Collaborative European efforts to support restart of operations

Videoconferences, 4, 11, 16, 24 — Four more coordination meetings were held in June, bringing together ECAC’s Directors General with the European Commission, EASA and EUROCONTROL in a continued cooperative effort to support ECAC Member States in the restart of operations.

With travel restrictions gradually lifting across Europe and the number of flights steadily increasing, discussions throughout the month have largely focused on the importance of coordinated and harmonised implementation of the EASA/European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) operational guidelines, which define measures to assure the health safety of air travellers as normal services resume, with the objective of regaining public confidence in flying.

The replies to the survey conducted by ECAC and the European Commission on the implementation of the EASA/ECDC guidelines are shared regularly with Member States. This survey, together with the EASA programme to monitor implementation of the guidelines, will provide essential input towards fine-tuning the guidelines and developing best practices.

Among other issues examined in June were new safety risks emerging from the pandemic, economic and financial relief measures outside the ECAC region, the adoption of the ICAO Council Aviation Recovery Task Force (CART) report, prepared under the leadership of Ambassador Philippe Bertoux (France), as well as the discussions on CORSIA held in the 220th Session of the ICAO Council.

Sharing information amongst stakeholders continues to be crucial in the strive to overcome challenges and support the sector in a harmonised and coordinated way and the coordination meetings will carry on over the summer period in order to continue monitoring the situation and exchanging information with the various stakeholders.

Regional organisations share experience

Videoconference, 2 June — At the initiative of the Director General of the Arab Civil Aviation Organization (ACAO), the four regional organisations (ACAO, African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC), Latin American Civil Aviation Commission (LACAC) and ECAC), through their Secretaries General/Executive Secretaries, met to discuss the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on their Member States and industry and to share the various initiatives taken to mitigate the impact of the crisis on the air transport sector at regional level.

Among the topics discussed were the traffic situation and the impact on the air transport industry, the measures taken to support Member States, the regional coordination efforts (such as information sharing, best practice exchange, development of specific guidelines) and the contribution to drafting the ICAO Council Aviation Recovery Task Force (CART) report. The participants agreed to continue the dialogue by sharing information and undertaking joint actions to support States and the air transport sector.
The work of the ACC is concentrated in running (European Cockpit Association). There are also investigators. Other groups that attend the meetings of ECAC’s Coordinating Committee on 25 June. The Committee examined the first lessons learnt from the crisis and its aftermath, which could prove essential if a second wave were to break out in the coming months. Crucial lessons emphasised included the value of effective contingency planning, the importance of a coordinated approach – and the role played by ECAC in this regard was highlighted – and the need for a pre-existing national coordination mechanism between different organisations and authorities (e.g. civil aviation authorities, public health, immigration).

So, what is the ACC group? It has been running for over 50 years. It is the core of the European Cockpit Association (ECAC) and the principal forum for all the Member States of the European Union and beyond. The ACC is a consultative, advisory and representational body that provides a platform for member States to discuss, exchange views and plan or organize joint activities related to accident investigation. The ACC is the principal forum for Member States to discuss, exchange views and plan or organize joint activities related to accident investigation. It is the main body for the coordination of safety investigations in the European Union and beyond.

Crispin has a wealth of experience and enthusiasm which will, I know, help him make a real success of the ACC chair.

So, what do I take away? I started my aviation career as an undergraduate engineering apprentice at BAT in 1970 (Concorde, BAC 1-11, VC-10…) and later spent several happy and challenging years as a development flight test engineer at Sikorsky Aircraft in the United States before returning to the UK, to the AAIB. Throughout my career it has been my privilege to work with strong and determined dedicated aviation characters. Safety investigation is filled with 'real aviation people' from manufacturers, operators, regulators, … all the various parts of our industry. These people are genuine safety enthusiasts and the backbone of aviation. Safety investigation has never been a route to the corporate boardroom - but it's a great way to an absorbing life and career.

So the work of the ACC group closest to my heart has been getting together to discuss real cases with current practitioners: "what went well?", "what needs improving next time?". That is the beauty of our ACC meetings, both through the published agenda of current topics and the discussions that take place around it. As chair, I am always careful to include the full scheduled breaks – often that's when the best open discussion happens!

Will miss the ACC ACC – but I know it will be in good hands with Crispin – who also has a background in helicopter development flight test! I have been very privileged to spend most of my aviation career as a professional investigator, working with a wealth of gifted and engaged colleagues from around the world. The icing on the cake was to be elected to chair the ACC in 2017 and I am deeply grateful to the ACC members who have been wonderful in their support and fellowship.

Next meetings of the ACC? A virtual meeting in October 2020 to replace the planned meeting in Bratislava (which has had to be postponed into 2021) and then a meeting, hopefully in person, in March 2021 in Budapest, back-to-back with a seminar by ESASI – European Society of Air Safety Investigators.

Finally, in closing, a very warm welcome to Crispin as the chair of the ECAC ACC. He has supported me very fully in my time as chair and I see a great future for the ACC group.
Experts brainstorm over first lessons learnt from the COVID-19 crisis

**Videoconference, 22 June** — The members and observers of the ECAC Economic Working Group and the Network of Chief Economists held a virtual brainstorming session to exchange lessons learnt and thoughts on the economic and financial impact of the COVID-19 crisis on the aviation sector. Mark Bosly (United Kingdom) and Ana Mata (Portugal), respectively chairs of the Economic Working Group and the Network of Chief Economists, chaired the session.

The economic and financial relief measures and the future resilience and economic sustainability of the sector were the main topics on the agenda. The participants agreed that it was early in the development of the crisis to make a proper assessment on the latter issue but they acknowledged that the sector will certainly face a new way of doing business. The importance of contingency planning by operators and regulators in order to be prepared in the event of a recurrence in the level of disruption was recognised as crucial, both for the economy and to restore public confidence and ensure passenger demand.

Given the usefulness of exchanging information on the priorities in the ECAC Member States, the participants agreed to organise smaller, more topic-specific sessions over the next few weeks.

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**Security**

Security experts examine cyber security issues

**Videoconference, 11-12 June** — The 35th meeting of the ECAC Study Group on Cyber Security in Civil Aviation was held on 11-12 June. Working in small groups, the participants exchanged experiences on the various challenges they are encountering in the cyber security domain and the national measures that have been taken to deal with them. They reviewed ECAC guidance material on cyber security for civil aviation as well as the recommendations for manufacturers and operators prepared by the ad hoc security equipment group before these documents are sent to ECAC’s Security Programme Management Group for endorsement. EASA was invited to present its work on the vulnerability responsible disclosure and the best-decision process in the event of a cyber incident.

Technical Task Force discusses impact of COVID-19 on aviation security

**Videoconference, 18 June** — The members and observers of the ECAC Technical Task Force met for their 76th meeting to examine the impact of COVID-19 on the technical aspects of aviation security in their States. Issues discussed included adapting security measures to ensure health protection of travellers and security staff at the restart of operations. The group examined revised versions of the ECAC Common Testing Methodologies (CTM) for security scanners and for explosive detection systems for cabin baggage, and discussed different funding options for the CTM pilot tests.

Explosive detection dogs study group develops new guidance on covert tests

**Videoconference, 24-25 June** — The development of a new annex to ECAC Doc 30, Part II: ‘ECAC Guidance Material on the implementation of covert tests on explosive detection dogs (EDDs) used to screen aviation cargo’ was the focus of the ECAC Explosive Detection Dogs Study Group meeting this month. This annex will help national authorities to check on-site the compliance of the EDD teams with EU and ECAC Doc 30, Part II requirements. The meeting also finalised the group’s new Terms of Reference, the General Test Methodology, Doc 30, Part II Annex IV-12-V on the approval process of EDD teams, and a new Doc 30, Part II annex on contamination, which will be submitted to the ECAC Security Programme Management Group for adoption.

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**Introducing Crispin Orr, new chair of the ACC group**

Crispin Orr comes to chair the ACC group as the culmination of a broad career in aviation. He graduated from Durham University with a degree in engineering and management and was commissioned into the British Army, training as an aviator and flying helicopters in Germany, Northern Ireland, Canada and France. He then became a test pilot at Boscombe Down, and later commanded the Rotary Wing Test and Evaluation Squadron. His military career also included a variety of management positions and operational commands including deployments in the Middle East and Afghanistan.

In 2014, Mr Orr was appointed as head of the UK’s Defence Accident Investigation Branch, a new multimodal organisation, building strong relationships with other investigating bodies and industry, particularly within Europe and North America. In 2016, he was selected to become chief inspector at the UK Air Accidents Investigation Branch, where he has seized the opportunities for the AAIB to play a full part within the international safety investigation community.

As the new ACC chair, Mr Orr will seek opportunities to broaden participation within the ACC group and coordinate its activities with other groups. He will encourage a lively agenda, addressing the many challenges and concerns of the wide range of investigation bodies within the ECAC Member States.

ECAC wishes all the best to Mr Orr in his new role!
Legal matters

ECAC Legal Task Force looks at data protection issues

*Videoconference, 23 June* — The ECAC Legal Task Force’s second meeting of the year looked at the application of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) principles to ECAC and its activities. The study group that had been established to look into the issue presented the outcome of its discussions during the two virtual meetings held in May. The Task Force agreed that it was desirable to apply the principles for data protection and that a proposal in that regard would be made to the Coordinating Committee and subsequently to Directors General.

The meeting also reviewed several proposed amendments to the handbook for the ECAC Common Evaluation Process (CEP) of security equipment, which was drafted by the CEP Management Group with the objective of streamlining the CEP. The task force will meet again in October to start preparations for the next ICAO Legal Committee (LC/38), which is likely to be held in early 2021, and to move ahead on the tasks under its 2020 work programme.

What’s on in July and August?

All meetings in July and August are organised via video link.

**July**

1. 60th meeting of the ECAC Medium-Term Objectives Task Force
2. 2nd brainstorming session with the Economic Working Group and Network of Chief Economists
8-9. 46th meeting of the Common Evaluation Process Management Group
9. 3rd brainstorming session with the Economic Working Group and Network of Chief Economists
9-10. 26th meeting of the Behaviour Detection Study Group
15. 29th meeting of the Security Forum - closed session

**August**

26. 188th meeting of the Coordinating Committee
27-28. 69th Special meeting of Directors General

News from the Secretariat

The ECAC offices reopened on 1 July.

In accordance with our host country guidelines, ECAC meetings have been rescheduled via video link until the end of August. We invite our meeting participants to regularly check the ECAC website (https://www.ecac-ceac.org/about) or specific meeting portals for the latest information.

Any suggestions or questions?
We’d be glad to hear from you!
Contact the communications team at communications@ecac-ceac.org

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