SEPTEMBER 2026

ECAC NEWSPOINT #09

European Civil Aviation Conference monthly news

ENVIRONMENT

Action, progress and ambition across aviation's environmental agenda at the ECAC Environmental Forum

Paris, 15-16 September 2026 — The 9th ECAC Environmental Forum (ENVFORUM/9) brought together representatives from regulators, international and regional organisations, industry, academia and civil society for two days of discussion across the civil aviation environmental agenda.

Chaired by Alex Philpott (United Kingdom), the Forum focused on recent European and global policy developments related to aircraft emissions and local air quality, sustainable aviation fuels (SAF), noise, carbon removals and zero-emission aviation.

Discussions on aircraft emissions highlighted opportunities for further progress through engine and combustor design, as well as through fuel composition and standards. On sustainable aviation fuels, early experience with demand-side policies provided encouraging signs, with the first ReFuelEU Aviation technical report showing that the 2% SAF obligation for 2025 had been exceeded. Experiences from the United Kingdom, Brazil, Africa and the Arab region also illustrated different approaches to supporting SAF deployment, while discussions highlighted continuing challenges around scaling production, mobilising investment, feedstocks and policy design.

Noise remains a significant concern for communities around airports, with new research illustrating the complexity of annoyance and sleep disturbance and the importance of acoustic and non-acoustic factors. Participants also considered possible responses by airport operators, regulators and other actors.

Looking towards net zero, the Forum explored the potential role of carbon removals in addressing residual aviation emissions, including questions around governance, cost and responsibility. Real-world electric aircraft testing in Norway also demonstrated progress towards zero-emission operations, while highlighting the infrastructure, financing, business models and wider ecosystem required for deployment at scale.

A recurring theme was the relationship between implementing existing commitments and continuing to advance environmental ambition. Different views on the pace and sequencing of further action contributed to lively and substantive exchanges, grounded in technical expertise and practical experience.

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ENVIRONMENT

EAEG meetings consider European aviation environmental priorities

September 2026 — The European Aviation and Environment Working Group (EAEG) held a series of meetings in September, with experts' preparations for the second Steering Group meeting of the ICAO Committee on Aviation Environmental Protection (CAEP/14 SG2) in Montreal in October forming a central focus.

The month began with EAEG-CAEP/94 on 3 September, which launched the next phase of preparations for SG2. European CAEP members and observers reviewed developments across the CAEP work programme and exchanged information on stakeholder engagement and outreach ahead of the meeting.

Preparations continued in Paris on 16 and 17 September. A dedicated stakeholder session on 16 September provided an opportunity to exchange views on aircraft NOx standards and helicopter noise limits, alongside wider stakeholder priorities for CAEP/14.

The discussions continued the following day, with participants considering feedback from the stakeholder exchanges and key issues expected to feature at the CAEP/14 Steering Group meeting. The meeting also considered developments across the different CAEP technical workstreams and practical arrangements for the October meeting in Montreal.

The month concluded with the expanded EAEG meeting on 24 September. Discussions covered the European Commission's proposals in relation to the EU Emissions Trading System, participation of European experts in CAEP, and ongoing work within the EAEG task groups on State Action Plans for emissions reduction and aircraft noise modelling.

Together, the meetings supported continued European information-sharing across both immediate CAEP/14 priorities and the EAEG's broader environmental work programme.

FACILITATION

Building capacity for consistent PRM quality assessments

Paris, 1-4 September 2026 — Nine participants from six ECAC Member States gathered in Paris from 1 to 4 September for the fifth session of the ECAC Quality Assessment Programme (QAP) Training and Certification Course, kindly hosted by the French Directorate General for Civil Aviation.

This course is a key part of the QAP on Assistance to Persons with Disabilities and Persons with Reduced Mobility (PRM). It prepares future ECAC quality assessors to apply common approaches, helping to ensure that assessments are carried out consistently and to a high standard by all assessors.

During the three-day course, participants strengthened their practical understanding of ECAC Doc 30, Part I (Facilitation), Section 5 Recommendations, and put their knowledge into practice through role-play exercises. They also prepared for the certification examinations required to join the ECAC roster of QAP assessors. The fourth and final day was dedicated to written certification tests.

By expanding and strengthening its pool of QAP-certified assessors, ECAC is supporting a shared objective: ensuring harmonised, transparent and quality assistance for persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility across all 44 ECAC Member States.

Behaviour Detection Study Group advances work on guidance material and future priorities

Videoconference, 1-2 September 2026 — The ECAC Behaviour Detection Study Group reviewed progress under its 2026 work programme and discussed priorities for the year ahead at its 45th meeting. The group focused on ongoing work related to behaviour detection, insider threat identification and awareness among crew members, with several guidance documents progressing towards finalisation and subsequent adoption.

Members also considered proposals for the group's 2027 work programme, including further work on the application of behaviour detection across different aviation security contexts. National updates from the members provided an opportunity for ECAC Member States to share recent developments, experiences and practices. The discussions also highlighted areas where continued cooperation and guidance could support the effective implementation of behaviour detection measures across the aviation sector.

Focus on the evolution of the security structure

Videoconference, 28 September 2026 — Work to streamline the structure of ECAC's security groups progressed at the 48th meeting of the ECAC Security Programme Management Group (SPMG/48). The proposal will be further developed ahead of the group's next meeting (SPMG/49), on 27 October 2026.

The management group also reviewed progress in the implementation of the ECAC Aviation Security Capacity-Building Programme and considered a proposal for the future development of the ECAC Aviation Security Audit Programme, which will be discussed further at SPMG/49.

ECAC Guidance Material Task Force addresses evolving aviation security challenges

Videoconference, 21-22 September 2026 — The 67th meeting of the ECAC Guidance Material Task Force reviewed work carried out under its 2026 programme and considered a range of current and emerging aviation security issues.

The discussions covered measures to maintain effective aviation security during large-scale events, as well as approaches to new and emerging threats. The task force also reviewed developments in security screening and air cargo and mail security, including the security regime for hauliers involved in the air cargo supply chain. Particular attention was given to ensuring existing guidance remains aligned with evolving regulatory and operational requirements.

The potential use of artificial intelligence and other emerging technologies in aviation security was also discussed. Looking ahead, the members began identifying priorities for the task force's 2027 work programme, including the review and development of guidance to address evolving risks and support a consistent, risk-based approach to aviation security.

Advancing aviation security training and certification

Videoconference, 17-18 September 2026 — Reviewing ongoing work on aviation security training and certification and shaping priorities for the 2027 work programme were key themes at the 63rd meeting of the ECAC Training Task Force, which met online on 17 and 18 September.

Members reviewed several guidance documents covering practical and theoretical testing for screener certification, training methodologies and the use of new security equipment. They also exchanged national experiences and views on emerging challenges, including unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) and counter-UAS, as well as the recruitment, motivation and retention of staff.

Looking to the 2027 work programme, members identified potential areas for further work, including guidance on staff retention and the development of aviation security awareness courses related to UAS.

The task force also considered whether existing training-related material should be revised to reflect evolving needs and best practices. It agreed that the 2027 areas of interest should focus on revising existing material covering subjects such as risk- and outcome-based approaches for training inspectors, the use of artificial intelligence and other recent innovations in passenger and baggage screening, and approaches to maintaining screener motivation and retention.

ECAC advances standards for explosive detection dogs

Bonneuil-sur-Marne, 17-18 September 2026 — Five updated Annexes to ECAC Doc 30, Part II (Security) have been endorsed by the ECAC Study Group on Explosive Detection Dogs (EDD) and will be submitted to the Security Programme Management Group for adoption in October.

Gathering at the premises of the French Civil Aviation Technical Centre (STAC) in Bonneuil-sur-Marne for their 49th meeting, the ECAC Study Group on Explosive Detection Dogs discussed standards and procedures for explosive detection dogs, along with sensitive matters relating to the implementation of the group's 2026 work programme.

The study group is also expected to finalise two new guidance documents by the end of the year, covering the use of EDD for vehicle examination and the use of training aids for EDD.

The study group continued its discussions on the ability of explosive detection dogs to detect improvised incendiary devices (IIDs), focusing in particular on incendiary materials that could pose a threat to civil aviation, and EDD's capabilities to detect them.

Strengthening security through more harmonised testing

Dubrovnik, 29-30 September 2026 — How testing can help identify vulnerabilities, assess security measures and support continuous improvement was a key focus of the fifth meeting of the ECAC Group on Security Testing. Members exchanged experiences and lessons learnt, highlighting the importance of effective testing in strengthening aviation security.

Discussions focused on how to further harmonise testing practices across ECAC Member States through a consistent, risk-based methodology. Participants also highlighted the value of collecting and analysing (overt and covert) testing data to identify trends and support risk assessment.

Areas of interest included testing when using explosive detection systems for cabin baggage (EDSCB), air cargo security and emerging areas such as known suppliers. The group also began shaping its 2027 work programme, with cooperation, knowledge sharing and further development of harmonised testing approaches among the priorities identified.

Study group endorses draft guidance on criticality in civil aviation cyber security

Videoconference, 9 September 2026 — A new draft "guidance on criticality in civil aviation cyber security", intended for inclusion in the ECAC Aviation Security Handbook, was endorsed by the ECAC Study Group on Cyber Security in Civil Aviation at its 56th meeting, marking a step towards a more harmonised approach to addressing cyber security risks across aviation.

The guidance provides a common approach to identifying essential aviation functions and assessing the criticality of the ICT systems and data that support them. It also sets out common criteria to help aviation organisations carry out these assessments consistently.

The study group also supported, in principle, the development of an ECAC policy on the cyber security of security equipment. This work will be discussed further at the 48th meeting of the Security Forum on 1-2 October 2026. In addition, the study group reviewed the results of a survey on Member States' needs for further guidance material, identifying several tasks to address these needs for possible inclusion in its 2027 work programme.

Economic experts examine connectivity, competitiveness and emerging challenges

Videoconference, 9 September 2026 — ECAC Member States shared information on the key challenges facing air transport over the busy summer period and ongoing policy and regulatory work underway at national level, at the Economic Working Group's second meeting of the year, held on 9 September.

Access to fuel and maintaining connectivity amid ongoing geopolitical tensions were among the main concerns highlighted by Member States. At the same time, several States reported increases in air traffic and the launch or expansion of routes.

The group also welcomed representatives of the European Network Airlines Association for an exchange on issues affecting connectivity and competitiveness across Europe. Discussions covered air services agreements and regulatory developments, including the review of Regulation (EC) 1008/2008 and the EU Emissions Trading System (EU ETS).

Looking ahead, the meeting also began planning the group's 2027 work programme, which would also consider the outcomes of major events taking place in the last quarter of 2026, in particular the ECAC/EU Dialogue with the air transport industry and the ICAO Seventh Worldwide Air Transport Conference.

On 14 September 2026, the group held a focused, informal session on interchange, which is an issue of current interest for several ECAC Member States. A presentation by a representative of LATAM Airlines gave participants an insight into how interchange operations are conducted in practice and how they are managed in line with regulatory requirements across different jurisdictions. Members agreed that this topic should be explored further in 2027, including as part of the group's ongoing work on the ECAC Air Transport Liberalisation toolkit.

ECAC MEDIUM-TERM OBJECTIVES GROUP

EMTO prepares work programme and budget for 2028–2030

Videoconference, 16 September 2026 — Work on ECAC's priorities and budget for the 2028-2030 triennium is progressing with a new work programme finalised and a draft budget prepared. The ECAC Medium-Term Objectives (EMTO) Group discussed both documents at its online meeting in September.

The new work programme includes improvements to its presentation, making it easier to read and to monitor progress in implementation. The draft budget has also been prepared, with amendments to its structure aimed at simplifying the presentation while maintaining its substance.

Both documents will be presented for initial discussion at the next meeting of the Coordinating Committee in October.

CONVENTION

Work progresses towards entry into force of the ECAC Convention

Videoconference, 25 September 2026 — The Working Group on Preparations for the Entry into Force of the Convention on the Bureau of ECAC held its second meeting on 25 September, welcoming new members from Italy and Monaco.

The group noted that six Member States have now ratified the Convention, with Albania, Monaco and North Macedonia recently completing their procedures. Members from other signatory States reported steady progress, with several ratification packages now under consideration by governments or parliaments and some further ratifications expected before the end of the year.

The meeting marked the start of work on the amendments needed to ensure full consistency between the ECAC Constitution and the Convention. Members reviewed the ECAC Constitution article by article, focusing on the changes required by the Convention. These include updating references to the Secretariat to reflect the future role of the Bureau and its staff.

Looking ahead, the working group will develop a transition plan setting out the practical steps towards the Convention's entry into force, which will be presented at its next meetings.

What's on in October?

calendar

1	I	58th meeting of the Legal Working Group (LEGWG/58), Dublin
1-2	I	48th meeting of the Security Forum (SF/48), videoconference
5	I	78th meeting of the Facilitation Sub-group on Persons with Reduced Mobility (FAL-PRM-SG/78), videoconference
5	I	16th meeting of the Common Evaluation Process (CEP) of security equipment participating test centres (CEP-TC/16), videoconference
6	I	97th meeting of the European Aviation and Environment Working Group (EAEG-CAEP/97), videoconference
6-7	I	94th meeting of the Technical Task Force (TTF/94), videoconference
7	I	NETCOM workshop, Tallinn
8	I	11th meeting of the Network of Communication Specialists (NETCOM//11), Tallinn
13-14	I	69th meeting of the Common Evaluation Process (CEP) of security equipment Management Group (CEP-MG/69), videoconference
13-14	I	13th ECAC/EU Dialogue with the European air transport industry, Paris
14	I	209th meeting of the Coordinating Committee (CC/209), Paris
14-15	I	72nd meeting of the Facilitation Working Group (FAL/72), London
15	I	14th meeting of the Network on Diversity and Inclusion in Civil Aviation (NETD&I/14), videoconference
15	I	98th meeting of the European Aviation and Environment Working Group (EAEG-CAEP/98), videoconference
16	I	3rd meeting of the Working Group on Preparations for the Entry into Force of the Convention on the Bureau of ECAC (CONVENTION-WG/3), videoconference
27	I	49th meeting of the Security Programme Management Group (SPMG/49), Madrid