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The following is a report about the first convention of the Group of Aerodrome Safety Regulators (GASR) with participation of industry representatives in correlation with the EASA (European Aviation Safety Agency) expanded competence and about the preliminary work for new aerodrome guidelines.

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What is the GASR?

Simply said, the GASR is the continuation of the in the JAA-Workgroup combined aviation authorities and ministries, that focus on the certification of aerodromes and their corresponding laws and regulations. The GASR represents the position of Europe's governmental institutions in regard to the matter of aerodromes and is currently carrying out a substantial portion of the preliminary work for future guidelines of European aerodrome facilities.

Conference Participants and the Roll of the IDRF in this Committee:

The conference took place from March 17th through 19th, 2009 in Istanbul. EU-Member States ministry and government agency staff as well as further EASA-members Norway, Switzerland and Iceland, have been integrated in this workgroup for numerous years now. For the first time in mid March of this year, industry representatives ACI Europe (Airports Council International) with numerous experts (from AMS, ZRH, MUC) and the IDRF (Association of Regional Aerodromes), with three persons, were invited to incorporate themselves. A listing of the expert groups can be found in the appendix.

The IDRF received mandates for the expert groups "equipment" (Mr. Kotzan), "aerodrome operation" (Mr. Eggert) and "aerodrome facility" (Mr. Mayer). Due to the short notice appointment of Mr. Kotzan, he is unable to be present until the next meeting in Prague.

Mr. Eggert and Mr. Mayer have been appointed by their colleagues to report on the meeting in Istanbul in each of their respective fields. An astounding fact, when you consider that we are neither a governmental institution nor are we a large association when compared to the ACI.

The IDRF expects professional cooperation, but also highly values the opinions of smaller aerodromes regarding the guideline draft; Therefore, constructive commentary is welcome.

Goal of the Conference in Istanbul:

Getting to know the participants; Familiarization of the drawn up documents by the GASR as yet; Differentiating between the political legislative elements and the regulating instruments of the European Parliament and the Commission through:

- Basic Regulation (BR. Have the characteristics of laws and have very complex amendment procedures by way of law, without exception) and
- Implementing Rules (IR. Similar to our executive order, exception only via the Commission, explanation must have scientific accuracy)

As well as the administrative jurisdiction tools of EASA through:

- Certification Standards (CS. Technical standards, complex amendments, exceptions via ruling of the EASA-directorate),
- Acceptable Means of Compliance (AMC. Binding interpretations, deviations with justification if necessary with scientific standards) and
- Guidance Material (GM. Explanations, examples, source identification, etc.).

The current documents should be brought into relation to the “Basic Regulation” and compared to Annex 14, as well as other international foundations.

Result of the First Meeting:

The viewing of the legal foundation and the currently existing materials, as well as the familiarization of the legislative and administrative instruments and their interpretation, was extremely time consuming. However, the meeting already yielded a first impression of individual nation’s positions and quirks. In particular, the grown and differentiating structures of every European country prevent the finding of a fast solution that is by all an accepted safe and economic approach.

The compilation of the actual regulation structures and contents will be context of future meetings.

Future Meetings:

We expect that the basic regulating contents will be determined during the next meeting, as well as the allocation of the ICAO-guidelines into IR / AMC / CS / GM. Concrete individual regulations will possibly be composed.

EASA will be present and will evaluate the contents of the drafts. They will surely also take with them the proposals of the formal rulemaking group, expected by the Fall of 2009.

Cooperation of IDRF-Members:

Basically all guidelines of the ICAO Annex 14 and the "Airport Design Manual" are being reexamined and converted into new guidelines. It will be determined which standards will be carried on, which recommendations will become binding and at which points strengthening is necessary. At the same time a frame of flexibility will be specified.

This gives members the possibility and necessity to detect deviations from the standards at their own aerodromes, display concrete affectedness, and if necessary work with us to developed solutions.

On all accounts, we expect discussion regarding:

- RESA (possibly also for VFR-runways)
- RWY-shoulder
- Amplitude explanation for any kind of deviation, beginning with the training of security guards, obstacle situation in the arrival and departure areas, to aerodrome operational equipment.
- Acceptance of existing standards of aerodrome equipment.
- Handling of aerodromes, respectively aerodrome areas that do not lie directly in the regulations frame of EASA.

If you happen to be in possession of a report, which offers substantiated justification (also operations limited) for the deviation of any standards or regulations, we kindly ask you to share it with us.

In addition, if you possess expertise in a certain subject matter, we would be happy to incorporate your knowledge in the development of new guidelines.

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