

**SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS OF THE
DIRECTORS GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION - EUR/NAT REGIONS
TELECONFERENCE MEETING (EUR/NAT-DGCA/2021-3)**

(29 September 2021)

1. Introduction

1.1 A joint teleconference meeting of the Directors General of Civil Aviation of the ICAO European and North Atlantic (EUR/NAT) Regions and European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) (EUR/NAT-DGCA/2021-3) was held on 29 September 2021.

1.2 The main objectives of the meeting were to:

- a) take stock of past events generating crisis in the EUR Region (e.g. volcanic ash, airspace closures and public health issues, aviation security-related and cyber events);
- b) identify the commonalities of such events (e.g. common safety risks, unavailability of airspace, impact on airports and service providers, economic impact, etc.);
- c) present the strategies and patterns followed to manage and overcome such crisis;
- d) draw lessons learnt from these events, from the first signs to the return to normal;
- e) identify the new competencies, skills and knowledge required to anticipate the events and contain the crisis; and
- f) identify, based on these experiences, which mechanisms and tools the EUR Region should have to be well prepared in the future to manage crisis (including the combined use of the European Aviation Crisis Coordination Cell (EACCC), CAPSCA, ICAO crisis coordination teams, Volcanic Ash Exercises Steering Groups, etc.).

1.3 About 140 participants from 40 EUR/NAT States and 7 organisations participated in the discussions. Several States from other ICAO Regions also joined as observers. The list of participants is provided in **Appendix A**.

1.4 The Meeting was chaired by the ICAO EUR/NAT DGCA Chairman, Mr. Luis Ribeiro (DG CAA of Portugal). The ICAO EUR/NAT Acting Director, Captain Denis Guindon, was the meeting Secretary, supported by other ICAO personnel.

1.5 The ICAO Secretary General, Mr. Juan Carlos Salazar, opened the meeting, followed by welcome remarks by Mr. Denis Guindon, Acting Regional Director for the ICAO EUR/NAT Region, Mr. Patrick Ky, Executive Director of EASA, as well as Mr. Luis Ribeiro, Chairman of the meeting.

2. Presentations

Presentation by ICAO

2.1 The Meeting was provided with a presentation on the impact of past and current crises, role of national and regional contingency plans and exercises.

2.2 It was seen from the presentation that the COVID-19 crisis, which affected the aviation industry as well as many other sectors, continued and it was likely that there would be new crises and vulnerabilities. Regional close cooperation between European authorities, States and aviation industry played

an important role in the resolution of this and similar crises. The ICAO EUR Doc 031 provided a framework for such cooperation, but it could be updated with items from the EACCC COVID-19 crisis lessons learned and new threat scenarios. Systematic and efficient coordination of all involved national stakeholders, including public health, through National Air Transport Facilitation Committees (NATFC) was key for preparedness and crisis response at the national level. It was aimed to develop and expand regional achievements such as the EU COVID certificate, EUR aviation health safety protocols and inter-regional achievements such as EUR-NAT-NAM connectivity.

Presentation by EASA

2.3 EASA provided the meeting with an overview of lessons learnt from new and emerging risks with a focus on COVID-19. In this overview, the following lessons learnt were highlighted:

- a) Data is good but not everything – use good, old expert judgment;
- b) Many interdependencies – high propensity for risk transfer;
- c) Integrated risk management - a key enabler to successfully manage disruptions of such scale;
- d) Management of external (non-aviation) risks – leading to a shift from “safety of flight” towards the “safety of the passenger”;
- e) Extensive use of “soft law” regulatory tools;
- f) International by design – imperative that measures are coordinated and accepted at regional/international level;
- g) Fragmented and uncoordinated non-aviation measures, an obstacle to the quick and safe recovery;
- h) Opportunity to implement bold changes: remote oversight, address regulatory rigidity, use of faster regulatory instruments;
- i) It’s not over yet – latent risks remain and need to be identified and mitigated, changed economic landscape, increasing environmental challenges; and
- j) Next crisis will be different – enhance overall resilience.

Presentation by EUROCONTROL

2.4 EUROCONTROL presented the EACCC Provisional COVID-19 Report providing lessons learnt from the past crisis situation from the airspace perspective.

2.5 In the presentation, it was stated that coordination and information provided by the EACC was necessary and appreciated. The epidemic was a social crisis which also had a huge impact on aviation, and while exercises were useful as preparation, they had limitations and the life of crisis organizations was limited. It was recommended that the EU aviation crisis management framework be evolved to manage crisis affecting aviation, the expectations regarding the EACCC’s role, scope and its objectives needed to be clarified in light of the COVID-19 experience and that the inter-sectoral cooperation could and should be improved.

Presentation by IATA

2.6 IATA presented the airline industry’s perspective which touched upon the experiences in the recent crises that had a significant impact on aviation. The importance of immediate sharing information and communication in times of crisis, crisis management and contacts between aviation and expert groups/organizations for different types of crises was emphasized as lessons learned. It was suggested to establish a crisis coordination center and State focal contacts, establish and exercise harmonised procedures, maintain a network of contacts with relevant expert groups/organizations and allow airlines to perform their own risk assessments in order to ensure that the system worked instead of shutting down in the time of a crisis.

Presentation by EASA

2.7 EASA presented the meeting with new and emerging risks to flight safety highlighting that information sharing and cooperation were key elements to addressing risks arising from conflict zones.

2.8 Information on the European Information Sharing and Cooperation Platform on Conflict Zones was provided. The conclusions from the presentation were that new emerging risks were already a reality, integrated risk management was becoming a necessity, and data capture, information sharing and capacity to analyse were the basis to addressing emerging risks and future crises events.

Presentation by ICAO, Czech Republic and Morocco

2.9 A presentation by ICAO, Czech Republic and Morocco on the Annex 9 Facilitation Perspective of National Air Transport Facilitation Committee (NATFC) was provided.

2.10 The importance of the awareness of the NATFC, improving cooperation with the Ministry of Health and Public Health Officer, revising and amendment of National Facilitation Programmes (NFP), ensuring more power of the NATFC, establishment of ad-hoc coordination bodies for managing the pandemic, and the insufficient level of implementation of Annex 9 SARPs for restart and recovery during pandemic were emphasized in the presentations as lessons learnt.

3. Panel discussions and conclusions

3.1 Mr. Piotr Samson (DG Poland) moderated the panel discussion and question session. The Panelists were:

- a) Mr. Luc Tytgat, Strategy & Safety Management Director, EASA;
- b) Mr. Elkhana Nahmadov, Deputy Regional Director ICAO EUR/NAT;
- c) Mr. Steven Moore, Head of ATM Network Operations Division, EUROCONTROL Network Manager;
- d) Mr. Giancarlo Buono, Regional Director Safety and Flight Operations, IATA Europe; and
- e) Ms. Tanja Grobotek, Director Europe Affairs, CANSO.

3.2 As a result of the discussions, the meeting acknowledged that the current crisis was still ongoing, the meeting emphasised the importance of fostering the soonest recovery through building on regional successes, such as EU COVID certificate, EUR aviation health safety protocols, and expanding inter-regional, e.g. EUR-NAT-NAM, to facilitate connectivity as a first step to global restart.

3.3 Having discussed the lessons learnt from the past and current crisis affecting the civil aviation system and with respect to the regional aviation crisis preparedness and response mechanisms, the Conference agreed on the following conclusions:

- a) Close cooperation between European authorities, States and aviation industry is instrumental for any arrangements designed to manage and overcome crisis events with a negative impact on air transportation.
- b) Considering the international nature of civil aviation, there is a need for efficient regional cooperation mechanisms to tackle major events affecting air transportation regardless their source (safety, security, health etc.) at technical and political level.
- c) Systematic and efficient coordination of all involved national stakeholders, including public health, through National Air Transport Facilitation Committees is key for, preparedness and crisis response at the national level.
- d) Taking under consideration the existing ICAO SARPS and newly developed guidance for the COVID -19 pandemic, enhance compliance with the ICAO provisions and coordination

through existing mechanisms (e.g. CAPSCA, VACP, crisis coordination teams) to facilitate improved preparedness planning and crisis management for future events impacting aviation.

- e) The past crisis events demonstrated that only Pan-European solutions compliant with ICAO SARPS and guidelines can be effective in providing solutions as it was achieved for the adoption of the EASA - ECDC COVID-19 Aviation Health Safety Protocol. Isolated and uncoordinated actions to an event of international nature should be avoided. The EUR aviation crisis management framework, associated mechanisms such as the European Aviation Coordination Crisis Cell and currently existing guidance material (e.g. EUR DOC 031) need to evolve in order to better manage events affecting aviation and not only network crises.
- f) States need to cooperate closely based on pre-defined arrangements taking into consideration safety, security and other aspects and necessity to ensure a quick recovery for the primary benefit of passengers and the aviation industry. Regional contingency and coordination plans and preparedness exercises are essential in that regard.
- g) Notwithstanding operational or financial impact on industry and on passengers' experience, safety, security and other aspects of any crisis need to be considered as a key element of a response to an event.
- h) Information sharing on safety, security and other risks and risk mitigation measures between States and industry is a key element to ensure readiness for a crisis. States and industry players should actively engage in the existing or yet to be established regional mechanisms for information sharing.
- i) Recognising benefits resulting from the existing coordination mechanisms at European level, a further reflection should be sought how to ensure more agility and coordination in the future, including inter-sectoral cooperation. To this end, it is proposed that ICAO, EASA, EUROCONTROL Network Manager, States and stakeholders such as ACI, CANSO and IATA to coordinate and propose further improvement proposals to the EUR crisis management framework for the DGCA consideration.

4. Agenda item 4: Next meeting

4.1 The Meeting was closed by the Chairman, the ICAO EUR/NAT Regional Director and Mr. Luc Tytgat, who thanked participants for their active contributions.

4.2 The date of the next EUR/NAT DGCA teleconference will be coordinated as soon as possible, tentatively planned in the first quarter of 2022.

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#### **LIST OF APPENDICES**

##### **Appendix A— List of Participants**

**APPENDIX A — LIST OF PARTICIPANTS***(Paragraph 1.3 refers)***ALBANIA**

Adelina GJONI  
Selma PAGRIA

**ARMENIA**

Tatevik REVAZYAN  
Armine DANIELYAN  
Aida GABRIELYAN  
Sergey SENEKEREMYAN  
Nelly HARUTYUNYAN

**AUSTRIA**

Andreas HERNDLER

**BELARUS**

Vladimir BROBOV  
Siarhei KULAK  
Aliaksandr AKULENKA

**BOSNIA AND  
HERZEGOVINA**

Vladimir CEKLIC  
Ilija SAVATIC

**CANADA**

Tyler BROOKS  
Andy COOK

**CYPRUS**

Louis VALIANTIS  
Nicos NICOLAOU

**CZECH REPUBLIC**

Zdenek JELINEK  
Marie HAUEROVA

**DENMARK**

Stine NORSKOV  
Christoffer BEN

**FINLAND**

Matti TUPAMAKI

**GEORGIA**

Levan KARANADZE

**GERMANY**

Raimund KAMP  
Marina KOESTER  
Uwe HUISMANN

**HUNGARY**

Mate LOWINGER

**ICELAND**

Jon Gunnar JONSSON  
Kristin Helga  
MARKUSDOTTIR  
Hlin HOLM

**IRELAND**

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Aidan GLOVER  
Deirdre FORREST  
Sean PATRICK

**ISRAEL**

Eli ALOOK

**ITALY**

Luca MERUCCI  
Giovanna LASCHENA  
Angelo ROMITO  
Alessandro GHILARI  
Simona SCOLLO  
Mauro COLTELLI  
Stefano CORRADINI  
Chiara CICIRELLO

**KAZAKHSTAN**

Kuanysh DAUTOVA

**KYRGYZSTAN**

Nurzhan MYRZABEKOV

**LITHUANIA**

Jurate PECIUKONYTE

**MOROCCO**

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Mohammed KARARA  
Raddaf SAFAE

**NETHERLANDS**

Robin VALKENBURCHT

**NORTH MACEDONIA**

Tomislav TUNTEV

**NORWAY**

Bjornar DAVIDSEN

**POLAND**

Piotr SAMSON  
Michal LEBIODA  
Robert PRZYBYLSKI

**PORTUGAL**

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Jorge CASTANHO

**REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA**

Octavian NICOLAESCU  
Corina IGNATOVA

**RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

Vladimir CHERTOK

**SERBIA**

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V. RADOVIC

**SLOVENIA**

Srecko JANSKA

**SPAIN**

Andres SANCHEZ  
Juan FIDALGO  
Diana SIMON  
Tomás HERRERO  
Alberto GUTIERREZ  
María ANTA-GARCIA  
Jorge TREMPES  
Verónica ELVIRA  
Teresa CABRERA  
Florencio CANO  
Joaquín RELLOSO  
Manuel ENAIRE  
Sergio TORRES  
Alejandro MENA

**SWEDEN**

Anne-Marie RAGNARSSON

**SWITZERLAND**

Esther Jutzeler

**UKRAINE**

Oleksandr BILCHUK

**UNITED KINGDOM**

Kirsten RIENSEMA

Sarah HILL

Pauline HUTCHINSON

Emily HOLLINS

Shobhna SHAH

Tom KIRKHOPE

Pearce STAPLES

Harry DALY

**UNITED STATES**

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Susan NORTHRUP

Minh FAVILA

Rachel FLANIGAN

Matthew R BUTLER

Alex NAAR

Trish HIATT

Jennifer SOLOMON

Tina AMEREIHN

Renee POCIUS

Megan BAILEY

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Adam BORKOWSKI

Carla IORIO

Fabio GRASSO

Bas van der WEIDE

**EUROCONTROL**

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Johannes De HAAN

**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**

Christopher ROSS

Carlos MESTRE

Staffan EKWALL

Pierre-Adrien MAREST

**IATA**

Giancarlo BUONO

Carlo VERELST

**ICAO SECRETARIAT****HEADQUARTERS**

Juan Carlos SALLAZAR

**ICAO APAC**

Tao MA

**ICAO ESAF**

Barry KASHAMBO

**ICAO NACC**

Melvin CINTRON

Eddian MENDEZ

**ICAO WACAF**

Nika Meheza MANZI

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**STATES OUTSIDE OF EUR/NAT REGION****CAMEROON**

Emmanuel HAMAN

Patrick BEMBA

**GHANA**

William AGYARE

**SOMALIA**

Abdi ADEN HUSSEIN

**- END -**