

**DATS - DIGITAL AIR TRAFFIC SERVICES FOR AERODROMES TASK FORCE
REMOTE TOWERS**

Presented by DATS chair

SUMMARY

This document describes the work of DATS -Digital Air Traffic Services for Aerodromes (Remote Tower) Task Force between IFATCA Annual Conferences of 2025 and 2026

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. As IFATCA is an international organization, it became evident that there is a need to change the terminology from remote tower to DATS, Digital Air Traffic Services for Aerodromes, to be in line with the ICAO definitions.

1.2. The DATS task force focused its activities after the Annual Conference held in Singapore in 2024. The members of the task force are Katariina Syväys, chair, Finland, Adam Rhodes, USA, Kate Chandler, UK, Miriam Kelm, Germany, Matthias Wiegand, Germany, Anja Bergstad Engvik, Norway and Mikel Goyarzu Gala, Spain.

The group worked in close collaboration with EVP TECH Benjamin van der Sanden, TOC Chair Jaymi Steinberg and SESAR Coordinator Marc Baumgartner.

The remote tower task force decided to continue its working program with the following topics:

- a) create remote tower/DATS Information Package
- b) participate in ICAO, EASA, Eurocae working groups
- c) assist the TOC/PLC
- d) any other business related to DATS

2. DISCUSSION

2.1. The DATS Task Force held four online meetings during the summer-fall 2025. The aim was to discuss and decide of the content of the planned Information Package for DATS.

2.2. The DATS Task Force has seen an urgent need to find a way to help the MAs when DATS is being planned or implemented. The material is published as Information Package and the latest developments to IFATCA policies and tasks stemming from the resolutions of the Annual Conference are covered in the package.

- 2.3. DATS TF Chair Katariina Syväys was invited to present DATS to IFATCA AFM region online in July 2025. The presentation was greeted with enthusiasm and the feedback “you really made a highly complicated issue understandable and showed us the way forward” felt heart-warming.
- 2.4. At the fall 2025 the TF was contacted by CANSO, as they are in the process of renewing their guidance material. CANSO opened a discussion regarding IFATCA’s concerns regarding remote tower. A list was sent to CANSO and that led to an invitation to participate in the CANSO WG updating their guidance.
- 2.5. Participation in rulemaking groups within ICAO and EASA is one of the most important tasks for the task force. IFATCA has two seats at the ICAO DAATS group, a position of a Thread Lead for DATS in the ICAO GANP-SG and ASBU groups, a seat at EASA Remote Tower Expert Group and a seat at the Eurocae WG100.
- 2.6. ICAO DAATS WG is producing Guidance Material under the umbrella of ICAO ATMOPSP. Adam Rhodes has participated almost all ICAO DAATS online meetings held in two weeks sequence. Katariina Syväys has been able to participate to only three of those meetings.
- 2.7. DATS TF Chair, Katariina Syväys, has been the Thread Lead for ICAO GANP ASBU since 2020. She has participated various meetings online over the years. She was finally able to participate in person in the GANP Study Group meeting held in Montreal, Canada in February. This meeting was the kick-off to start developing the next edition of GANP as required by the ICAO 42nd Assembly.

3. CONCLUSION

- 3.1. The Task Force drives the future of digital aerodrome services. Through expertise and active engagement, it safeguards controller interests and will shape global standards.
- 3.2. The evolution of IFATCA policy regarding DATS from a negative perspective to a more talkative direction has proven to be spot on. IFATCA has been recognized and invited to various working groups and events, and what we say is truly been appreciated.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1. The working group’s efforts remain highly relevant. Having established a position of influence especially within ICAO and EASA, it is important to continue this work. Looking ahead, we should also explore opportunities to participate in various development and research initiatives.

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