

ONE STEP NEARER: EUROPE'S FUTURE ATM SYSTEM

➤ **ROGER CATO, BAA'S SESAR CONSORTIUM PROJECT DIRECTOR, REPORTS ON THE EFFORTS OF THE CONSORTIUM TO DEVISE A MASTER PLAN AND PERFORMANCE GOALS FOR A NEW EUROPEAN ATM SYSTEM.**

THE SESAR CONSORTIUM HAS NOW DELIVERED ITS AIR TRANSPORT FRAMEWORK

– The Performance Target (D2) report, which establishes the framework for a future European ATM system that will accommodate the doubling of air traffic growth by 2020. It also defines the required performance targets that will shape the design of the future system.

The Single European Sky legislation launched by the European Commission in March 2004 has set the political framework for European efforts to support ATM evolution for the next 20 years and allow for the necessary growth in air transport. The SESAR project is the operational complement to the legislative packages. It includes two phases:

- The SESAR definition phase, which will produce a commonly agreed ATM master plan
- The implementation phase, which will build on the results of the definition phase and cover the development and deployment of the European ATM master plan

Definition phase

The SESAR definition phase consists of six 'deliverables'. The Milestone Deliverable 1 report, which presented an analysis of the current air transport situation and a way forward, was released last July. A report setting out the performance objectives for the future ATM system was also made available recently.

SESAR brings together 29 companies and organisations and 20 associated partners, as well as airspace users, air navigation services providers, suppliers, safety regulators, military, pilots' and controllers' associations and research centres. The consortium includes major European players such as ADP, AENA, BAA, Fraport, LFV, and Schiphol and Munich airports.

With the definition of a detailed performance framework and targets in Milestone Deliverable 2, SESAR stakeholders have taken a further step towards reaching agreement on the main performance targets that should be met by the future ATM system – which will ultimately be able to handle three times more traffic than today, at a 50% lower ATM cost per flight.

Milestone Deliverable 2 also successfully identified initiatives to address current stumbling blocks in the operation of airports and airspace, potentially saving between €500 million and €1 billion per year in operational costs. At least one-third of this would come from more efficient use of existing airspace and airport resources.

Short-term goals

Short-term initiatives that will improve the efficiency and safety of operations and safeguard the environment should also be supported. For example, on the airport side, the consortium has identified some solutions that could help unlock latent peak-hour capacity. The consortium also suggests that:

- Eurocontrol ACE-recommended best practices could allow a 20% average increase in runway capacity.



The six 'deliverables' of SESAR's definition phase.

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- The deployment of advanced surface movement guidance and control systems could be worth between €130,000 and €900,000 a year.
- The collaborative decision-making concept has reached a mature stage, and there is an extremely good business case for implementing it.

Milestone Deliverable 2 was a crucial step in establishing a concept of operations, which is the next step for the SESAR definition phase study. The performance targets that have been defined in Milestone Deliverable 2 are currently being integrated by the consortium to provide major input for a detailed concept of operations. ○

KEY FACTS

- The SESAR consortium has established a master plan for Europe's future ATM system.
- The consortium has agreed performance targets for the new ATM system.
- The consortium is working on short-term solutions to improve Europe's existing system.



AUTHOR

➤ Roger Cato spent many years at BAA, where he was managing director of Heathrow airport – the world's busiest international airport – before retiring in early 2005. He now works as a consultant and represents BAA in the SESAR consortium. He is a non-executive director of NATS.