

**Report of the Chair of the IFATCA
Remotely Piloted Aircraft Task Force (RPATF)**

Presented by Eugenio Diotalevi

SUMMARY

The Remotely Piloted Aircraft Task Force (RPATF) has supported the IFATCA's positions on UAS operations by participating in conferences, events, demonstrations, and working groups at regional, and international levels. The RPATF has also supported IFATCA TOC and PLC in developing Working Papers and has contributed to commenting on many international documents.

The IFATCA RPATF Chair would like to renew the invitation to contact the TF for anyone interested in joining or in becoming a regional focal point.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This report covers the activities of the Remotely Piloted Aircraft Task Force (RPATF) from May 2023 to April 2024. Integrations to this report about new elements or on ongoing activities will be provided at the Conference.

2. DISCUSSION

- 2.1. The RPATF (Remote Piloted Aircraft Task Force) was first established after the Conference of Ghana 2018 as a specialized team on UAS operations and the introduction of the concept of Task Force in the Administrative Manual in the Conference of Costa Rica 2019 provides a recognized status to this working group. Mr. Eugenio Diotalevi (ANACNA) has been the RPATF Chair since September 2019.

- 2.2. Terms of Reference (ToR):

AREA OF INTEREST

- 2.2.1. ToR: *The origin and main driver of the group is the interest in the introduction of unmanned aircraft in the aviation environment, the development of rules and procedures to ensure the coexistence of manned and unmanned aircraft in controlled airspace, and the study of ways to safely operate unmanned aircraft in non-controlled airspace.*

- 2.2.1.1. The interest in international UAS activities has remained in the Very Low Level airspace (VLL). Innovative Air Mobility (IAM) has taken the scene and, among IAM operations, Urban Air Mobility (UAM) is the one that stakeholders have focused on. Interaction with ATC is still considered not

a priority for operations. Interest in High Altitude Operations (HAO) is still relevant but there are only a few known developments, focused mainly on HAPS (High Altitude Platform Station).

- 2.2.1.2. To support MAs, the RPATF needs a more distributed network and participation, especially from South America and from AFM and API Regions. All associates who are interested in joining the RPATF to be updated on international evolutions and/or to become an RPATF Regional point of contact are kindly invited to contact rpas.tf.lead@ifatca.org or eugenio.diotalevi@ifatca.org.

ACTIVITIES

- 2.2.2. ToR: *GATHERING INFORMATION: The members of the RPATF will monitor all developments and deployments of unmanned civil operations in order to collect and share information on them.*

- 2.2.2.1. European Network U-space Stakeholders

<https://www.eurocontrol.int/product/european-network-u-space-demonstrators>

Meetings:

27th September 2023, Madrid (connected to Airspace Integration Week)

22nd November 2023, Katowice

17th April 2024, Amsterdam (connected to the Amsterdam Drone Week)

The network is a forum to share knowledge on how to keep drone operations safe, secure, and green. It focuses on U-space and it's led by the European Commission which group together the EASA, the R&D management expertise of the SESAR JU, EUROCONTROL's air traffic management expertise, and the contributions of many stakeholders involved in unmanned operations. The ATC aspect is still a minor item. The RPATF has always reiterated the importance of having an ATM system ready to host the U-space but, nowadays, the focus is still on technicalities connected to the deployment of the U-space services.

- 2.2.2.2. ICAO UAS Advisory Group (UAS-AG)

The ICAO UAS Advisory Group has officially ceased its operation end of 2023 and the last meeting was held just after the ICAO Drone Enable 2023 (Montreal, 5-7 December 2023). A small drafting group from the original UAS-AG is now working to create 2 new appendices to the "UTM framework" document concerning the items presented at the latest Drone Enable: "CNS solutions in low-level airspace" and "AAM critical elements for global interoperability and harmonization".

- 2.2.2.3. ICAO Advance Air Mobility Study Group (AAM-SG)

This new group was created by ICAO in 2023 and had its first meeting in May 2023. It groups regulators, manufacturers, operators, and research institutions. The aim is to develop an international strategy and consistent procedures, formulated through consensus standards and uniform, convergent policies for AAM operations and traffic management. IFATCA is not part of the group yet but we're evaluating any options to become a member since the number of seats available is limited.

- 2.2.3. ToR: *ESTABLISH CONTACTS WITH RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS: Being unmanned aircraft operations a reality, it is important to contact the main stakeholders working on the concept. This is to ensure that its development meets the standards of quality and safety that are expected in the aviation sector. The RPATF will work to create contacts and maintain links with industry developers, regulators, and research entities.*

2.2.3.1. RPATF members are involved in international working groups and they provide comments and inputs following the TPM's policy statements. In addition to the groups and activities reported above in the paper, RPATF is collaborating with:

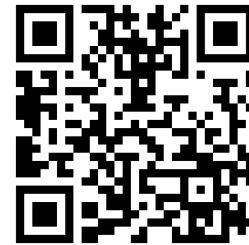
- EASA
- European Expert Group on Human Dimension (EGHD)
- EUROCAE: WG 105 Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS)
- EUROCAE: WG 115 Counter Unmanned Aircraft Systems (C-UAS)
- ICAO: Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems Panel (RPASP)
- JARUS Automation WG
- JARUS ISB (Industry Stakeholders Body)
- SESAR ECHO (European Concepts High Altitude Operations)
- SESAR U-ELCOM (U-space European Common deployment) → Advisory Board Member
- SESAR IRINA (IFR RPAS Integration into European Airspace) → Advisory Board Member
- SESAR EUREKA (European Key solutions for vertiports and UAM) → Advisory Board Member (TBC)
- SESAR Master Plan Campaign → Representing European PSO in WG4–U-space 2.0

2.2.4. ToR: WRITE GUIDANCE MATERIAL: *The RPATF will work to provide a clear position for IFATCA and develop guidance material for the use of the Federation Member Associations.*

2.2.4.1. No Guidance Material has been produced or updated.

2.2.4.2. The RPATF would like to ask all associates which are the areas of main concern considering UAS and the integration of UAS operations in controlled airspace. Inputs will be collected by using the following link or the QR code:

<https://forms.gle/u23nMn7Sd6iVYhpi7>



RPATF Chair would like to thank all participants for their support. Results will be presented at the Conference.

2.2.5. ToR: DEVELOP AND UPDATE POLICY: *The RPATF will ensure the harmonization of any new material with the existing policy. To achieve this goal, it will propose new policies or modify existing ones, always in coordination with TOC and PLC.*

2.2.5.1. The RPATF has supported TOC and PLC in revising and developing policy statements for the TPM. In particular, this year the RPATF has supported development papers on flight rules and on DAA/RWC which will be presented at this conference.

2.2.5.2. Policy statements contained in WP 156 "Dynamic Reconfiguration of the U-Space Airspace (DAR)" (Montego Bay, Jamaica 2023) have been discussed with EASA. EASA has recognized the importance of the proposed items and has invited IFATCA to further discuss the proposed policy with the UAS Section and the ATM Section in an in-person meeting planned for June 2024.

STRUCTURE

2.2.6. No changes from the previous report. The RPATF is under EVPT area of responsibility, and it is chaired by Eugenio Diotalevi (ANACNA, Italy). Among its small number of members (less than 10), five members have been active in participating in discussing and commenting. A heartfelt

thanks to Mrs. Sylvie Lemair, Mr. Christoph Gilgen, Mr. David Guerin, Mr. Nicholus Siele and, Mr. Sergio Vello for their hard and continuous work and support.

2.2.7. As listed above, the amount of work done by the RPATF is enormous compared to the number of active members. Due to the geographical location of RPATF members, the work done is still focused on the EUR region. Last year, the creation of a bigger group with representatives from all regions was proposed. After an initial interest from two new members (API region), the effort didn't continue. The RPATF Chair would like to renew the invitation for MAs to consider proposing one representative for each region to become the regional focal point. This would allow the RPATF to have global coverage of the Unmanned Aviation progress and punctual support to MAs and the whole Federation. People interested can approach the RPATF Coordinator during the conference or anytime via e-mail eugenio.diotalevi@ifatca.org or rpas.tf.lead@ifatca.org.

2.3. Working programme 2023-2024

2.3.1. The RPATF will continue to support the Federation's position with all the relevant stakeholders, working on:

- flight rules and airspace classification;
- innovative/urban air mobility;
- automation;
- Trajectory Based Operations;
- separation minima between UAS and manned aviation;
- high altitude operations.

2.3.2. Any other contributions to the working program are welcomed. To propose new items, please write to eugenio.diotalevi@ifatca.org or rpas.tf.lead@ifatca.org.

3. CONCLUSION

3.1. The amount of work carried on by the RPATF in the last year has been significant and the same amount is expected also for the next year.

3.2. The geographical coverage of the activities is not uniform among the IFATCA regions. To punctually support all MAs, the RPATF is looking for one representative for each region to become the regional focal point.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1. It is recommended this report be accepted.

5. REFERENCES

- NIL-

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