperation was shaped up, following its birth in 2014 in Amsterdam. Bucharest, where the second Inter-FAB workshop was held, was an interesting step forward which brought supplementary work to the Functional Airspace Blocks (FABs), perhaps also achieving a further reach.

Before the event, Terms of Reference and Questionnaire for sharing information amongst members were drafted and iterated, ensuring these documents were in a mature state for this second workshop to endorse and take this project a step forward.

Over 50 delegates from all nine FABs met in Bucharest to align common goals, and collectively form a platform of enhanced cooperation. The BLUE MED FAB was represented by Italy and Malta through ENAC, ENAV and MATS respectively, who attended the breakout sessions separately in order to horizontally benefit from the outcomes of this project. The breakout sessions included

- Developing Work-Programme Inter-FAB Coordination 2016-2017
- Developing Inter-FAB Strategy
- Developing Inter-FAB Communication Strategy
- Inter-FAB Coordination mechanisms in support of SESAR Deployment

BLUE MED FAB facilitated the latter through Mr. Cristiano Cantoni of ENAV, while on the second day ENAC & ENAV jointly held a presentation about eTOKAI. Other presentations were given by other FABs.

The outcomes were presented by ROMATSA on 20th October 2015 and can be accessed electronically through <http://events.danubefab.eu/library>.

This is believed to be the first platform which brings together all FAB stakeholders under the same roof. The platform is therefore an opportunity for wide ranging cooperation and coordination, allowing FABs to align common goals, share experiences and collectively form a strong and cohesive voice in Europe.

After drafting this short article, I wish to conclude by underlining a comment which was brought forward during one of the break-out sessions. I quote:

"Alliances are created because of potential cooperation benefits, rather than 'forced' on the members, as maybe perceived in the FAB scenario".

My question is: Should we celebrate our birthday because we enjoy life, or as happened at our first birthday party, celebrating a 'natural' milestone?

