

European Networks



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He graduated with an Engineering Degree from the University of Malta in 1975 and joined the Air Traffic Services Unit in Malta in the same year. He obtained ATCO Licences in Aerodrome, Radar and Area Control and was a Watch Supervisor for four years.

In 1982, he was appointed Head of Air Traffic Services in the Maltese Department of Civil Aviation.

Dear Reader,

Please take a moment with me to share a perspective on what we are doing in the Directorate of Network Management of EUROCONTROL. Very recently the European Commission has put forward new proposals to make it easier for people to travel and do business within the European Union. This is known as the Single Market Act II and advocates the opening up of EU airspace so that it operates as a single entity. At NM, the Single Sky concept can only become a reality if those of us, involved in ATM network management strive to ensure that the network operates safely and efficiently.

Indeed, I'm sure that European citizens would like to be reassured that the ATM network is safe. Achieving and maintaining a safe network is a complex task that involves many players. You will hear the argument that it is the job of the regulators to keep aviation safe, but I believe it is our common goal as well – it should be the aim of all the actors working together with a distinct purpose. Just as public health is not only the responsibility of the Health Authorities, safety is not a responsibility just of the Safety Authorities.

To make our contribution to a safe European ATM Network more tangible, those of us in the Directorate of Network Management of EUROCONTROL follow a structured collaborative process with our stakeholders to identify operational safety priorities and thus determine what we can do to make improvements. Consequently, we have collaboratively established our Top 5 Operational Safety Risks and have selected two of these for detailed review – Runway Incursion (RI) and Loss of Separation En-Route (LoS-ER). The detailed review took form of dedicated workshops with six Air Navigation Service Providers during summer 2012. The review was performed with the help of comprehensive operational safety barrier models which we have developed which we call 'Safety Functions Maps' – SAFMAPS. These SAFMAPS were populated with representative samples of

data for European 'A' and 'B' severity ATM occurrences and the vulnerability areas were analysed. On the basis of that analysis we now have some very good ideas where to focus further effort and undertake targeted Operational Safety Studies (OSS). The subject of one of the six potential OSS we are looking at has a relation with the theme of this Hind-Sight – it is about the risk of aircraft operations without a transponder or with a malfunctioning one.

Operations without a transponder or with a malfunctioning one constitute a single 'threat' with a potential of "passing" through all the existing safety barriers up to "see and avoid". One of the two incidents from the sample of LoS-ER that was prevented only by the "Providence" barrier involved a malfunctioning transponder. This single threat was also found in a sample of 'A' and 'B' Losses of Separation in TMA operations. This latter sample was constructed mainly to help validate the SAFMAP concept, but it contained an incident that was again prevented only by the "Providence" barrier because of operation without a transponder which arose after a departure from Controlled Airspace into Uncontrolled airspace where there was no transponder equipage requirement.

The Operational Safety Studies are still to be agreed and initiated but you, as HindSight readers, will have the opportunity to read more about them in future editions.

Finally, I would remind you as a HindSight reader that HindSight is a communication tool within a portfolio of activities we undertake which contribute to a safe Network. As such I would urge you to make the most of the magazine by discussing its contents with your colleagues and providing us with your feedback. S