

SESAR incorporates unique public-private partnership to modernise European sky

15 companies ready to join the SESAR Joint Undertaking

Brussels, 8 December. The SESAR Joint Undertaking, a unique public-private partnership in air traffic management research and development, was inaugurated today in Brussels. Fifteen companies are ready to join this EUR 2.1 billion programme, which is the first of its kind in aviation history. The SESAR JU is now poised to tackle its vital mission: to develop a modernised air traffic management system for Europe, which will prevent crippling congestion of the European sky and reduce the environmental impact of air transport.

The ceremony was hosted by Dominique Bussereau, French Minister for Transport, representing the Council of the European Union, Antonio Tajani, Vice-President of the European Commission and Commissioner for Transport, and David McMillan, Director General of EUROCONTROL, in the presence of 300 representatives of the European air transport community.

The SESAR programme came to life with the acknowledgment that Europe's current air traffic control systems will soon be unable to cope with the growth in flight movements, the number of which will double by 2030. In 2007, about 10 million flights were recorded, whilst the most likely scenario according to the EUROCONTROL report "Challenges of Growth" is an average growth of 2.7% a year between now and 2030, i.e. 20.4 million flights by 2030¹. At the same time, environmental awareness is rising, prompting the need for more efficient operations and better technology. The EU's Single European Sky legislation has taken jurisdiction over air traffic management matters to Community level in a drive to coordinate the critically needed upgrade of European ATM systems.

¹ Source: EUROCONTROL – long-term forecast at www.eurocontrol.int.

The solution: the SESAR Joint Undertaking

The aim of the SESAR Joint Undertaking (SJU) is to ensure the modernisation of the European air traffic management system by coordinating and concentrating all relevant research and development efforts in the Community. Founded by the European Community and EUROCONTROL, the SESAR Joint Undertaking also benefits from the support of fifteen public and private enterprises which plan to become members of the SJU:

- air navigation service providers: the DSN (France), the DFS (Germany), ENAV (Italy), NORACON (Northern Europe and Austria), AENA (Spain), and NATS (En Route) Limited (United Kingdom);
- ground and aerospace manufacturing industry: Frequentis, Indra, SELEX Sistemi Integrati and Thales;
- aircraft manufacturers: Airbus and Alenia Aeronautica;
- airports: SEAC (a consortium expected to be comprised of six large European airports), AENA and NORACON;
- airborne equipment manufacturers: Thales.

They will take all the necessary steps to finalise the ongoing discussions, in order to promptly set up the appropriate SJU operational framework. Moreover, SESAR will follow an international cooperation policy, aiming at creating added value for the European society and reciprocity. Honeywell (USA) and Natmig (Norway) are also ready to join SESAR.

"It is the first time ever that a partnership of this importance and with this many partners has been created in the air traffic management sector. With SESAR, Europe will not only have the safest and most modern ATM infrastructure (an infrastructure which will be greener too), but will also continue to be a leader in

the wider aeronautics sector,” observed Dominique Bussereau, French Minister for Transport, representing the Council of the European Union.

By 2020, SESAR aims to achieve a threefold increase in capacity in Europe, while improving safety by a factor of ten. The programme also seeks to reduce by 10% the environmental impact per flight, in the knowledge that aviation today is estimated to account for 2% of the world's CO₂ emissions. The modernised air traffic management system in Europe should cut ATM-related expenses by half.

“This is one of the most complex research and development programmes ever launched by the European Community,” underlined Antonio Tajani, Vice-President of the European Commission and Commissioner for Transport, adding that *“the positive impact of SESAR's goals on the day-to-day activities of the air space users, passengers, air traffic controllers and citizens will include fewer delays, lower fuel consumption, improved efficiency, time gains and increased airport capacity.”*

Main conceptual change in a modernised sky: the business trajectory

Key to the SESAR concept is the “business trajectory principle” according to which the users and controllers of the airspace together define, through a collaborative process, the optimal flight path. *“Compared with today's way of managing aircraft, SESAR represents a paradigm shift, to be achieved in clear steps. We will change the way we manage air traffic: no more skyways, just the most efficient trajectory – saving fuel and time,”* insists David McMillan, Director General of EUROCONTROL.

Taking full advantage of existing and newly developed technologies, SESAR's target concept relies on a number of key features:

- the notion of “trajectory-based operations”, which will dramatically improve the predictability and precision of operations;
- a rolling network operation plan, taking into account real-time situations including weather and traffic evolution;
- the introduction of an air traffic management intranet, including aircraft, which will enable all actors to have full access to the right information at the right time;
- the full integration of airport ground activities into the air traffic management processes;
- increased automation support for air traffic controllers and pilots, enabling them to concentrate on high-added-value activities;
- increased environmentally friendly operations at airports, allowing greener trajectories whilst maximising the use of existing runways.

A label for SESAR- operating airlines, airports, manufacturers and ANSPs

Before the end of 2009, the SESAR Joint Undertaking will formally launch the “SESAR label”. This will be an opportunity for all existing and future airspace users to integrate the SESAR concept of operations into their way of working. The SESAR label will demonstrate that air transport industry operators have taken on responsibility and are already contributing to the improvement of their operations.

Patrick Ky, Executive Director of the SESAR Joint Undertaking, concludes: “*The SESAR team is very enthusiastic about accompanying our fifteen new enterprises in the development phase. There are challenging projects, such as*

building an intranet for air traffic management (SWIM), which will for instance allow airlines to better manage their fleets and to gain time and money thanks to forward-looking and reliable information on the exact positioning of their aircraft and their precise arrival times. Furthermore, controllers and pilots will be assisted by new automated functions which will facilitate their handling of complex decision-making processes.”

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The SESAR programme is the technological answer to the major challenges of Europe's air traffic management. The aim of the SESAR Joint Undertaking is to ensure the modernisation of the European air traffic management system by coordinating and concentrating all relevant research and development efforts in the Community. Partnership, sustainability and user-drive are key concepts of the SESAR Joint Undertaking approach. Founded by the European Community and by EUROCONTROL, fifteen companies have already been pre-selected to join the SJU: AENA, Airbus, Alenia Aeronautica, the DFS, the DSN, ENAV, Frequentis, Honeywell, INDRA, NATMIG, NATS (En Route) Limited, NORACON, SEAC, SELEX Sistemi Integrati and Thales. More information can be found at www.sesarju.eu.

For further information, please contact:

Eric Platteau - Chief Communication & Stakeholders' Relations

Mobile: + 32 493 51 09 46 Tel.: + 32 2 507 80 12 Email: press@sesarju.eu