

COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

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AIR TRAFFIC SYSTEM CAPACITY PROBLEMS (Communication from the Commission)

Proposal for a COUNCIL DECISION

on consultation and coordination between Member States
in the field of air traffic services and air traffic flow
management

Proposal for a COUNCIL DECISION

extending Decision 78/174/EEC to the field of sea and air
transport infrastructure

Proposal for a COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION

on a flexible and efficient use of airspace

(presented by the Commission)

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AIR TRAFFIC SYSTEM CAPACITY PROBLEMS

(Communication of the Commission)

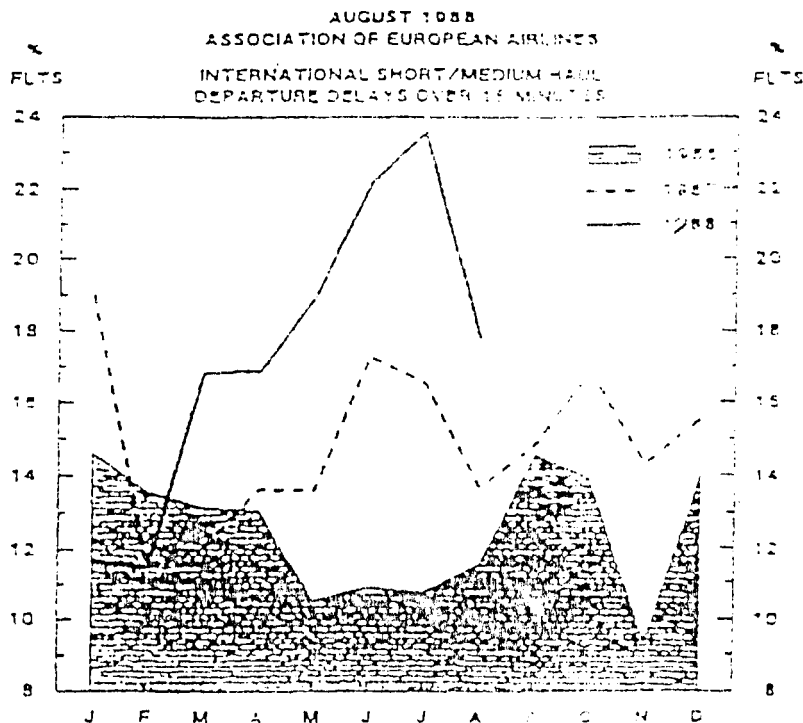
I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Air Traffic system in Europe is causing growing concern because traffic demand in a number of instances exceeds the available capacity at airports and in certain parts of the airspace. This is no surprise. The Commission pointed this out already in 1983 when it sent a study report to the Member States which already at that time indicated a number of bottlenecks. As a consequence a safeguard clause had to be introduced in Community legislation in order to prevent reduction in the margins of safety underlying the air traffic control system. However, it is surprising that remedial action has not been taken.
2. The situation is now threatening to seriously impede the further growth of the Aviation and Tourism industries, with harmful effects on the idea of "People's Europe", since the investments in air traffic control and airports which are needed to overcome it will not become effective for a number of years. Whilst Airspace Management and the provision of ATC services is a national responsibility, the capabilities of each individual 'state' system influences that of its neighbours and as such the overall capacity of the region. Therefore the current problems have to be addressed on a European basis and there would appear to be the need for a positive action at Community level for which all Member States must cooperate.
3. The European Parliament has strongly stressed the problem and most emphatically demanded a number of initiatives.
4. This Communication presents a report of the current situation and makes proposals for positive action to be taken at Community level. A first part is devoted to an analysis of capacity problems, a second part to institutional problems, and a third part examines the role of the Commission and the Community.

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II. THE PROBLEM

5. The problems are the result of a faster than expected growth of aircraft movements since 1984 conversely slower than necessary expansion of the capacity of Air Traffic Control and Airport systems. All indications support the view that this trend is going to continue and many are therefore concerned that the system will very soon be unable to cope with the increasing demand and will start literally breaking down. The main subject of concern and public discussion is the situation of the Air Traffic Control system in Europe.
6. The gap between traffic demand and capacity manifests itself mainly by the following effects :
 - an increasing number of flights are delayed and the average time of delay is growing. As a consequence passengers waste considerable time waiting for delayed flights (and time is money) or miss connecting flights and the image of punctuality of airlines is damaged;



- aircraft have to use uneconomic flight levels and/or longer alternative routes and waste time and fuel in holding patterns or stay on the ground because of airspace congestion or saturated airports or a combination of both;
- new routes can not be created because of lack of capacity at major airports;
- a number of airport terminal buildings are congested during prolonged peak periods; `
- air traffic controllers' working conditions and morale show a marked deterioration;
- a growing number of near-misses are reported by the media, creating the impression to the public that air safety is at risk.

Aviation safety does not appear for the moment to be seriously threatened by the quantity of traffic handled by Air Traffic Control judging from the decline in the number of near misses reported by pilots and air traffic controllers. Traffic growth up to now has been handled by the improvement of controller productivity. However, improvement in controller productivity on its own can not be expected to handle further traffic growth on its own.

7. Several elements of the air transport system are important for the capacity to handle aircraft and passenger movements. The most important are :

- the control of the aircraft "en route" between airports;
- the control of the aircraft at the terminal and approach navigation areas at airports;
- the layout and equipment of runways;
- the number of stands;
- the size and arrangement of terminal buildings.

8. The main factors contributing to the problem of congestion and delays of the air traffic system are :

- inaccurate forecast of the growth of aircraft movements;
- a lack of effectively available airspace and technical capacity of the Air Traffic Control system;
- planning and coordination procedures for the use of the available capacity do not sufficiently take into account the variations over time of flight programmes;
- the near saturation of a number of major airports and of those mainly used by holiday traffic;a number of
- airlines are scheduling the use of their aircraft with very little spare time.

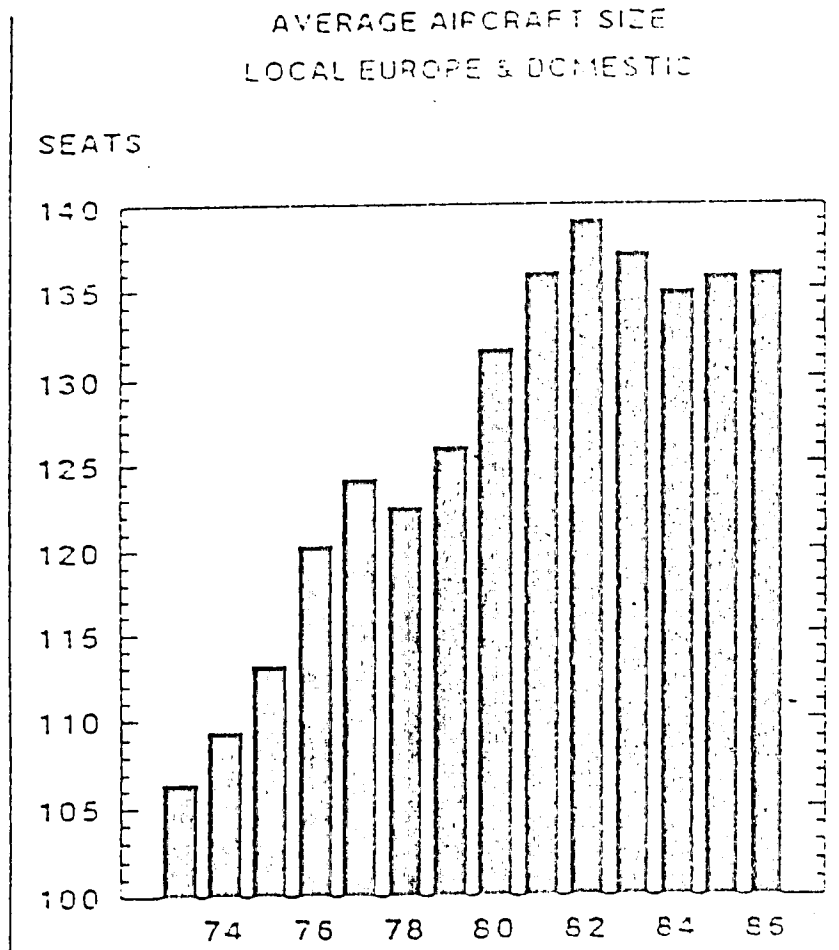
These problems are examined in the following two sections.

9. Expanding international trade, governing the demand for business travel, has influenced the need to expand scheduled air services. At the same time a combination of an improving level of affluence and more realistic air fares are reflected in the popularity of holidays abroad, producing significant seasonal traffic flows between Northern and Southern Europe.

This situation is further complicated by the strong traffic streams towards the North Atlantic and to the Far East.

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The actual growth of aircraft movements especially over the last 3 years, is considerably higher than the forecasts used for planning purposes. This tendency seems to have continued in 1988. This can clearly be seen by comparing the traffic observed in the airspace belonging to the EUROCONTROL user charges system with the forecast made immediately after the second oil price shock. The actual 1987 traffic was 2,5 % higher than a forecast made in 1982. This increase in the number of movements is caused not only by the doubling of the number of passengers over the last 10 years, but also by the use of smaller aircraft by scheduled services.



The charter airlines on the contrary are now using larger aircraft and their number of aircraft movements is showing a slight decline in 1988 over 1987 even with a 20 % increase in passenger kilometers.

10. The reasons which limit the capacity of the air traffic system are manifold; the most important ones can, however, be summarized as follows.

- a. Large parts of European airspace are reserved for military use; the result is a heavy traffic concentration in certain parts of civil airspace creating difficult conditions for Air Traffic Control services. As a consequence, the average aircraft flies 10 % longer than the direct route. Brussels to Zurich is 45 % longer.
- b. Furthermore the airspace available for civil use is often not used in an optimum way because
 - it is generally organized along national boundaries and not on the basis of operational requirements;
 - the capacity of modern aircraft to fly any route with high precision, independently of the physical location of navigation aids is rarely exploited because of the channelling of traffic along fixed air corridors.
- c. Air Traffic control (ATC) Services are being provided in a decentralised manner by a large number of ATC centres the technical characteristics of which vary substantially as a result of a lack of co-ordination. These facilities are in several instances becoming obsolete because they are based on outmoded technology and have limited automation support. The performance of the ATC system and hence its handling capacity sometimes considerably deteriorates as the result of breakdowns of unreliable technical equipment.
- d. The size, motivation and vocational training of the controller work force is not adequate for the traffic demand given the level of automation available.

- e. Stress felt by air traffic controllers combined with strained staff-employer relations occasionally leads to open or hidden industrial actions. Such actions, most often limited to one state or even one centre, have often serious repercussions throughout the European area.
- f. At European level equipment incompatibility occurs due to a lack of cooperation and coordination in system planning and implementation. For example the transfer of flight responsibility from one ATC Centre to the next is still in most instances being communicated through telephone. As a consequence communication is difficult, controllers have more coordination work than necessary, the available airspace capacity can not be fully exploited and traffic planning and execution is often disrupted at the boundary between ATC Centres.
- g. Although Eurocontrol has been successful in the limited roles it has been given, nevertheless - mainly due to individual states' concern to safeguard sovereignty rights - it has not been able to tackle the fundamental issue of a long term plan for a common integrated Air Traffic Flow Management system, and the concomitant plans to increase the system capacity through equipment evolution and controller training.
- h. Too many Air Traffic Flow Management Units (ATFMU) are jointly responsible for the coordinated handling of the actual traffic of the day and, in particular, at peak periods. The fact that there are eight ATFMUs within EEC and that very often three or four of them are involved in the handling of one flight indicates clearly the problem of coordination and the waste of capacity in periods when it is needed.

- i. The saturation of some major and/or holiday airports (runways, terminal buildings, aircraft stands) over increasingly longer periods has aggravated "en route" ATC problems. Expansion of existing airports and the building of new ones is difficult because account must be taken of environmental considerations and budgetary constraints. On the other hand, a number of regional airports have remained underutilized and uncoordinated investment in airports has sometimes led to the waste of resources.
 - j. The limited consultation in a number of instances between airports and airlines at the traffic planning stage prevents the tailoring of traffic to airport capacity and vice versa.
 - k. Airlines have sometimes extremely tight schedules for crews and aircraft. A delay of a few hours caused by airport or airspace overload can interfere with the availability of the aircraft or crew and, in extreme cases, may cause additional delays of twenty four hours or more.
11. Demand for ATC system capacity is very likely to go on increasing at an accelerating rate. Community legislation on inter-regional air services, tariffs, capacity and market access may make it possible for airlines to avoid congested areas or, if they cannot, at least to obtain optimum payloads.

Under the assumption of a positive economic development the European Civil Aviation Conference (ECAC) forecasts a doubling of annual aircraft movements between 1987 and 2000 if growth is not constrained by lack of airport and Air Traffic Control system capacity. The use of larger aircraft

may to a limited extent alleviate increasing congestion. The Commission's proposed revision of the existing interregional air services directive would provide further help.

12. The flexibility which the December package of 1987 provides for airlines will not be sufficient to counterbalance the pressure of traffic on air traffic control. The present system cannot cope even taking into account the transfer of passengers which will result from the construction of the High Speed Train network.
13. In some parts of Europe the expected traffic increase can be absorbed by the application of existing technology, more controllers and better organisation and cooperation. In others, however, where state of the art technology is already in use, only a limited improvement seems possible by the application of traditional methods, for example by more or better use of controllers. For such parts of Europe a redesign of the system is necessary.

In the USA where a large upswing of traffic has also taken place, a large-scale research and investment programme (about \$ 4 Billion for automation only) is being contracted in order to rebuild the system and to provide the additional capacity required.

It is generally agreed that only a comprehensive package of measures can solve the present and future capacity crisis in Europe without impairing present high safety standards. Large investments are needed for the reinforcement of the workforce, the improvement of infrastructure and the advancement and promotion of automation. In addition there is an urgent need to review the use of European airspace and to streamline its use. There is now growing acknowledgement of the vital role that coordinated air traffic flow management can play in the efficient use of the entire traffic system.

14. As a first measure systems and operational procedures must become more compatible and cooperation between civil and military users has to be further improved.
15. The most important measures which may be taken may be summarized :

Communication between systems is one of the weak points of today's system, the use of digital data transmission between ground computers should be generalized and the necessary communication protocols developed. In some instances it will be necessary to improve the quality of voice communication between controllers and between pilots and controllers. The latter problem is often aggravated by differences in pronunciation and the simultaneous use of English and the national language and could be alleviated by technical developments which reduce the need to communicate by radio.

In the medium term, for example, digital communication between ground computers and the aircraft would reduce the need to communicate by voice and thereby also increase the productivity of the controller. Technology (satellite based or land-based) exists but further research may be needed.

Land-based Navigation facilities are generally sufficient even for the introduction of Area Navigation. In the long-term, satellite navigation may replace present navigational means for cost reasons.

The importance of the compatibility of neighbouring systems has for a long time been neglected. A multitude of different procedures, forms of organization and technical facilities has developed. To some extent such differences are justified

by the special environment and prevailing traffic conditions in each case but they are a serious obstacle for the application of advanced automation in contiguous parts of airspace (e.g. the smooth transfer of aircraft from one centre to the next) and hence the full exploitation of the capacity of advanced centres. Ideally all systems should be identical as it is the case in the USA.

Increased compatibility would also allow cost reductions. However if compatibility and good communication can be achieved then the need for identical systems or for one ATC centre may become less pressing. Common specifications for equipment would, however, bring clear advantages for the Community manufacturing industry.

Automation is one of the main tools to help the controller to handle more traffic safely. It is also a prerequisite for the general introduction of more flexible routes by removing the limitation of the two-dimensions of the horizontal Area Navigation System and thereby making use of the technical capability of modern aircraft.

The introduction of a conflict alert function for the air traffic controller based on radar information should be generalized as soon as possible. Such a function is presently available in the most advanced systems.

Present technology could be used to facilitate the replacement by electronic displays of the paper strips used to display flight progress data .

More advanced automation features are under development and evaluation; they include tools to assist the controller in the safe planning of conflict-free flight trajectories over extended periods and thus to reduce the need to monitor all aircraft on a permanent basis.

A major task will be the functional integration of the new air-ground data link between the cockpit and the controller. This will be a phased process.

The development of enhanced automated systems on board the aircraft and on the ground and their integration via digital communication links will be the real challenge of the future but necessary for satisfying the traffic demand predicted for the turn of the century. Its experimental realization has started but further research is needed into the possibilities offered today by advanced telecommunication technologies for an integrated Communication Navigation and Surveillance System fully adapted to the specific European needs and characteristics of air transport. New research will have to take full account of work already accomplished by international bodies active in this field so as to avoid duplication of effort and to expedite results.

16. Technology cannot, by itself, solve the capacity problem. ATC personnel must be reinforced and their tasks redefined and made more attractive.
17. It is necessary to make more airspace available for civil use without questioning the fundamental need of reserved airspace for defence purposes. Improvements can be achieved in two ways.
 - The division between civil and military airspace was arranged at a time when the space for civil use seemed ample. Areas set aside for military use should now be reviewed.
 - Reserved airspace should be managed so as to release unused military airspace for civil uses and should whenever possible be released even for daily or seasonal traffic peaks. Good communication between military and civil

authorities including those for Air Traffic Flow Management is a prerequisite and the efforts of the Committee for European Airspace Coordination should be encouraged.

Scope for improvements also exists within the use of civil airspace. For example,

- sector boundaries should be based on operational needs, not on the location of national boundaries;
- the capability of modern aircraft to fly with great precision any route, independent from the physical location of navigation aids (Area Navigation) should be exploited more systematically in line with decisions taken by other international bodies.

18. The existing system which plans global traffic flows in Europe during periods when demand exceeds capacity requires a major redesign. This is true both with respect to the organisation and the tools available. In this context the Central Data Bank of Eurocontrol is a key element since in principle it provides an overview of all the traffic foreseen in Europe. However, it cannot be used effectively for Air Traffic Flow Management purposes since the data it provides are only sufficiently complete up to about 24 hours before the actual time of flights. Because of this lack of precise short-term information it can only be used for strategical planning.

19. The most critical phase of Air Traffic Flow Management is up to 1/2 hour before take-off, when redirection of traffic flows or last minute allocation of ATC slots is needed and for this real-time data on actual traffic is required. This management of traffic flows is presently performed by complex negotiations between many national, sub-regional and airport bodies currently responsible for the management of the available airspace and airport resources.

20. None of the bodies involved has however a complete picture of the prevailing traffic situation. As a result scarce ATC slots are often wasted. The problem has been recognized and EUROCONTROL is developing proposals to convert gradually the existing Central Data Bank (CDB) concept into a real-time system. However, this by itself will not be sufficient to develop CDB into a tactical instrument since the way in which Air Traffic Flow Management (ATFM) is currently organised is not appropriate to deal with critical traffic demands.

21. Twice a year - at the beginning of the summer and winter seasons- the International Air Transport Association organises a meeting to match the demand by the aircraft operators to the available slots at the airports. The notion of centralised coordination does not exist in the Community at inter-governmental level. There is some coordination through the International Civil Aviation Organisation, European Region, but this does not fill the vacuum of an efficient ATFM for Europe.

Actual air traffic within the Community is coordinated on a daily basis by eight Air Traffic Flow Management Units. They establish the actual take-off time based on the pilot's request and the actual traffic of the day. A centralised traffic management organisation (manned multi-laterally) is needed to coordinate all ATFMUs in Europe.

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III. INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE

22. Authority to deal with Air Traffic Control matters is split between a number of inter-governmental bodies with different membership and geographical responsibility.

The European Air Navigation Planning Group (EANPG) is a standing committee of the European region of ICAO. Its main objective is to maintain a viable and permanently updated regional plan for air navigation in Europe for implementation by states within the limits of their possibilities and priorities. It works through specialized working groups with representatives of states and aircraft operators. One of its tasks is to develop a detailed concept for the Future European Air Traffic Services (FEATS) system for the period extending from the mid-1990s to 2010/2015.

The Committee for European Airspace Coordination is a civil-military coordination body operating under the responsibility of NATO but without executive power.

The European Civil Aviation Conference (ECAC) of 22 states in Western Europe, has in the past been mainly concerned with regulatory issues and matters dealing with traffic rights. It is only recently that it has started to look into Air Traffic Control problems.

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It is advising European Ministers of Transport. It cannot however assume executive powers such as would be needed for an effective Air Traffic Flow Management (ATFM).

EUROCONTROL is made up of the Community with the exception of Denmark, Italy and Spain. Malta and Turkey are expected to become members in 1989. Most other European states have association or cooperation agreements in particular concerning the collection of ATC charges. Although mainly dealing with civil problems, both civil and military representatives work together in the organisation.

EUROCONTROL coordinates research, national plans and training, executes studies and research, provides training in air navigation, collects user charges and defines objectives in the field of air navigation, including the establishment of a Common Medium Term Plan in respect of Air Traffic Services. Furthermore EUROCONTROL has been charged with assisting the member states with ATFM.

At an operational level EUROCONTROL runs the combined civil-military Air Traffic Control centre at Maastricht.

Under the pressure of the present capacity crisis, the reasons which led originally to the creation of EUROCONTROL are again becoming a high priority. Over the last few years this has also resulted in a more positive attitude of its Members.

IV. THE ROLE OF THE COMMUNITY

23. A major feature of current air traffic control problems is the complexity that stems from a large area of airspace, divided into many sub-areas each with its own authority. Each authority has to compete for its funding. Different levels of funding result in system capabilities in each sub-area being at different stages of development. In general, there is a lack of modern equipment, there is incompatibility between the systems installed in the various Member States, and there is a need for more air traffic controllers.
24. Other areas of the world with similar airspace capacity problems, such as the United States, Canada and the Soviet Union, have a major advantage over Europe in that they have single executive authorities able to oversee total requirements and to direct resources to the benefit of the total system.
25. European 'national' ATC systems are heavily interdependent. As such, the weakest link creates repercussions throughout the system. If the overall system is to be improved, available resources need to be channelled towards the weakest links.
26. The Commission feels that the Community has an important role to play.
It can ensure coordination of Member States activities regarding the Air Traffic System with particular reference to technical harmonisation and research.
It can also reinforce recommendations emanating from the international civil aviation bodies by the use of Community legal instruments.

27. A number of harmonised technical standards could be laid down at Community level to improve communication, technical compatibility and training.

Areas which would lend themselves to action include the following :

- area navigation on a greater scale should supplement the current system of fixed air corridors;
- Conflict Alert Systems should be installed in ATC centres ;
- transfer of control responsibility for individual flights should be communicated automatically between ATC centres;
- all aircraft flying according to Instrument Flying Rules (IFR) should be equipped with automated altitude transponders;
- radar data should be shared among ATC centres and directly transmitted across national boundaries ;
- a common training program for controllers should be developed at Community level;
- all busy airports should be equipped with precision approach-to-landing aids to at least Category III (automated landing) standards.

The Commission has already commissioned a study on the air traffic controllers work position.

28. An urgent review of these matters is needed by the Commission together with Member States.

The Commission is calling a meeting of experts with a view to developing concrete proposals. Other interested parties will also be invited.

29. There is a need for common standards and training programmes for ATC personnel. A proposal for the mutual acceptance of licences will soon be submitted to the Council and will also cover other areas of aviation.
30. Action regarding the structure of the ATC system needs to be taken as soon as possible both with respect to a reduction in the airspace reserved for military purposes and Air Traffic Flow Management.
31. The question of reserved military airspace must be taken up immediately by all Member States. An appropriate decision on it would immediately increase the capacity available for civil purposes. The Commission is recommending immediate action (see Annex 3).
32. No executive body exists at present which can ensure effective centralised Air Traffic Flow Management for the whole of Europe. EUROCONTROL, which at the request of ICAO operates the Central Data Bank, may be best placed to ensure this. The choice facing the Community was whether the effort should be made to create a new organisation or whether EUROCONTROL could be further expanded to fill the need. Having in mind the need for immediate action EUROCONTROL seemed to be the most realistic possibility.
However, this will require the participation of all Community Member States. The possibility of becoming a member of Eurocontrol only to participate in Air Traffic Flow Management might be envisaged. The Convention would in this event need to be modified.
In fact, in the opinion of the Commission the adherence of the Community to the International Convention relating to cooperation for the Safety of Air Navigation is ultimately necessary for the attainment of the common air transport policy.

Therefore, under the rule laid down in Opinion 1/76* the Community is competent to adhere to the International Convention relating to cooperation for the Safety of Air Navigation and the Commission proposes that the Member States Contracting Parties to the International Convention shall take the necessary steps to modify the Convention in order to permit the Community to adhere to it.

The Commission believes that the creation of centralised Air Traffic Flow Management is urgent (see Annex 1).

33. In planning Air Traffic Control systems there is a need to ensure that scarce resources are being used to the greatest effect. Some work has been carried out in this area at a limited number of ATC centres. The Commission has for its part ordered a feasibility study in order to examine whether a useful simulation of total air space utilisation in Europe is possible. The cooperation of all interested parties would be welcome. In this context it is also necessary to follow the development in air traffic delays and assign them to their proper causes. The Commission intends to provide statistics on these matters.

34. Airport infrastructure should be used as efficiently as possible. This concerns both the day to day business but also the planning of new projects.

The Commission proposes that airport infrastructure should be included in the Community coordination with the possibility of Community financial support (see Annex 2).

A better permanent dialogue is needed between airports and their users. The Commission will therefore soon submit a draft Regulation to the Council.

* (1977) ECR, 741.

35. A continuous Research Development and Technology Acquisition effort is a vital element for maintaining a safe and competitive Air Traffic System.

The pace of technological advance in this field is rapid. This advance is stimulated not only by the direct competitive thrust of the world's largest companies and national governments in general but also by formidable investments by a number of governments including that of the USA. By means of comparison it is beyond doubt that the USA is leading the pace in Research and Technology Acquisition with large investments for a new generation of relevant equipment.

Furthermore, the USA enjoys a large single and uniform environment whereas efforts in Europe are fragmented by a number of national authorities which decide separately on the allocation of resources and priorities in this field.

To keep up with the growing demands of the Air Traffic system throughout Europe on the one hand, and to respond to the competitive challenge from non-European manufacturers, on the other hand, Research and Technology Acquisition collaboration is necessary on a European level.

Key technology areas for such collaboration include :

- . communication, navigation and surveillance equipment including air-ground interface using cellular and satellite technology;
- . automated controller support and human factors;
- . integration of airborne and ground based systems.

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36. Some collaboration already exists in the framework of, among others, EUROCONTROL and will be enhanced by the new AERONAUTICS Programme proposed by the Commission. Furthermore, the Commission is launching a study the prime objective of which is to deliver a comprehensive and detailed report, embracing all technical and operation aspects, leading to the development of a fully integrated Communication-Navigation-Surveillance (CNS) and Air Traffic Management (ATM) system using automated methods to the maximum extent to service the European airspace. (European Airspace is that airspace over the Member States of the European Community together with such other international airspace currently under the control of European Community Members' Air Traffic Authorities). The study will be conducted in cooperation with Eurocontrol, airlines, national civil aviation authorities and other interested parties in close co-ordination with existing programmes and structures.
37. The Commission also plans to examine whether the actual collaborative effort in Research and Technology Acquisition in this field is sufficient or whether there is a need for a major reinforcement of this common effort, always in close co-ordination with the existing programmes and structures.

Proposal for a
COUNCIL DECISION

on consultation and co-ordination between Member States
in the field of air traffic services and air traffic flow
management

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European
Economic Community, and in particular Article 84 (2) thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the Commission,

Having regard to the opinion of the European Parliament,

Having regard to the opinion of the Economic and Social
Committee,

Whereas the completion of the internal market by the end of
1992 requires the existence of an efficient air transport
system to ensure the unhindered movement of people and goods
within the Community;

Whereas the smooth running of the air traffic system will
improve the implementation of the common transport policy in
the field of civil aviation;

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Whereas air transport in Europe is presently under considerable strain due to air traffic congestion ;

Whereas the saturation of the airspace available to civil aviation in Europe is one of the primary causes of this air traffic congestion ;

Whereas this situation stems largely from the provision of often unco-ordinated air traffic services at national level, hence the need for consultation and co-ordination between Member States;

Whereas the lack of co-ordination in the Community is particularly evident in air traffic control (ATC) and in air traffic flow management;

Whereas this situation can be remedied by the establishment of a centralised air traffic flow management system;

Whereas according to the amended "International Convention relating to co-operation for the Safety of Air Navigation" Eurocontrol has been assigned the task inter alia "to assist the Contracting Parties and interested non-Member States in the institution and operation of an international Air Traffic Flow Management System" ;

Whereas the existing Eurocontrol Central Data Bank could be expanded to serve as the core of such a system;

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Whereas the existing relationship between the Community and Eurocontrol based on a Co-operation Agreement signed in 1981 should be further enhanced in order to ensure that Eurocontrol having been assigned the responsibility of an important function in the realisation of the common air transport policy is fully supported by the Community,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION :

Article 1

1. Member States shall establish a common air traffic flow management system, to be administered by a centralised unit, which shall be served by the Eurocontrol Central Data Bank.
2. The Member States Contracting Parties to the International Convention relating to co-operation for the Safety of Air Navigation shall take the necessary steps to ensure that Eurocontrol is in a position to assume responsibility for the organization and operation of the centralised air traffic flow management system.

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Article 2

1. Member States shall consult with each other and the Commission on the activities they undertake in the field of air traffic services, in particular with regard to :

- the establishment and functioning of the system envisaged by Article 1,
- the planning and acquisition of air navigation facilities,
- the development of common ATC procedures and training programmes for ATC controllers.

To this end the Member States shall inform the Commission, at the earliest possible stage and in any case before undertaking any concrete action or commitment, of their intentions. The Commission shall immediately inform the other Member States.

2. An Advisory Committee, consisting of representatives of the Member States and chaired by a representative of the Commission, shall be set up under the auspices of the Commission.
3. The Committee may examine any problem relating to air traffic services which is referred to it by its chairman either on his own initiative or at the request of a representative of a Member State.

Article 3

Member States Contracting Parties to the International Convention relating to co-operation for the Safety of Air Navigation shall take the necessary steps to ensure that a clause is inserted in the Convention permitting the Community to adhere to the said Convention.

Article 4

This Decision is addressed to the Member States.

Done at

For the Council

Proposal for a
COUNCIL DECISION

extending Decision 78/174/EEC to the field of sea and air transport infrastructure

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community, and in particular Article 84(2) thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the Commission,

Having regard to the opinion of the European Parliament,

Having regard to the opinion of the Economic and Social Committee,

whereas Council Decision 78/174/EEC of 20 February 1978 instituting a consultation procedure and setting up a committee in the field of transport infrastructure¹ creates an organizational framework to guarantee the effectiveness, consistency and continuity of transport infrastructure measures; whereas that Decision applies only to transport by rail, road and inland waterway;

Whereas it is appropriate to extend the application of the Decision to sea and air infrastructure measures, taking into account the geographical structure of the enlarged Community and the significance of both transport modes for the functioning of the internal market,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION :

¹ OJ No L 54, 25.2.1978, p.16.

Article 1

Decision 78/174/EEC shall apply to plans and programmes for the development of transport infra-structures and to projects of Community interest in the field of sea and air transport.

Article 2

This Decision is addressed to the Member States.

Done at

For the Council

Proposal for a
COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION
on a flexible and efficient use of airspace

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community, and in particular Article 84(2) thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the Commission,

Having regard to the opinion of the European Parliament,

Having regard to the opinion of the Economic and Social Committee,

Whereas the completion of the internal market by the end of 1992 requires the existence of an efficient air transport system to ensure the unhindered movement of people and goods within the Community;

Whereas the smooth running of the air traffic system will improve the implementation of the common transport policy in the field of civil aviation;

Whereas air transport in Europe is presently under considerable strain due to air traffic congestion;

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Whereas the saturation of the airspace available to civil aviation in Europe is one of the primary causes of this air traffic congestion;

Whereas the organisation of European airspace is still based on considerations that prevailed in the late Forties, which are largely redundant in the political climate of today and in particular in the Community of 12 ;

Whereas, for historical rather than operational reasons, the organisation of the airspace reserved for civil aviation follows national boundaries within which specific air corridors have been fixed; whereas there is therefore an urgent need for re-examination of the considerations to be taken into account for a more flexible and efficient use of that airspace;

Whereas for safety reasons Member States' defence policies may still require the exclusive use by military aircraft of certain parts of airspace for certain time periods ; whereas a more rational distribution of the available airspace is therefore needed so that the real needs of all users are satisfied;

Whereas modern aircraft are capable of flying with high precision on any route independently of the physical location of navigational aids ; whereas Member States should consider the use of airspace outside the fixed air corridors ;

HEREBY RECOMMENDS:

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Article 1

Member States should re-examine the institutional, technical, geographical and economic considerations to be taken into account with a view to achieving a more flexible and efficient use of airspace and should co-operate to this end.

Article 2

Member States should reconsider the use of airspace by civil and military aviation and take appropriate measures to redistribute rationally on a temporary or long-term basis the available airspace according to users' needs.

Article 3

Member States should reconsider the use of fixed air corridors/airways and encourage the use of area navigation whenever possible.

Done at Brussels,

For the Council