

Report of the Executive Vice President Technical

Presented by Benjamin van der Sanden

SUMMARY

This report covers my 1st year as EVPT. The main topics covered are TOC, the Task Forces within the Tech domain and the efforts that have been made to improve the workflow and achieve better coordination within the Federation, as well as activities for the future.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This has been my first year as EVP Tech. Aside from it being an honour and a privilege to be trusted with this office by the Directors, it has also been a pleasure, but not without a steep learning curve. Coming to the end of this first cycle, I am happy with some of the things we have achieved this year but there are always areas to improve upon.
- 1.2. This report will cover the activities of EVP Tech from conference in Montego Bay '23 until Singapore '24.

2. DISCUSSION**2.1. Technical and Operations Committee (TOC)**

- 2.1.1 TOC had a full complete cycle again after several years of disrupted operations due to the pandemic. The committee was able to meet twice in person, as I will show in more detail in the following paragraphs. The working programme was finalised after conference in Montego Bay, we are aiming to have it ready sooner than that this time to get the committee off to a smoother start in the new cycle 24-25.
- 2.1.2 TOC's working programme this year included review of Remote Tower policy, a study of Flight Rules for UAS, System-Based Licensing, Space Based Communications, Implementation of FF-ICE, Review of Automation Policy, Review of Terrain and Obstacle Clearance policy, 5 Letter Naming Codes and Complexity and Workload of working VFR Traffic.

- 2.1.2 TOC's first meeting of the 23-24 work cycle took place in Melbourne, Australia. We were generously hosted by our MA, Civil Air. I would like to thank Tom McRobert, EVPF, for his support in organising a very successful meeting. Our industry partner Thales was very generous to provide meeting space for both TOC and PLC. Both contributions meant that the cost for IFATCA was very manageable. This was also helped by the fact that quite a significant number of members of TOC were unable to make the journey to Australia due to the significant financial and time demands this involved.
- 2.1.3 TOC's second meeting of the 23-24 cycle took place in Sofia, Bulgaria. Our Bulgarian MA, BULATCA, did a lot of the organising for us, and arranged stellar meeting facilities in the BULATSA (ATS provider) building. They also hosted a lovely dinner in a traditional Bulgarian environment, providing some much-needed relaxation and entertainment after the long and intensive days. Thanks go to Tzvetan Dimitrov, Zhan Belev and their colleagues for helping us conduct a productive meeting. Again, thanks to our generous friends, the cost to the Federation was very manageable.
- 2.1.4 TOC's meetings resulted in work that was, as always, of high quality, and I am happy to have the privilege of recommending their output to the sessions in committee B. TOC was able to conduct its business this year within the constraints of the budget set by the directors at conference last year. Costs, however, are still increasing and my projection is that next year the sailing might not be so smooth on the financial front. It is my hope that we can find generous hosting offers again so that TOC can focus on the important work of maintaining and expanding the policies in the TPM to maintain the Federation's high-quality output.
- 2.1.5 An effort was made to include the Task Forces into the discussions about the subject matter where the efforts of TOC and the TFs overlapped. I believe this is a good first step in making sure that we maintain cooperation and alignment across the different teams that make up our organisation.
- 2.1.6 I would like to take this opportunity to thank Jaymi Steinberg for her work as chair TOC. Her relentless dedication and attention to detail drive the committee to produce the best they possibly can. Not only does she have a seemingly endless capacity to do more work, but she has also developed her skills as an animator and communicator, creating great pieces to better publicise the work of the committee. She remains an excellent chair of the committee.
- 2.1.6 Thanks also to our ICAO panel representatives, some of whom attended physically, but all of whom provided crucial feedback to the committee's work.

2.2 **IFALPA and IFATCA**

- 2.2.1 The relationship between IFALPA and IFATCA remains crucial to us. As Ignacio Baca stressed in his final report as EVP Tech, it is more a strategic partnership than a simple relationship. We were therefore very happy to welcome Kolja Bollhorst to our meetings, providing valuable insights from a pilot's perspective for our work. He integrated smoothly into our meetings, and we hope to continue working with him for a long time.
- 2.2.2 To bolster our partnership with IFALPA, TOC intends to travel to Madrid in September, where IFALPA's ATS committee will be meeting at the same time. The next cycle will

therefore focus on issues that affect both the controller and pilot communities, as this will be a unique opportunity to join forces.

- 2.2.3 Maintaining this relationship is an essential effort for the Federation and I'd like to thank Kimmo Koivula, Philippe Domogala and more recently, Ignacio Baca for their efforts in this regard.

2.3 Task Forces

2.3.1 Remote Tower Task Force (RTTF)

- 2.3.1.1 The Remote Tower Task Force has continued to meet regularly under its chair Katariina Syväys supported by Marc Baumgartner, my thanks to both for their work.

- 2.3.1.2 To align the work of the Task Force with the work of TOC, I set out a brief for TOC and the Task Force at the start of the cycle regarding the expectations I had for the work they were producing. I am happy to report that both teams have contributed to high quality and complementary documents. Both of which have been submitted to the office for distribution to the MAs. I am engaged in an ongoing effort to maintain coordination between the teams, to ensure that we don't double up on work, but of course also to ensure that we all remain on the same page.

- 2.3.1.3. The RTTF is currently made up mainly of representatives from the EUR region, with only a few exceptions. It is my hope that we can find more representatives from other MAs to become involved in the work, as the Remote Tower concept gains more traction globally.

2.3.2 RPAS Task Force (RPAS TF)

- 2.3.2.1 The number of activities deployed in the domain of RPAS, UAS and everything associated with it can be daunting. It would be a lie to claim I am able to keep track of all the developments, so I am very thankful to Eugenio Diotallevi for keeping his finger on the pulse and IFATCA's head in the game in this regard. Eugenio also represents the federation on the ICAO RPAS Panel, ensuring that we are involved at the very highest level and influencing worldwide policy.

- 2.3.2.2 Eugenio attended TOC's meetings and provided valuable and crucial input to the work produced by the committee on this subject. Work is ongoing and we will continue to monitor developments in this area.

- 2.3.2.3 As the work of the RPAS TF continues, and there are many threads to follow, volunteers are welcome to join the RPAS TF. At the moment all of the work falls to Eugenio and Christoph Gilgen. While they work tirelessly, there is only so much they can do, and extra pairs of eyes would be a great addition.

2.4 Developments for the Future

- 2.4.1 The advent of regional committees in the Federation has been a matter of attention to the EB and the 2030+ Task Force. Efforts have been made to find ways to integrate the regional committees into the organisation to make sure that they are an asset, and our different teams don't start working against each other. The 2030+ Task Force envisions a newly defined role for the Technical and Professional Secretary to make sure that the efforts of these committees are in line with the larger goals and policies of IFATCA.
- 2.4.2 To make sure that TPSec is empowered to perform these tasks, the role has been discontinued pending review of the IAM regarding this matter. I would like to extend my personal thanks to Joy Bhattacharya, who has been a tireless worker and has always come through for IFATCA, even during times of significant personal hardship.
- 2.4.3 IFATCA's Tech Talks have gotten off to a good start. We've had the opportunity to sit down with our Industry Partners Frequentis, Aireon and L3Harris. All of which provided very interesting and informative presentations to the attendees. The Tech Talks are available for rewatching via the IFATCA website. We are planning to have another Tech Talk soon with another Industry Partner, Thales. After this we will evaluate the initiative and decide how to take it further.
- 2.4.4 I will attend Airspace World in March, which will come too late to include in this report. I am hopeful to make connections with industry there and hope to develop these relationships into something beneficial for IFATCA. As we all know, it can be hard to make industry understand our demands for their products, and we have a reputation for being difficult as a profession. The lines of dialogue must remain open to maintain our influence and reputation as a constructive partner. It is in this area that I intend to invest a significant amount of my time.
- 2.4.5 I also intend to attend the Fly AI forum hosted by Eurocontrol in April as this will be a relatively cheap and easy trip for me, as I will not have to travel very far. I will continue the efforts of Ignacio Baca to include the JCHMS concept in these discussions. To keep involved in the subject matter, I have attended some of the JCHMS group's virtual meetings when able.

Other important mentions

- 2.5 I was honoured to be invited to attend the AMA regional meeting in Nassau, Bahamas, where I was able to meet many representatives from our MAs in the region. It was very enlightening to hear the stories of their issues and challenges. Presentations from L3Harris and NATCA were informative and interesting, and I was given the opportunity to present the work of TOC and how it ties in to the larger efforts IFATCA is involved in, mostly at the ICAO level. Thanks to JF Lepage for his support in putting the presentation together.
- 2.6 I'd like to thank my MA, VNLG, for their support to me in this new role. Without the backing of my board at home, I would not be able to be involved in IFATCA's work as I have been for the last 10 years, but in particular this last year. They also generously supported me in organising an Executive Board meeting in Amsterdam this February, for which I am also grateful.

- 2.7 I would like to thank my fellow EB members, for their help and support in this first year. Thanks for welcoming me to the team and making me feel at home in a new environment.

3. CONCLUSION

- 3.1. This was my first year as EVP Tech. A very enjoyable and satisfying experience, but not without its challenges.
- 3.2. TOC has performed well and remains one of the workhorses of IFATCA under the leadership of Jaymi Steinberg. Steps have been made to increase cooperation and coordination between TOC and the various other teams in the Federation. Efforts to improve must continue.
- 3.3 The technical Task Forces are still active and relevant. I believe their efforts must continue for now as developments are still ongoing and our positions as IFATCA are not yet finalised.
- 3.4 The Technical budget was sufficient this year, but I do expect increased costs next year due to general pricing trends.
- 3.5 Thanks to my MA, the EB and everyone else who supported me this year.

4. Recommendations

It is recommended that this report is accepted.