COVID-19 EUROPEAN COORDINATION MEETINGS

5 and 27 October — ECAC held two COVID-19 European coordination meetings in October. At the first meeting, Directors General of ECAC’s Member States, the European Commission, EASA and EUROCONTROL discussed the recent traffic developments. Johan Skjäl (Traficom, Finland), chair of the European branch of the Collaborative Arrangement for the Prevention and Management of Public Health Events in Civil Aviation (CAPSCA), provided an overview of CAPSCA and its work related to COVID-19 health measures, focusing on CAPSCA’s scope, milestones and structure and in particular the CAPSCA EUR project.

At the 27 October meeting, the participants discussed the latest outcomes of the ICAO CART II meeting, during which the Terms of Reference of the three CART working groups were approved and a first progress report was presented proposing amendments to the CART “Take-off” guidance material.

Member States also exchanged views regarding pilot projects in several Member States and latest developments for the use of rapid testing at airports, and the establishment of public health corridors (PHC) between ECAC Member States, and between ECAC Member States and non-European countries.

The next European coordination meeting will be held on 24 November.

ECAC MEDIUM-TERM OBJECTIVES TASK FORCE

EMTO prepares 2022-2024 work programme and budget

2 October — Gathering remotely on 2 October, the ECAC Medium-Term Objectives (EMTO) Task Force, chaired by Urs Haldimann (Switzerland), reviewed the current status of implementation of the ECAC 2019-2021 work programme in all of the organisation’s domains of activity. The meeting underlined the importance for ECAC Member States of signing the Code of Conduct on Cooperation in the Field of Accident/Incident Investigation, and requested amendments to the mid-term review to reflect the ongoing recruitment of new staff members, such as the climate change and capacity-building specialist and the aviation security capacity-building specialist. The outcome of this mid-term review will be presented to Directors General at their next meeting in December (DGCA/155, 10 December 2020), and serve as a basis for the discussions on the draft ECAC 2022-2024 work programme.

EMTO considered the initial proposals for the 2022-2024 work programme and agreed on a series of objectives and deliverables. Following a presentation on the organisation’s performance against the current 2019-2021 budget, the task force examined the draft budget and agreed on some key principles, notably regarding Member States’ contributions. The meeting encouraged further containment and reduction of costs given the current economic and financial context of the air transport sector. It agreed that the work programme and related budget would be presented to the next Coordinating Committee meeting in November (CC/189, 5 November 2020) for further discussion.
European Aviation and Environment Group meeting

1 October — The European Aviation and Environment Group (EAEG) held its 32nd meeting on 1 October to finalise preparations for the second steering group meeting of the 12th cycle of the ICAO Committee on Aviation Environmental Protection (CAEP12SG2020) (held remotely from 5 to 9 October 2020).

Additional exchanges of views took place in an informal setting through an ad hoc group of European CAEP members and observers and their advisers established for the duration of CAEP12SG2020. This informal group held its last meeting on 13 October to take stock of the outcome of CAEP12SG2020, and Urs Ziegler, Switzerland, was commended for his nomination as chair of the ICAO Committee on Aviation Environmental Protection as a successor to Gilles Bourgeois, Canada.

Aircraft noise modelling experts discuss noise calculations

27-28 October — The Aircraft Noise Modelling Task Group of the European Aviation and Environment Group (EAEG) held its 33rd meeting (AIRMOD/33) virtually on 27-28 October, under the chairmanship of Darren Rhodes, United Kingdom Civil Aviation Authority.

Key topics on the agenda included the calculation of helicopter noise and the revision of existing guidance on the calculation of aircraft performance in the context of aircraft noise calculation. On the first item, AIRMOD made progress in developing ECAC guidance on the calculation of helicopter noise, where a different method is being developed to that published in ECAC Doc 29 for fixed-wing aircraft. This will better reflect the unique characteristics of helicopters and this method is expected to be suitable for UAS (drones) and eVTOL vehicle noise.

On the second item, the meeting discussed the revision of existing ECAC Doc 29 guidance on aircraft performance calculations, which are the inputs to noise calculations, including the development of reference case performance calculations to complement acoustic reference case calculations published in Vol. 3 Part 1 of ECAC Doc 29 (4th Edition) in 2016.

European Safety and Air Navigation Coordination Group prepares for ICAO high-level safety conference

7 October — The European Safety and Air Navigation Coordination Group met virtually to discuss the European priorities for the next ICAO High-level Safety Conference, scheduled in 2021. It also discussed the different European contributions to be presented to the conference as well as the timeline for the preparation of these contributions. Progress will be reviewed at its 16th meeting on 12 November 2020, and an update will be presented to Directors General at their December meeting.

Air accident and incident investigation experts meet virtually

22-23 October — Air accident and incident investigators and experts from ECAC Member States, observer organisations and stakeholders met virtually for the first time, after the meetings planned for this year had to be postponed to 2021.

Under the newly appointed chair of the ECAC Group of Experts on Air Accident and Incident Investigation (ACC), Crispin Orr - United Kingdom Air Accident Investigation Branch, the participants discussed the challenges of conducting air accident investigations during the COVID-19 pandemic and the measures adopted to manage the risks so that this important work can continue. Industry representatives and regulators also provided an insight into the changes underway across the industry as a result of the pandemic and its impact on safety management.

During two half-day sessions, the meeting heard updates on current investigations, such as the fatal loss of control of an electric aircraft in the Netherlands, the complex investigation into a fatal light aircraft accident in Ireland, the final report of the Air France A380 engine explosion and fan loss over Greenland, and an update on the Boeing 737 Max return to service.

Observer States Singapore and the United States, and observer organisations EASA, the European Commission, EUROCONTROL and ICAO, provided updates on recent developments and current priorities and activities.

The group also reviewed its activities and discussed its aspirations and development of the draft 2022-2024 work programme, including outreach and future events such as the planned workshop on unmanned aircraft systems (UAS).
The Facilitation Working Group met virtually in October to work through a full agenda. Over two half days, the participants shared information on the recent facilitation activities in their States and in particular on the coordination efforts relating to the COVID-19 crisis. Johan Skjäl (Traficom, Finland) briefed the meeting on the latest developments in health matters, in particular related to COVID-19, the work of CAPSCA and the ICAO Health Issues Outbreaks in Aviation Task Force. Following the discussions on health matters at the COVID-19 European coordination meetings and the focus on these topics this year, the group considered a proposal for new recommendations to amend ECAC Doc 30, Part I and agreed to include a new section on health matters.

For the group’s discussions on the interrelation between aviation security and facilitation and their effects on each other, the participants were joined by the chair of the Guidance Material Task Force (GMTF), Eleanor Travers (Ireland), who provided an insight into the GMTF’s work and tasks. The meeting agreed to create a joint ad hoc working group to collaborate and identify gaps in their respective documentation and guidance material (ECAC Doc 30, Parts I and II) and to develop new recommendations as needed.

The group reviewed the status of implementation of its 2020 work programme, developed a proposal for the 2021 work programme and evaluated the progress made by its two sub-groups: on passengers with reduced mobility (PRM) and on immigration matters. Considering the 2022-2024 work programme for the next triennium, the meeting discussed future work in this domain and agreed on a proposal for the priorities and deliverables ahead.

Last but not least, the meeting bid a warm farewell to the outgoing chair, Halla Sigurjardottir (Iceland), who will take up a new role in her State administration. The participants wished Halla all the best in her future endeavours and thanked her for her excellent work as chair over the last years.

Facilitation Programme Management Group meeting

27 October — Chaired by Alessio Quaranta, Focal Point for Facilitation and Security, the Facilitation Programme Management Group met virtually for the first time since January 2019. The meeting considered at a strategic level ECAC’s future work on facilitation. It discussed the calls to fill the vacant roles of chair and deputy chair of the Facilitation Working Group and the Sub-Group on Immigration respectively. Given the growing importance of facilitation - a fact that has been highlighted and become even more apparent during the ongoing COVID-19 crisis - the meeting concluded that awareness of the work in this field should be raised among ECAC Member States.

Reviewing ECAC Doc 30, Part I, the group adopted a proposed amendment to the text on multiple valid passports and considered and agreed to submit a new Section 6 on health matters to Directors General for adoption.

The group also reviewed the implementation of the facilitation groups’ 2020 work programmes and the tasks ahead for 2021, and discussed the events expected to be held on a global level in the next year.

LEGAL MATTERS

Legal experts reflect on 2020 work

19 October — The ECAC Legal Task Force met online for the third time this year. Chaired by Susanna Metsälampi (Finland), the meeting exchanged information on recent developments and on updates from various meetings, including the COVID-19 European coordination meetings, and reviewed the actions carried out by the task force this year. The participants also discussed the ICAO Legal Committee’s ongoing work and next meeting, which is scheduled to take place in the second half of 2021, and progress made in the Committee’s working groups, and briefly looked at the European priorities and objectives for these meetings.

The task force undertook its annual review of the status of implementation of the 2020 work programme, developed a proposal for the 2021 work programme, discussed future work, and endorsed the 2022-2024 work programme on legal matters.
NEWS FROM THE SECRETARIAT

ECAC is delighted to welcome two new staff members who joined the Secretariat on 1 October

David Matesanz Jiménez joined the Secretariat as Security Equipment Specialist (CEP). Before joining ECAC, David worked for the previous 14 years as National Auditor and Policy Advisor for the Spanish Appropriate Authority (AESA), after several years involved in airport handling operations. David has participated in several ECAC activities as a certified aviation security auditor and certified vulnerability assessor, and has been co-representing Spain in the CEP Management Group and in the Technical Task Force. David is an aviation enthusiast and looks forward to supporting the ECAC CEP, providing a trustworthy common laboratory testing programme of security equipment against ECAC/EU performance standards for the benefit of the 44 ECAC Members States and a wider international community.

Jasna Gamber joins the CASE II Project team as Project Management Assistant. Before joining ECAC, Jasna was responsible for the scientific content and programme management of congresses at the MCI Group. During the past years she has served as a liaison between conference departments, other branch offices, governments, external partners and thousands of participants. Motivated and dynamic, Jasna is eager to support the CASE II Project to deliver a wide range of capacity-building activities on aviation security in Africa, Asia and the Middle East and ensure a successful follow-up to the already well-praised initial CASE Project.

What’s on in November?

Meetings in November are organised virtually

3-4  30th meeting of the ECAC Security Forum
4  11th ECAC/EU Dialogue: Restart, reconnect, recover – rebuilding aviation in a changed world
5  189th meeting of the ECAC Coordinating Committee
12  4th meeting of the European coordination group for economic matters
12  16th European Safety and Air Navigation Coordination Group
12  32nd meeting of the ECAC Security Programme Management Group
16  11th annual meeting of security equipment manufacturers involved in the ECAC Common Evaluation Process (CEP) of security equipment
24  28th COVID-19 European coordination meeting