

**Report of the Liaison Officer to SESAR
and EASA (LOES)**

Presented by Marc Baumgartner

SUMMARY

EASA and **SESAR** are the safety rulemaking body and the research pillar of the European Single European Sky program. IFATCA has been active in both bodies with a group of representatives.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This report covers the period from 21st of February 2025 to 21st of February 2026. It includes links to some of the projects, plans, publications, videos and legislation mentioned in the report.
- 1.2. According to the Terms of Reference: Under the Direction of the Executive Board the Liaison Officer to SESAR and EASA shall:
 - a. Establish and maintain contact with the SESAR Joint Undertaking and SESAR deployment manager based in Brussels
 - b. Establish and maintain contact with EASA, based in Cologne and Brussels, Represent IFATCA whenever specifically asked to attend any international meetings hosted or sponsored by SESAR and EASA, which are directly relevant to Air Traffic Control.
 - c. Make any necessary arrangements for IFATCA representatives' participation to SESAR and EASA work and ensure that they are properly briefed on items of protocol, and properly introduced to relevant persons within SESAR and EASA.
 - d. Liaise with the Liaison Officer to the European Union and EVP Europe any other relevant coordination with European Agencies and offices with a view to promoting and maintaining the aims and objectives of IFATCA.
 - e. Together with EVP Europe, administrate the SESAR contract and provide the EB with annual SESAR and EASA budget.
 - f. Provide written reports to the Executive Board on all meetings attended on

behalf of the Federation, within SESAR and EASA.

- g. Undertake other duties deemed advisable by the Executive Board.
- h. Relay to the Executive Board immediately any items of special or significant interest as they arise.

2. Discussion

2.1. EASA update

2.1.1. EPAS

The part of the European Aviation Safety Programme (EASP) which is under the lead of EASA is the so-called European Aviation Safety Plan (EPAS). The EPAS flows from and works in support of the European aviation strategy. The relationship of the EPAS with rulemaking and the EU Aviation Strategy is shown in figure 2.1:



Figure 2.1: EPAS & the European Aviation Strategy. Source: EASA

The EPAS becomes the primary mechanism by which safety is managed and monitored, The EPAS sets out the risk landscape for European aviation, identifies priorities and actions – be they rulemaking, safety promotion, safety action – to be undertaken.

IFATCA's representation

IFATCA representatives have been able to participate in various activities within the EASA organisation of rulemaking and strategic outlook for safety. EASA exclusively meet via remote webex.

Andrea Poti from the Italian MA, represents IFATCA in the Stakeholder advisory Body (SAB), Marc Baumgartner (LOEASA) is the alternate.

Andrea Poti represents IFATCA in the Air Traffic Management /Air Navigation Services Technical Committee (ATM/ANS.TEC).

In the domain specific Collaborative Analysis Group (CAG) IFATCA is represented by:

Commercial air transport –Mladen Kotsov
Human Factors – Anthony Smoker
ATM – Mladen Kotsov

2.1.2. Rulemaking activities:

ATCO licensing Rule – regular update - Mladen Kotsov
Technical requirements for Remote tower operations – Katariina Syväs
Follow-up on SERA - Thorsten Raue
Datalink – Christoph Gilgen
Drone –Eugenio Diotalevi
Artificial Intelligence – Nora Berzina and Stathis Malakis
ATCO Fatigue TF – Zeljko Oreski
U-Space - Eugenio Diotalevi and Marc Baumgartner

I would like to thank them on behalf of IFATCA for their willingness to work in these important tasks.

2.1.3. Easy Access

EASA publishes for each of the Implementation Regulations a so-called EASY Access. This guidance material has become a powerful repository and provides many answers to questions ATCOs, ANSPs and Regulators might have regarding the various EU Implementation Regulations.

2.1.4. Follow-up of ATCO occupational fatigue study

As part of its work on the human dimension of the Single European Sky (SES), and to complement its various initiatives related to the licensing and training of air traffic controllers (ATCOs), the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) launched, end 2022, a study on 'ATCO Fatigue'.

A consortium led by the Netherlands Aerospace Centre (NLR) and Welbees (an aviation fatigue risk management research organisation) was commissioned to collect scientific data on the workload and fatigue of ATCOs employed at air traffic service providers (ATSPs) that provide services in the EASA Member States.

IFATCA has been invited to the follow-up work of this study. Zeljko Oreski from Croatia is representing IFATCA in this ATCO Fatigue TF.

The Task Force' objective is to provide expert advice on the implementation of the EASA ATCO Fatigue study recommendations, as included in the resulting Action Plan. One of the main actions assigned to the Task Force is to review and complement the existing Guidance Material with reference values, to guide stakeholders in the implementation of the 8 rostering elements referred to in Regulation No 373/2017.

The 8 rostering elements the Task Force was discussing are:

- Maximum consecutive working days with duty (in days)
- Maximum hours per duty period (in hours)
- Maximum time providing air traffic control service without breaks (in minutes)
- Minimum duration of break (in minutes)
- Minimum rest period (in hours)
- Maximum Consecutive duty periods encroaching the night time (00:00 to 06:00am) (nbr of periods)
- Minimum rest period after a duty period encroaching the night time (in hours)
- Minimum number of 'off duty' periods within a roster cycle

The Task Force met several time and EASA rapidly pushed for guidance material which was going against IFATCA policy on working conditions (IFATCA Manual Working Condition 10 ff). Under the close coordination of Zeljko Oreski and EVP Europe Elect Benjamin Fichtner IFATCA, together with ATCEUC and ETF representative successful adjusted some of the proposal made by EASA, to fit the IFATCA policy.

2.1.5. Various

- IFATCA had one dedicated exchange with EASA in October. Several topics were discussed. The aim is to organise such bilateral exchanges once a year at least and more frequently on topical exchange.
- Notice of Proposed Amendment 2025-07 Detailed specifications and associated acceptable means of compliance and guidance material on Artificial intelligence trustworthiness. For details check information on Joint Cognitive Human Machine System Group report for conference Bucharest 2026.

2.2. SESAR Update

2.2.1. SESAR 3

A contract with the SJU was signed which allows IFATCA to be tasked with different work directly for the SJU or as an IFATCA research project.

IFATCA actively supported the SESAR Joint Undertaking (SJU) throughout 2025, submitting and executing tasking requests for multiple advisory bodies, participating in quarterly PSO coordination meetings, and contributing to strategic discussions on SJU's future orientation and service delivery model. The Federation was deeply involved in flagship initiatives such as virtualisation and cyber-secure data sharing.

Advisory Bodies & Research Projects

Across all quarters, IFATCA contributed to numerous SESAR-related projects and advisory bodies, including

AEROPLANE	IRINA
ATCAMA	JARVIS
ATC TBO	Opera
CONCERTO	ORCI
CICONIA	RESPONSE
EXODUS	SATERA
GALAAD	SOLO
IFAV 3	TADA

For detailed information please search as follows:
<https://www.sesarju.eu/projects/> Name of Project.

Strategic & Industry Engagement

IFATCA attended and contributed to the SESAR Annual Conference, participated in governing body discussions, attended Airspace World, and initiated discussions on service delivery models and joint cognitive human-machine systems. The Federation also prepared groundwork for a common PSO position paper on Environment and ATM.

Industry Panels & Future Directions

- Participated in SID Days in Bled, highlighting the need for caution with new technologies and legal issues.
- Drafted a common PSO position paper on Environment, coordinated GNSS input, and prepared intelligence briefings for PSOs.

Outlook for 2026

- Several advisory boards have sent invitations for meetings in 2026.

- Activities related to CP2, digitalisation, and Environment will be at the forefront of IFATCA's work

Key Focus Areas

Throughout 2025, IFATCA concentrated on:

- Virtualisation and digital transformation
- Cyber-secure data sharing
- Human-machine integration in ATM
- Environmental performance in ATM
- Service delivery model evolution
- Inter-PSO coordination on common position on GNSS RFI and legal liability in ATM with the advent of AI.

2.2.2. SESAR Exploratory and Industrial Research calls, Wave 1

IFATCA participated to CODA (COntroller adaptive Digital Assistant). Work is followed by the SESAR coordinator, Dr. Stathis Malakis and Dr. Anthony Smoker. Controllers from Italy and German have volunteered to participate to the trials in Madrid in November 2024 and in March 2025. The work was supervised by Dr. Anthony Smoker from IFATCA. The final publications are under its way and the research projects finishes at the end of February 2026.

2.2.3. SESAR Exploratory and Industrial Research calls, Wave 2

The AWARE project (Achieving Human-Machine Collaboration with Artificial Situation Awareness). It started in June 2024 and IFATCA has been involved in designing scenarios. The validation exercises will take place mid-April 2026 in Malmö (Sweden). The projects is ongoing till November 2026.

2.2.4. SESAR Exploratory and Industrial Research calls, Wave 3

Following the bidding period ending in September 2025, of the seven consortia IFATCA was invited to bid for future Exploratory Research Projects, 2 submissions were successful:

- EHRA: Evolution of the human role supported by automation
- ZENITIA: Zero-Emission Next-Gen Innovation and Technology Integration for Aviation

Both Projects will start in June 2026 and last for 30 month.

2.2.5. SESAR Scientific Committee

Dr. Stathis Malakis (ATCO from Rhodes, GR) continues the work in the scientific committee.

2.2.6. Other activities coordinated by SESAR/EASA coordinator Prosecutor Expert Courses

The courses took place in May and November 2025. Courses planned for May and November 2026 still have a few places left for ATCOs.

The SESAR coordinator participated to the Just Conference in Spain, co-organised by the Judiciary, the Professional ATCO Association and Eurocontrol. See as well <https://ifatca.org/article/the-future-of-air-traffic-management/> for more information.

2.2.7. Joint Cognitive Human Machine System Group

See separate agenda item B 6.4./C4.4. for the full report.

2.2.8. Eurocae

IFATCA has a signed a memorandum of understanding which provides access to all the work of Eurocae.

All of this work has been carried out via remote platforms in the last year.

The following representatives are representing IFATCA in the Eurocae Working Groups (WG):

SWG	Content	Representative
WG 51	ADS-B Asterix	Christoph Gilgen
WG 59	Flight Object interoperability	Thorsten Raue
WG 75	ACAS X	Christoph Gilgen
WG 82	LDACS	Marco Riccato
WG 100	Remote Tower	Katariina Syväys
WG 105	UAS	Eugenio Diotalevi
WG 111a	A-CDM	Olivia May
WG 114	AI	Mauro Barduani
WG 114 SG 5	AI – ODD	Marc Baumgartner
WG 115	C-drones	Christoph Gilgen / Eugenio Diotalevi
WG 122	Virtual Centres	Eugenio Diotalevi / Oliver Wessolek
WG 130	ATM	Akos van der Plaats (until 2025), Nora Berzina from 2026 onwards

2.2.9. Environment

See separate report under the Agenda Item C.4.7.

3. Conclusions

IFATCA has many representatives to EASA, Eurocae and SESAR willing and able to assist to ensure that the voice of the controller is heard in the various rulemaking, certification and research work.

A big thanks to all the IFATCA representatives that have spent some of their free time to give input to the work carried out in these various groups.