

All Together Now

ATM Interviews Massimo Garbini, the Industry chief charged with deploying the technology framework underpinning the Single Sky, Europe's bid to overhaul the way in which its airspace is managed

ATM The SESAR CEO Survey 2016 demonstrates that the SESAR Deployment Manager (SDM) has had an extremely good launch – especially through its support for ANSPs to access Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) funds allied to a general belief by industry leaders that the SDM has developed the correct structure to move ATM modernisation in Europe forward. The emerging challenge for many SESAR CEOs suggests that future Common Projects (CP) need to be defined in such a way as to achieve policy objectives while remaining realistic. How will the SDM make the projects 'do-able' and maintain that early positive spirit - and prevent unnecessary infringements in the future?

MG Today, the establishment of a strong partnership between the European Commission (EC) and the industry is indeed proving to be the right model to achieve results. Thanks to the facilitation and coordination performed by the SDM but most importantly through the cooperation with all stakeholders, SESAR is becoming an essential enabler to achieve the Single European Sky (SES).

The SDM is working closely together with the EC, SESAR Joint Undertaking (SJU), Network Manager (NM), European Defence Agency (EDA) and all stakeholders regarding the preparation of proposals for future CPs and to make sure objectives remain realistic bringing in the experience gained so far.

ATM SESAR CEOs were asked how they view the role of the current institutions such as the NM and Eurocontrol evolving in the long term in the framework of SESAR deployment and found that there is strong support for SDM/NM coordination. How do you see that co-ordination evolving?

MG A Commission implementing regulation requires the SDM and the NM to cooperate, which we have been doing since the beginning of the SDM. A formal cooperative arrangement between the SDM and NM will be established to ensure in particular the alignment and assurance of synergies between the Deployment Programme (DP) and NM plans (NSP, NOP), but today we are already working together closely as if signed.

Furthermore, the NM was consulted in an early phase of the creation of the DP, since before the submission of its draft to the Stakeholders' Consultation Platform. The cooperative arrangement also foresees the exchange of useful information in the area of performance measurement and review.

ATM When asked whether there were sufficiently robust arrangements for supporting smaller, less profitable ANSPs in addition to non-EU ANSPs, SESAR CEOs expressed satisfaction with the SDM consultation process and the use of cohesion funding to support smaller nations - 85 per cent funding rather than 50 per cent. How can the SDM best help cohesion states make the most of the available funds?

MG Within the CEF Transport Calls for Proposals 2015, €515 million has been made available for the ATM priority under the general CEF budget, €300 million has been made available for projects in member states eligible for the cohesion funds.

Every stakeholder is important whatever its size because we are talking about public funding and you could easily jeopardise network performance by not giving the necessary attention to very small organisations and damaging the entire value chain. We are studying where the real network needs are on the basis of where good technological investment is necessary and just because we have 28 member states does not mean we have to give funding to 28 ANSPs in any given call.

Also, to have access to public funds at European is tremendously complex and since ANSPs have not historically received such funding they may not be prepared at the organisational level and we have a duty to support them on that.

We need also to raise awareness within these cohesion states about what ATM could offer in terms of growth. ATM is a very cheap enabler of the economy of any country and we need to support that argument with good evidence to an ANSP's state representatives. SESAR is a unique opportunity where if you have to invest €10 million, you will get €8.5 million in co-funding. That could possibly grow your capacity by 20 per cent and improve cost efficiency, safety and environmental impact.

We need to be left with one standard for all the technologies we are going to deploy so they are truly interoperable.

After all, if Europe really achieves global leadership here, it stands to boost its export potential around the world. We cannot as the SDM enforce this but once it has included a technology within the DP, this might perhaps mean a small loss of competitiveness for a manufacturer – but in exchange for a far larger potential market.

ATM We asked whether the performance scheme and charging regulation regimes could impact deployment and whether SESAR technologies which actively help drive down ANSP costs should be prioritised. Most SESAR CEOs suggest that CPs should focus on performance improvement although more as an aside to the ultimate goal of ATM modernisation. How will the SDM guarantee a coherent and beneficial CP2 which offers the right balance of creating a solid baseline versus actual operational improvement?

MG The next CP indeed needs to offer the right balance of creating a solid baseline for operational improvement versus actual improvement.

However, if we reduce the performance scheme solely to cost-efficiency we are approaching it incorrectly. First of all, we should look at safety performance targets. Milan Linate in 2001 was a serious crisis which I lived through. So to translate this as an issue solely about money is wrong. Safety is your first objective as an ANSP so you have to give the controller the right technology which matches capacity increases with the same level of confidence. We need always to keep that balance in mind together with environmental impact.

ATM Is there a long term role for the SDM beyond the current financial perspective - funding expires in 2020? How confident is the SDM that new funds will be made available in the next financial perspective?

MG It is correct that the current funding expires in 2020 and the SJU also has a mandate until then. But there are projects that will run until 2024 and as deployment always follows R&D, the work will not be finished in 2020. Also, a new CP will require new funding.

Today, the SDM is a consortium but we are looking at the possibility of becoming a legal entity which means that the SDM will no longer be linked to its consortium partners. With that autonomy, it could become a real company with the managerial ability to procure and the capacity to become leaner, increase efficiency and be swifter in its stra-

tegic decision-making. That could enable the EC to task us with some new responsibilities too. It's complex, but nothing is impossible.

ATM SESAR CEOs generally supported an extension of the European Aviation Safety Agency's (EASA) oversight although limited its extent to defining rules on areas where national supervisory authorities (NSA) currently provide oversight. Do you think there is a need to create a better NSA/EASA working relationship?

MG A Commission implementing regulation has made coordination between the SDM and NSAs mandatory. A cooperative arrangement was also concluded between the SDM and NSAs on July 10 and a cooperative arrangement with EASA is work in progress. NSAs have been consulted by the SDM through a consultation process in parallel but separate from the Stakeholders' Consultation Platform.

Ultimately, it is a Commission decision but in my personal view, EASA has to play an important role in standardising the NSA approach. What is safe in Lisbon should be safe in Riga. To establish the Single European Sky we must have one rule. Of course, the NSA has to have the final word on safety but I see a good balance in EASA being given the co-ordinating authority role to which the NSAs can contribute.

Mostly, we are dealing with a simple lack of resources in some countries where very few people are dedicated to the evolution of ATM. That means a defensive, protective and conservative stance – which is good for safety but not good for major technology-based change.

ATM SESAR CEOs admit to concerns over the absence of military projects, the need for cyber-resilience through effective SWIM governance and the impact of delayed datalink technology but believe that by identifying and working on them ANSPs will be able to deploy in a more confident manner. This suggests a healthy collaborative approach to identifying and implementing solutions. How will the SDM support that collaborative approach going forward?

MG Contrary to the CEF Call 2014, there will be several military projects submitted to the CEF general and cohesion calls 2015. This is an essential step forward as PCP cannot be fully implemented and release all expected benefits without a significant share of military investments (about 10 per cent of total PCP investment). Military projects are particularly important to enable Flexible Use of Airspace (FUA) and Free



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Route (FRA) which are the most beneficial functionalities in the PCP.

The European Defence Agency (EDA) is the SDM's gateway to the military community. EDA and the SDM are working closely together in planning and integrating the military projects into the proposals submitted to CEF Transport Calls.

Regarding cyber security, the SDM is working with the SJU to ensure that cyber security requirements relevant to PCP implementation are integrated into the DP. Through this integration in to the DP, compliance of implementation projects with the SJU's developed requirement will be ensured where relevant.

On SWIM governance, the SDM and SJU will foster the establishment of adequate governance in order not to delay SWIM implementation. Proposals to CEF calls 2015 includes several SWIM related activities - study and implementation - that will ensure necessary progress if awarded.

On datalink, the EC has specifically mandated the SDM to develop a DLS implementation strategy. This has been initialised in the DP 2015 and will grow with DP 2016, based on a project view that meets the DLS IR revised deadlines and meet the baseline required for AF6 implementation in a timely way. 

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