



COORDINATING COMMITTEE

ECAC Coordinating Committee prepares for 2025 meetings and reviews work programmes

Brussels, 27 November 2024 — The Coordinating Committee, gathering in Brussels for their 203rd meeting, focused on preparations for the meeting of ECAC Directors General in Paris on 18 December (DGCA/163) and discussed European priorities for the 42nd ICAO Assembly to be held in Montreal in autumn 2025.

Reflecting on the past year, the Committee members assessed the implementation of the 2022-2024 work programme and reviewed achievements and ongoing challenges. Proposals from ECAC's Medium-Term Objectives (EMTO) Task Force were also discussed, including the updated criteria for evaluating the

performance of ECAC working groups, and preparations for the review of key ECAC documents in 2025. ■

DIRECTORS GENERAL

Cooperation remains the key for managing disruption in uncertain times



Paris, 17 December 2024 — This week, the latest ECAC Forum of Directors General (FORUM/16) took place in Paris, bringing together over 70 representatives of ECAC Member States, EUROCONTROL, the European Commission, EASA, ICAO and Zero to exchange information and discuss strategies for managing the growing threats of disruption in the aviation sector in our current uncertain times.

Raúl Medina, Director General EUROCONTROL, set the scene for the Forum by sharing priorities for his organisation based on challenges such as air traffic restrictions and weather disruptions, the need for the aviation sector to reduce its emissions, and calls for increased operational efficiency to manage higher volumes of flights while meeting sustainability requirements.

In the opening session, moderated by Damien Cazé, Director General of Civil Aviation, France, speakers shared their experiences in managing critical situations and crises, and their key concerns for stability affecting the global aviation sector. The second session, led by Zdeněk Jelínek, Director General of Civil Aviation, Czechia and ECAC Focal Point for Diversity and Inclusion, addressed the critical topic of the evolution of the workforce and the sector's need for new talents and competencies. In the third session, moderated by Anelia Marinova, Director General of Civil Aviation, Bulgaria, speakers explored strategies to predict and mitigate future crises within and outside of the aviation sector.

The discussions highlighted the valuable experiences across Europe in dealing with diverse crises. Throughout the Forum, participants recognised that cooperation was crucial to address common challenges related to the impacts of current conflicts in Ukraine and the Middle East, economic

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16th ECAC FORUM

Managing disruption in uncertain times

Paris
17 December 2024

instability, and climate change, including weather events of increasing severity.

The participants agreed there was serious threat to the efficiency and effectiveness of the aviation sector if skills and competencies could not be secured. With expectations of continued aviation growth worldwide and changing mentality about the attractiveness of the sector, they recognised the need for greater diversity within the aviation workforce. Such diversity would also contribute to a more innovative environment. They stressed the importance of communicating the wide range of career

opportunities across the aviation industry, particularly to underrepresented groups.

The Forum concluded with a reminder of the importance of learning from the past. While not all crises can be predicted, it was agreed that having established procedures, protocols and communication networks in place is essential for responding swiftly when crises arrive. Collaborative planning was identified as critical to build a foundation for action, especially in the first crucial stages of a crisis.

Directors' General end-of-year meeting in Paris



Paris, 18 December 2024 — Directors General of Civil Aviation and their colleagues assembled in Paris the day after the ECAC Forum for their last meeting of the year (DGCA/163), where they were joined by observers from the European Commission, EASA, EUROCONTROL, the ICAO EUR/NAT Regional Office and JAA TO.

The meeting was the occasion to review ECAC's activities in 2024. ECAC Focal Points presented detailed reports on accomplishments and ongoing activities in the fields of facilitation, security audit and capacity building, accident investigations, economic matters, legal matters, unmanned aircraft systems, communication activities and diversity and inclusion. Discussions also centred on

setting priorities for the upcoming year, including key objectives for 2025.

Amongst key topics discussed was the draft Convention for the Secretariat of the Conference, in preparation for the Diplomatic Conference to be held in Paris on 20-22 May 2025.

With the 42nd ICAO Assembly scheduled to take place in Montreal in autumn 2025, significant discussion was also dedicated to Europe's strategic goals and priorities for the Assembly. Participants reviewed Europe's preparations, emphasising Europe's stance on critical issues in the global aviation landscape. Discussion centred around a number of proposed contributions to the Assembly in the safety and air navigation, economics,

facilitation, environment, and security and cyber security domains.

The meeting featured updates on recent developments from Hungary, which held the EU presidency during the latter half of 2024, as well as from Poland, set to take over the presidency in the first half of 2025, together with inputs from the European Commission on future regulatory priorities. The meeting also heard a briefing from European members on the ICAO Council on the outcomes of the last Council session, and priorities for the upcoming winter 2025 session. Updates from the ICAO EUR/NAT office also highlighted plans for a joint facilitation activity in 2025.

Oleksandr Bilchuk, Director General of Civil Aviation in Ukraine, briefed participants on the civil aviation situation in his country, detailing the ongoing challenges faced by the country's aviation sector amid the current conflict, and the continued efforts to maintain safety and operations. Safety and air traffic management developments were also discussed, with updates from EUROCONTROL and EASA on recent advancements in these critical areas. ■

New Coordinating Committee member

A warm welcome to **Wilhelm Eschweiler** (DGCA Germany), who was appointed as a member of the ECAC Coordinating Committee during the 163rd meeting of Directors General in Paris on 18 December 2024.



Security Programme Management Group reviews 2024 achievements

Videoconference, 4, 7 and 8 November 2024 — Chaired by Gunnar Ljungberg in his capacity as ECAC Focal Point for Security, the Security Programme Management Group reviewed the implementation of the work programmes of all security task forces and study groups, and endorsed several documents prepared over the last months.

It also endorsed a series of amendments to ECAC Doc 30, Part II (Security), notably on the use of explosive detection dogs, which were recently sent to all Member States for adoption. In addition, the group reviewed the implementation of the ECAC Audit and Capacity-Building Programmes in 2024, and the development of new activities such as cyber security audits.

Experts gather in Paris to advance security testing practices

Paris, 26 November 2024 — Thirteen experts (pictured below right) from 11 Member States met in Paris to share knowledge and experience on covert and overt testing. Following presentations from several Member States on their national covert testing programmes, the group engaged in discussions about common challenges and key lessons learnt in the design, organisation and implementation of covert and overt testing.

The ECAC Secretariat presented its recent initiatives, including the creation of a new network of points of contact for security testing. These designated experts can be contacted by security experts in the same role from other Member States to share technical insights, best practices and lessons learnt on both covert and overt testing. Additionally, a library of security testing material will be made available to these points of contact.

Building on the discussions, the participants agreed that a dedicated ECAC group focused on security testing would benefit Member States. The proposal for establishing this new group was approved by the Directors General of Civil Aviation at their recent meeting on 18 December.

CTM sub-group advances key projects and drafts 2025 work programme

Videoconference, 26 November 2024 — The Common Testing Methodologies Sub-Group (CTM-SG) met for the fourth time in November, with the European Commission and United States' Transportation Security Administration attending as first-time observers. The chair of the Technical Task Force (TTF) also attended the meeting to provide updates on the TTF's key projects, including the tray equivalency approach, the policy paper on simulants, and a proposal for using an image quality test piece in ECAC Common Evaluation Process (CEP) testing.

Participants were briefed on the progress of the first CTM-SG workstream to finalise a harmonised explosive trace detection testing protocol, as well as updates on other workstreams. The sub-group agreed on a draft 2025 work programme, which was presented for endorsement at the CEP-MG/63 meeting on 2 December. The group's next meeting is scheduled for early 2025.

CEP Management Group finalises 2025 work plans and roadmap for future expansion

Videoconference, 2 December 2024 — Members of the Common Evaluation Process (CEP) of security equipment Management Group assembled online to finalise the 2025 work programmes for both the CEP and the Common Testing Methodologies Sub-Group. The discussions also focused on the CEP roadmap for 2025-2027 and plans for

future expansion. Key topics included the principles behind the roadmap, strategic objectives, resource allocation, and contributions to various tasks. In addition, the group examined aspects of chairship of the group, including the duration of mandates and principles for rotation.

15th information session for security equipment manufacturers

Videoconference, 10 December 2024 — Ninety-four security specialists, including 80 manufacturers and 19 members of ECAC's CEP Management Group, Technical Task Force, Security Forum and Threat Response Group joined the 15th information session for security equipment manufacturers in the ECAC Common Evaluation Process (CEP).

The meeting provided updates on CEP test programmes, 2024 developments, the funding model, and administrative fees. Participants were informed about the draft 2025 CEP work programme and 2025-2027 roadmap objectives. Martijn Koolloos (TNO, Netherlands) presented an overview of configuration change management request evaluations, while the ECAC Secretariat outlined the CEP testing process. Updates on the activities of the Technical Task Force, the Security Forum and the Threat Response Group were also shared.

Key discussions included tray equivalency, modular testing, simulants in approval testing, image quality test piece, and manufacturers' contributions to ECAC initiatives.



Security testing experts meet in Paris, 26 November 2024

New training course on cyber security for national auditors



Valletta, 5-7 November 2024 — The ECAC Secretariat has developed a new training course on auditing cyber security in aviation, entitled “Best Practices for National Auditors – Cyber Security (level 2)”. This course is designed to enhance the knowledge and capabilities of national auditors in overseeing cyber security within the aviation sector.

To validate the training content, a pilot course was held for national auditors from Albania, Belgium, Georgia, Malta, Montenegro and Serbia. The course also featured the expertise of an experienced cyber security oversight specialist from the United Kingdom Civil Aviation Authority, who contributed valuable insights throughout the training.

The course comprises six modules that cover the key principles for protecting critical aviation systems and data, and which present a structured approach to overseeing cyber security in aviation. A central component of the course focused on reviewing good practices for auditing the implementation of cyber security recommendations outlined in ECAC Doc 30, Part II, Chapters 11 and 14. Through a blend of theoretical presentations, interactive classroom activities and a practical visit to an airport, participants were introduced to the practical aspects of preparing for a cyber security audit. This covered drafting a checklist, gathering information on the identification and protection of critical systems and data, reporting findings, and assessing compliance with ECAC Doc 30, Part II.

The ECAC Secretariat has received very positive feedback from the participants, who particularly appreciated the hands-on approach to conducting a cyber security audit or inspection in the aviation sector.

ECAC workshop on human factors and motivation in aviation security

Paris/videoconference, 13-14 November 2024 — Over 45 security experts gathered both in-person and online for the ECAC Workshop on Human Factors and Motivation in Aviation Security. The workshop provided a platform for in-depth discussions on the latest developments, challenges and best practices related to human factor principles in aviation security.

The workshop featured a series of sessions that addressed the following topics:

- the application of human factor principles in aviation security;
- challenges, lessons learnt and best practices for integrating human factors into the planning and implementation of new technologies, including semi-automation;
- decision making, root cause analysis, and system thinking in aviation security;
- actions that Appropriate Authorities and regulators can take to support human factor considerations within Member States.

In addition to theoretical presentations, discussions, and Q&A sessions, the workshop included four practical activities designed to apply the knowledge gained during the theoretical sessions to real-world scenarios. ■



ECAC facilitation experts discuss this year's work programme and look ahead to another busy year in 2025



Paris, 6-7 November 2024 — Members and observers of the Facilitation Working Group met over one and a half days in Paris to discuss ongoing work in the domain, and to look ahead to developing the work programme for 2025.

Updates were received on recent developments in air cargo and health matters, and in relation to ongoing issues

under Passenger Name Records (PNR), as well as on States' progress towards next year's implementation of the EU Entry Exit System (EES). The meeting reviewed the survey findings on air services liabilities and complaints from persons with reduced mobility. It was agreed that experts would review both of the surveys in detail to check that their aims were consistent with current State challenges

and to propose improvements to more efficiently capture and use the resultant data under both of these important topics in future.

The working group agreed to continue its work on developing guidance on assistance dogs, and to review ECAC's Policy Statement on Facilitation, Doc 30, Part I, in the new year.

State Assistance to Air Accident Victims Task Group reviews progress over past year

Haarlem, 27 November 2024 — Members of the State Assistance to Air Accident Victims Task Group (SAAV-TG) reviewed progress on their mandate at their first in-person meeting and final meeting of the year held in the Netherlands. The meeting coincided with the ICAO Symposium on Assistance to Aircraft Accident Victims and their Families (AAAVF2024), hosted by the Netherlands in Haarlem from 26 to 28 November 2024.

During the meeting, the task group agreed to present their outputs from the past 12 months – in the form of a comprehensive ECAC working paper on family assistance plans – to Directors General at their meeting in Paris on 18 December (DGCA/163), along with a proposal to continue the work of the task group in 2025-2026. This presentation will highlight the group's progress in line with its mandate.

A key topic of discussion at the meeting was the importance of sharing experiences on air accident assistance among ECAC Member States. Participants underlined how much they had already learnt from exchanges within the task group, emphasising the value of collaboration in strengthening support for accident victims and their families.



Symposium on Assistance to Aircraft Accident Victims and their Families

Haarlem, 26-28 November 2024 — The second ICAO Symposium on Assistance to Aircraft Accident Victims and their Families (AAAVF2024) brought together experts and policymakers from around the world to exchange experiences on supporting accident victims and their families. The event fostered a deeper understanding of the needs of the families of those affected by accidents.

The chair of the ECAC Group of Experts on Air Accident and Incident Investigation (ACC), Crispin Orr, and the ECAC Executive Secretary, Patricia Reverdy, contributed to panel discussions where they shared information on activities and achievements, notably the work of the task group on assistance to accident victims and their families. They emphasised the importance of all ECAC Member States implementing a national family assistance plan.



Third ECAC Quality Assessment Programme training and certification in Paris



Paris, 2-5 December 2024 — The third session of the ECAC Quality Assessment Programme (QAP) training and certification concluded successfully, marking the end of the programme's activities for 2024.

Representatives from Croatia, Iceland and Italy participated in the three-day training in Paris, designed to equip facilitation experts with the skills and knowledge to become assessors for the QAP programme on assistance to persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility.

Delivered by the ECAC Secretariat, the training allowed participants to deepen their understanding of ECAC's Policy Statement, Doc 30, Part I (Facilitation), which forms the foundation for the programme's recommendations and guidelines. The course also covered the QAP methodology, report-writing techniques and assessment practices.

Certification for the programme required the participants to complete three written tests: one on Doc 30, Part I (Facilitation), another on the QAP methodology, and the third a report-writing exam based on the techniques taught during the training. ■

Air accident experts advance aviation safety and focus on family communication

Videoconference, 6-7 November 2024 — The 61st meeting of the ECAC Group of Experts on Air Accident and Incident Investigation (ACC) gathered to discuss the latest updates and developments in accident investigations. Chaired by Crispin Orr of the United Kingdom's Air Accidents Investigation Branch (AAIB), the meeting covered ongoing investigations and other important topics for advancing good investigation practices, and benefitted from valuable contributions from ATR and Airbus.

A key topic of discussion was best practices for investigators when liaising with families of victims after accidents. Presentations emphasised the importance of transparency when communicating with victims' families, and of sharing factual information to build trust and prevent the spread of misinformation.

Updates on ICAO activities, such as the main outcomes of the last ICAO Accident Investigation Panel held in September, were also shared with the participants. The European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) provided updates on its efforts to integrate human factor considerations into certification processes. This initiative aims to improve safety through enhanced feedback loops between design and operational practices.

Looking ahead, the group confirmed plans for its next meetings in 2025, including the ACC/62 meeting in Vienna in May, and an ACC workshop to be held in Roskilde, Denmark in November. ■

European Aviation and Environment Working Group prepares for key 2025 events

November 2024 — Throughout November, the European Aviation and Environment Working Group (EAEG) convened for a series of meetings led by co-chairs Olivier Meynot (France) and Andrei Mungiu (European Commission).

The meetings focused on key preparations for two important events: the ICAO Committee on Aviation Environmental Protection (CAEP/13) in February 2025 and the 42nd ICAO Assembly in autumn 2025, both to be held in Montreal.

The meetings included:

- **EAEG/75** (online, 5 November): This session reviewed elements of the current CAEP/13 work programme as well as the participants' views on priorities for the CAEP/14 cycle.
- **EAEG/76-Expanded** (online, 5 November): Discussions centred around pro-



EAEG/77 with stakeholders, Paris, 19 November 2024

posals for European papers to the 42nd ICAO Assembly, and updates to the European common section of ICAO State Action Plans, which were reviewed and endorsed by the group.

- **EAEG/77** (Paris, 18-19 November) (*pictured above*): This in-person meeting continued preparations for CAEP/13,

facilitating productive dialogue with stakeholders. The industry representatives shared their priorities and updated the EAEG members on their work on critical environmental issues. ■

ECONOMIC MATTERS

Final meeting of the year for the Economic Working Group

Videoconference, 12 November 2024 — The Economic Working Group recently held a virtual meeting to discuss key economic and market issues affecting the aviation sector. A highlight of the meeting were the group's ongoing activities related to its market liberalisation toolkit and the first survey on ground handling practices. Launched earlier this year, the survey aims to establish a baseline understanding of

ground handling structures and policies across the ECAC region.

Participants exchanged updates on several key matters, including traffic flows, national policies related to taxation and sustainability, and ICAO's recent Air Services Negotiation event, ICAN2024.

Looking ahead, the group agreed that next year's Economic Working Group work

programme would see an opportunity to continue the development of the market liberalisation toolkit, to expand the group's knowledge and understanding of ground handling issues, and to continue raising awareness among ECAC Member States and external stakeholders about the financial and market impact of crises and challenges on the aviation sector. ■

COMMUNICATION



Enhancing communication in civil aviation: highlights from latest NETCOM meeting

Brussels, 13 November 2024 — Strategies for effective communication within the aviation sector were the focus of the seventh meeting of the ECAC Network of Communication Specialists in Civil Aviation, kindly hosted by EUROCONTROL and chaired by Francesca Miceli (Italy). Participants from ECAC Member States and three invited experts engaged in dynamic discussions on community and staff engagement, communication strategies for unruly passengers, and crisis communication.

A key highlight was the NETCOM workshop on media management, featuring insights from members with journalistic backgrounds. The meeting underscored the importance of effective communication in addressing the complex challenges faced by the aviation sector. The insights and strategies discussed will contribute to the ongoing efforts to enhance communication within the industry, setting the basis for NETCOM's 2025 work programme. ■

Celebrating 80th anniversary of the Chicago Convention



Chicago, 5 December 2024 — ECAC President, Alessio Quaranta, and Executive Secretary, Patricia Reverdy, attended the celebration marking the 80th anniversary of the Chicago Convention. Held in the historic location where the text of the Convention was negotiated and signed, this milestone event offered a chance to reflect on the

achievements of the past eight decades while also looking ahead to future opportunities and challenges. In addition to the commemorative activities, the event provided valuable opportunities for bilateral meetings with international partners, and insightful discussions with members of the ICAO Council.

Aviation security at the heart of ICAO’s priorities

Muscat, 9-11 December 2024 — The recent ICAO Security Week concluded with the formal adoption of the Muscat Declaration on Aviation Security and Aviation Cybersecurity. The event addressed key aviation security topics, including the role of Annex 17 in shaping the aviation security systems of States and the industry. Discussions also focused on cyber security mitigation measures in a diverse and multicultural environment. ECAC Executive Secretary, Patricia Reverdy, moderated the first session, *Flying Tomorrow: Enhancing Aviation Security for a Sustainable Future*, setting the stage for conversations on the evolution of aviation security. ■



calendar

What’s on in January?

- 9 | 19th meeting of the European Coordination Group on Facilitation matters (ECG-FAL/19), videoconference
- 13-14 | 4th meeting between the civil aviation regional organisations (REG-ORG/4), Guatemala City
- 16 | 78th meeting of the European Aviation and Environment Working Group (EAEG/78-CAEP), videoconference
- 17 | 43rd meeting of the Security Programme Management Group (SPMG/43), videoconference
- 21-23 | 44th meeting of the Explosive Detection Dogs Study Group (EDD/44), videoconference
- 30 | 51st meeting of the Study Group on Cyber Security in Civil Aviation, videoconference

