

FABS FOR THE FUTURE

➤ **ULRICH SCHULTE-STRATHAUS**, SECRETARY GENERAL FOR AEA, EXPLAINS TO *FUTURE AIRPORT* WHY THE SINGLE EUROPEAN SKY REQUIRES POLITICAL COMMITMENT.

Future Airport: Where does Europe stand in relation to the rest of the world?

Ulrich Schulte-Strathaus: The status quo is anti-European because it's inefficient, anti-consumer because of the delays as a result of inefficiencies, and anti-environment because of the superfluous and unnecessary CO₂ emissions that are emitted as a result. And it's anti-industry because we are spending €3 billion unnecessarily as a result of the inefficiencies.

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FA: Are we moving in the right direction?

US: It's more of a political commitment than it is a technological one. Yes we have the SESAR programme but I don't think it's an integral element of SES. Without NextGen or other technological systems, SES will not be possible. The restructuring of the skies into functional blocks of airspace needs to have an organisation of agencies to implement SES.

EASA (the European Aviation Safety Agency) and EUROCONTROL are two agencies dedicated to the task of implementing this. This will result in an integrated approach to safety in Europe, which means closer integrations of the ground and airport systems. So it's not only a question of what the organisation should attribute to safety but any ATM and aerodrome safety regulations that they would also be responsible for.

FA: What's the next crucial step?

US: We are making several moves. There was a conference in Bordeaux in November 2008, under the French EU presidency, where member states are committed to implementing, by 2012 at the latest, a functional block of airspace (FAB) bringing together the airspaces of France, Germany, Benelux and Switzerland. This would be the major restructuring of one of the key

airspaces of Europe, with eight other functional blocks to be implemented.

The key priority here is to get political commitment so that they don't just talk about a Single European Sky, but act in terms of Europe rather than a national aerospace management company. I think that now this key project is politically endorsed it will gain momentum and be finished by 2012.

In addition to, and complementing that, we need a performance-setting mechanism so we don't replace the current fragmented system of 41 different systems with nine that are still fragmented. We need a way to make sure that these FABs will be managed cost efficiently, thereby gradually reducing the cost for the operators involved. Creating a central economic performance target mechanism to which these ANSPs will be bound is also a key factor. ○



ULRICH SCHULTE-STRATHAUS

➤ Ulrich Schulte-Strathaus was appointed secretary general of the Association of European Airlines by the CEOs of the Association in September 2002.

➤ He developed the 'AEA action plan', which focused the aeropolitical debate of the aviation sector with EU institutions on key political objectives.

➤ AEA, founded in 1954, brings together Europe's most important network airlines – 34 in all – passenger, airfreight and express

SINGLE EUROPEAN SKY TIMELINE

1989 – AEA publishes a study 'Towards a single air traffic control system for Europe'

1994 – AEA launches a public and political campaign for 'a Single Sky for Europe'

1999 – Incoming commission president Prodi makes air traffic delay a key priority

2004 – The Single European Sky framework package passes into law

2009 – The second package of single sky measures (SES II) becomes law

2012 – The division of European airspace into nine functional airspace blocks should be completed

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