



The Newsletter for the UK-Ireland FAB

# First Customer Forum sets FAB agenda

The first UK-Ireland Joint Customer Forum was held in London at the beginning of October.

Co-hosted by Eamonn Brennan, Chief Executive, IAA, and Richard Deakin, Chief Executive, NATS, the event was attended by nearly 20 airline partners as well as representatives from both countries' civil aviation authorities, trades union and the UK's military.

The forum provided customers with an opportunity to discuss and share ideas that will help shape future FAB strategy as well as the next FAB Plan setting out future activities up to 2014. Delegates were also invited to take part in a question and answer session with both CEOs.

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*In tune; IAA and NATS Chief Executives Eamonn Brennan and Richard Deakin.*

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## FAB secures European Funding

The UK-Ireland FAB received a major boost with the award of a grant of 1.154 million Euros via the European Commission Ten-T funding programme (Trans-European Network – Transport).

The programme aims to create good, international and environmentally friendly connections; enabling Europe to maintain a competitive position.

The funds will be used to support a feasibility study into the development of FAB High Level Sectors (HLS).

Work commenced in October and will run throughout 2011 and 2012.

This funding will primarily support the cost of simulation activities and other feasibility exercises.

# FAB plan paves the way to 2013 and beyond

The UK-Ireland FAB published its second plan this summer setting out its vision and future activities through to 2013.

At its heart is continued focus on integrating North Atlantic, Domestic (Irish/UK) and European traffic flows by maximising the operational capability of the two countries' airspace.

The UK-Ireland FAB has already delivered a number of significant improvements; the ENSURE Project creating a route-free block of upper airspace allowing airlines to find their optimum flight paths, generating savings on aircraft fuel burn and emissions; night time fuel saving routes and a joint airspace development, the first in Europe, which has improved efficiency for flights between the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland and Scotland.

It has also enabled North Atlantic Continuous Descent Approaches for Manchester arrivals, the daily FAB Pre-Tactical Network Brief, a reduced number of NERS (North Atlantic European

Routing Scheme) from 12 to 4 and a first version of the FAB Oceanic Domestic Interface Concept of Operations.

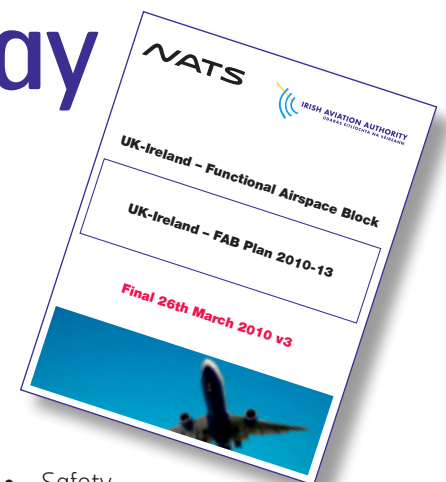
Other initiatives are being progressed through the joint working groups.

As part of the Airspace Design and Service Provision work programme, the ODNET global project (Optimisation of Domestic North Atlantic and European Traffic) continues to be a key feature. ODNET projects include:

- Tactical management of London Heathrow/North Atlantic departures
- Reduced separation on North Atlantic flights
- Enhanced Night Time Fuel Saving Routes (NTFSRs)
- Implementation of the Isle of Man airspace development.

The Safety Working Group is continuing to progress its main FAB projects including:

- Safety Management Systems (SMS) convergence



- Safety culture improvement
- A plan of action for operational safety improvement
- Standardised European Rules of the Air (SERA) integration.

The latest FAB Management Board meeting, which was due to be hosted by the Irish Air Corps in early December, was hit by the heavy snowfalls throughout the UK and Ireland and had to be cancelled.

It will be rearranged early in the New Year to agree a framework for the next rolling plan for the FAB, from 2011-14.

## NEAP drives border free collaboration

NEAP, the alliance of nine North European air navigation service providers, is driving forward plans to create border free collaboration across more than 13 million km<sup>2</sup> of combined airspace.

By creating a single platform, NEAP's members are working to deliver operational, technical, financial and regulatory benefits as well as meeting performance targets in line with the Single European Sky initiative.

NATS became NEAP's latest member earlier this year, joining the IAA and Nordic ANSPs from Denmark, Finland,

Iceland, Norway and Sweden as well as Latvia and Estonia.

Ian Hall, NATS, Operational Strategy and Standards Director said: "Being an active member of NEAP provides a valuable opportunity to develop benefits from our relationship with other members as well as opening up new opportunities for the UK-Ireland FAB.

He added: "NEAP enables members to work in equal partnership to identify ways that will deliver improved safety through technical innovation, cost savings by avoiding duplication where possible, including

shared services such as training and certification and different procurement models in areas such as radio telephony and energy."

Eamonn Brennan, chairman of NEAP and chief executive of the IAA said: "NEAP represents a significant area of European airspace which currently handles over five million flights a year.

By working together we can achieve greater alignment between existing FABs and it also opens up the potential for a single FAB in the future."

# New arrival procedure for Dublin

**A team from the IAA is working closely with EUROCONTROL to deliver a new arrivals procedure for Dublin Airport.**

The procedure, called Point Merge, forms a central part of the IAA TMA2012 Project and aims to sequence arriving aircraft more efficiently, even with higher traffic loads in the future. Point Merge builds on some changes introduced at Dublin last year including airspace

redesign and Precision Area Navigation (P-RNAV).

The implementation of Point Merge is being fully supported by activities within the FAB Airspace Design Working Group (ADWG) and the civil and military authorities of both States.

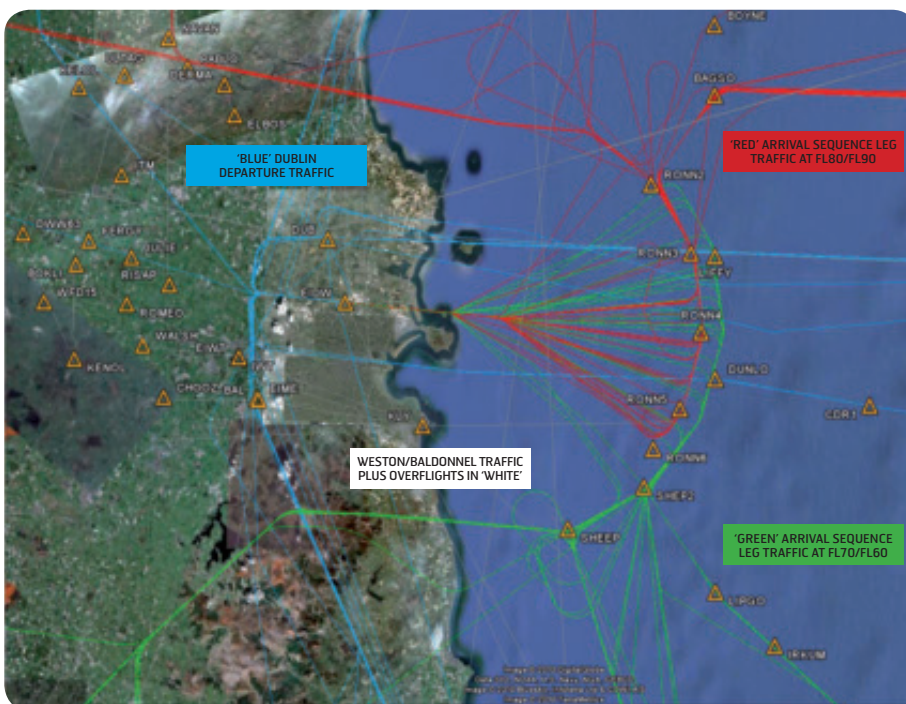
Point Merge aims to provide significant benefit to airlines, including improved flight efficiency, predictability and flight crew situational awareness through

optimised FMS usage, the potential for reduced fuel burn (an estimated 90kg from 9,000 ft) by keeping aircraft higher for longer and enabling Continuous Descent Operations, as well as environmental noise and emission savings (approximately 260 Kg of carbon dioxide).

Inefficient conventional racetrack holds at low levels are replaced by arcs at 8,000 and 9,000ft, based on P-RNAV, and from which aircraft can be turned directly towards the runway and given continuous descent.

Dublin plans to introduce the Point Merge procedure in May 2012. The IAA sees Point Merge as an intuitive controller system which will enable a more balanced task allocation and workload distribution between TMA controllers, providing enhanced safety, through efficient systemisation of traffic. Furthermore, no ground system improvements are needed.

Leader of the IAA team, Paul McCann said: "This is an exciting development for Air Traffic Controllers, the airlines using Dublin and the airport itself. The project has already undergone considerable evaluation and testing at EUROCONTROL's Experimental Centre in Paris and we're on track for delivery in two years' time."



## New UK Secretariat takes up role

The UK has a new Secretariat as Mark Morton hands over to Mark McLaren. Most recently Mark McLaren was NATS' General Manager at Southampton Airport.

Mark Morton has taken up a new position of Manager, London Terminal Control Development.

Donal Handley continues to provide Irish secretariat support and over the summer he visited NATS to meet his new counterpart and others involved in the FAB programme.

Commenting on the moves, Ian Hall, Joint Chair of the FAB Management Board said: "I'd like to thank Mark Morton for his valuable contribution

supporting the FAB over the last 18 months; it's been a period in which the tangible benefits of the FAB have been delivered to our airline customers. I'd also like to welcome Mark McLaren who, together with Donal, will continue to drive forward the FAB Plan by ensuring we have the right supporting framework in place."

# Strong airline engagement to secure real benefits

In their welcoming address, Eamonn Brennan (CEO, IAA) and Richard Deakin (CEO, NATS), emphasised the need for strong airline engagement to help maximise benefits of the FAB for its customers.

Eamonn emphasised that: "The influence of the airline community in helping the UK-Ireland FAB deliver tangible benefits should not be underestimated. Our airline customers have already demonstrated their strength by helping shape Single European Sky (SES) I and II, including the new performance

regime and the SES air traffic management research programme (SESAR). I'd like to see airline operators continuing to apply pressure to drive FAB activities and those across Europe, forward."

"Richard added: "FABs are an important part of the SES journey. Technically we can do whatever we need to do, but we also need to manage the social and political challenges we face in the creation of a truly Single European Sky."

Airline partners expressed support for this approach, indicating the need for an increase in

the pace of change across Europe as well as within the UK-Ireland FAB itself, by taking a stronger lead on European developments.

Jeff Mulvey (Continental Airlines) said:

**"The UK-Ireland FAB is committed to moving things forward and hopefully it will encourage others to do the same."**

During the day airline customers acknowledged the operational focus of the FAB to date and said they would now wish to see a clear roadmap for increased business integration between the IAA and NATS, to enable larger cost savings and the removal of duplicated overheads.



## Regulatory harmonisation to support FAB integration

The need for regulatory harmonisation (i.e. between governments, regulators and in Europe) to support the development of FABs across Europe was a key theme at the workshop.

Both CEOs emphasised that the implementation of a new performance scheme would be a critical step towards achieving this.

Eamonn said:

**"ANSPs operate in a very structured regulatory environment that airlines are largely free from.**

**The objective of the FAB is to make savings but this will only**

**come about through regulatory involvement; we can do together what we cannot do apart."**

He added:

**"ANSPs could become more adventurous in areas such as centre contingency planning, common charging, training, and systems, we can make more savings, but this will only come through the right regulatory and shareholder involvement, and it will take a very long time."**

Richard Deakin added:

**"Before liberalisation, airlines were flag carriers for Member States; I think we are at the same starting point."**



## Expansion of FABs – a logical progression for UK-Ireland

Development of the UK-Ireland FAB within the context of NEAP, the alliance of nine north European ANSPs, came under discussion. While some ANSPs are working towards border free

collaboration at different paces, it was felt others, whose activities were more advanced, should be fast tracked to help them progress more quickly.

## Service resilience

Contingency planning was suggested by Ian Holland, British Airways, as another key item for consideration by the UK-Ireland FAB, “We are focused on the development of contingency planning. We want to see that your respective arrangements are dovetailed. We want to see greater combined contingency planning and greater visibility for the air operators”.

## Shared needs of Civil/Military

There were calls for improvements in civil-military planning and tools. Airlines expect improved access for civil operators to military airspace. Although fully supportive of these calls, the UK MIL representative, Cdr Paul Harvey stressed that,

**“...arrangements must be made on a quid pro quo basis, and that future tools should ensure that lesser used airspace is released back to enable access by other airspace users.”**

## Could competition fast track a Single European Sky?

Declan Ryan, (Ryanair) said:

**“Airlines want to see greater competition between service providers across Europe. This could include putting FABs out to tender for a period of say, 10 years. This would have a massive impact on driving down costs and increasing efficiency.”**

Richard Deakin responded:

**“I would definitely support a proposal to tender ANSP services; however this would require a level playing field across Europe.”**

He added:

**“I also believe that the SES performance scheme will highlight good and bad performers.”**



## Food for FAB thought

Other ideas suggested by customers for consideration by the UK-Ireland FAB in the future included:

- Greater combined contingency planning, with greater visibility for customers
- Examine centre consolidation
- Adopt a cautious approach in relation to any potential future common charging policy
- FAB customer benefits should be shared equally and proportionately between long and short-haul customers
- Introduce common controller training
- Support the harmonisation of licensing for Air Traffic Controller Officers
- Digitise Route Availability Documents and Letters of Agreement
- Hold annual FAB Customer Forums, and to include neighbouring FABs
- Free route airspace in the UK to complement the Irish ENSURE project
- Efficient delegation of airspace, cross border service provision and high level sectors
- En route Collaborative Decision Making
- Flexible use of airspace for all users
- FAB activities aligned with UK Future Airspace Strategy
- Increased timeframe for Night Time Fuel Saving Route operations
- Explore opportunities within NEAP to further improve the potential of the FAB.

## A Regulatory Perspective

The day also included a presentation from Phil Roberts, Assistant Director of Airspace Policy, CAA who gave an overview of the role of the FAB Supervisory Committee, their work to-date, and their aspiration to align and enhance their regulatory activities across the FAB.

He also paid tribute to the close working relationship between both ANSPs and the regulator during the Icelandic volcanic ash cloud incident earlier this year.



# FAB delivers technological improvements

## UK-Ireland Communication Circuits

Experts from NATS and the IAA are set to deliver some of the first technological improvements for the FAB by the end of this year.

By working closely, the Technology team, lead by Peter Nolan (IAA) and Roger Byrne (NATS), identified an opportunity to consolidate the significant number of individual communication circuits in use between the UK and Ireland, replacing them with multiplexer links. Information such as radar data and direct telephone calls will now be fed through a single communications channel.

Once in place, the new system will provide greater resilience and contingency support, as well as savings of up to £200,000 a year.

## Ground to Air data links a step closer

CCAMS, a Eurocontrol led project to introduce a centralised surveillance radar code assignment and management system across Europe, is on track and expected to become fully operational in 2012.

The new system is designed to improve the efficiency of air traffic services in cross-border airspace and provide a solution to the shortage of secondary surveillance radar (SSR) at peak times of the day.

Currently SSR codes are assigned on a national basis and, with limitations on the number of codes available to each country, the existing process would not meet the expected rise in air traffic.

CCAMS offers a Europe-wide solution through a more efficient use of codes; in the future participating air



navigation service providers will pool their allocated codes allowing them to be distributed for use according to demand. In addition, CCAMS will reduce the opportunity for code conflicts and reduce controller-pilot workload, and improvements in safety.

CCAMS forms part of the roadmap towards the introduction of Mode-S aircraft ID.

Testing of CCAMS in the UK begins in spring 2011. The FAB Technology team will continue to explore opportunities from CCAMS, such as reducing costs associated with the project by avoiding duplication as well as developing a joint approach to testing and validation procedures.

## Ground to Air data links a step closer

Traditional methods of communication between air traffic controllers and pilots will soon be augmented with the introduction of Controller-Pilot Data Link Communications (CPDLC) messaging which is set to be introduced above Flight Level 285 across the FAB in 2013.

Establishing direct links between air traffic control and the cockpit is part of an EU mandate to improve efficiency of air traffic services through faster information exchange; reduce radio channel overload in high

density airspace, and improve safety by reducing the risk of misunderstanding a message.

CPDLC is already used for passing routing to a substantial number of transatlantic flights, but the mandate will introduce it into domestic airspace and cover a broader range of controller-pilot interactions.

Representatives from the UK and Ireland have already met suppliers of data link infrastructure and the FAB is now exploring options for joint implementation by 2013 to comply with the legislation.

# General Managers Shannon and Dublin

Nearly one year on since Aidan Fox, General Manager, Shannon Area Control and David Usher, General Manager, Dublin Area Control, left their respective roles in the airline business, they share their thoughts on making the switch from operating tens of thousands of flights a year to managing the airspace across Ireland including handling up to 90% of flights

## You both have extensive airline experience, so what attracted you to join an ANSP?

**AF:** *I was working on Air traffic Management issues for Aer Lingus and was part of the FAB process. The more I worked with the ANSPs, the more interested I became in the Air Traffic Management side of the business. I felt I'd like to make a difference and help make changes in a related business using direct knowledge I had gained as an airline employee. The opportunity arose and I was successful in becoming the General Manager for the Shannon ACC.*

**DU:** *"After 21 years at Ryanair, I wanted a different challenge – which was exactly what I was offered with the opportunity to join the IAA as General Manager of the Dublin ACC. It has allowed me to remain in the aviation industry and broaden my knowledge and experience."*

## Can you describe a typical day in your current role?

**DU:** *No two days are the same. We are responsible for the safe and efficient delivery of air traffic services for Dublin Airport and the*

*transiting between Europe and North America.*

*For over twenty years David worked at Ryanair holding various roles in the commercial side of the business.*

*In 2005 he was appointed Deputy Director – Airports, responsible for all ground operations and in 2007 he held the post of Deputy Director Operations Control, responsible for a fleet of over 200 aircraft.*

*surrounding area and much of my time is spent ensuring that we have appropriate manpower and technical resources available to allow us to do this.*

**AF:** *Planning is a key component when running an ATC centre and a good deal of time is spent reviewing projects and options for change leading to improvements of the service for the customers. Current projects have to be implemented, e.g. our new COOPANS system which will be delivered in 2011.*

*The introduction of modern technology to enhance the service is a key goal and always gets regular attention. Without skilled people in the ATC business nothing happens and human resource issues like roster planning, training plans and day-to-day issues are always to the fore. Safety and efficiency of the ATC service is one of my key responsibilities in Shannon and not a day goes by when these issues are not discussed and decisions are made to resolve issues and make improvements.*

*Like any business related to flying, the core business involves managing safety, resources, technology and customer expectations. The time taken on each of these, or the priority given changes depending on what needs attention. Knowledge from both sides is an advantage and is helping me to deliver the service as required.*

## What is your role with the FAB?

**AF:** *My current role in the FAB is as a member of the Service Provision Working Group (SPWG) representing the IAA.*

*Aidan worked for Aer Lingus from 1988 and has extensive experience of the airline industry. His last post was Manager of Flight Dispatch. He also held roles in aeronautical information services, flight planning, service delivery, operational technical support and business continuity management.*

*Both Aidan and David took up their roles with the IAA in November 2009.*

*This is the group tasked with ensuring the service is as efficient as possible and new projects are delivered to meet the core requirements of improvements in Safety, Efficiency, Environmental and Capacity issues. I am currently the lead on the "Network Management" Project for the IAA as part of the FAB. An integrated network management function should lead to a better flow of traffic, reduced delays and a more efficient traffic structure.*

*I am also part of a group reviewing the airspace design in the FAB. The goal of the feasibility study is to treat the airspace as one continuum and remove inefficiencies and provide a more seamless flow of traffic for the airlines.*

**DU:** *I am currently one of the IAA representatives on the Airspace Design Working Group (ADWG). I am also part of the team that will deliver joint IAA/NATS Network Management.*

## Where would you like to see the FAB in 10 years time?

**DU:** *The UK-Ireland FAB should continue in its European FAB leadership position. We were the first in Europe and we should use this head start to shape the evolution of the concept over the next 10 years. This will surely see us add new members to our FAB, giving it greater influence across Europe and beyond.*

**AF:** *The FAB in ten years time will be a different place than it is now. Currently ANSPs are integrating within FAB. In ten years time I would like to see FABs integrating with each other.*

If you have any comments on this publication or story ideas for future editions please contact either:

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