



2021

Annual SW FAB Report

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ABSTRACT: <p><i>This document contains the yearly report of the SW FAB initiative, as required by the article 10 of the SW FAB State Agreement. It summarizes the main activities developed by the different bodies of the SW FAB in 2021.</i></p> <p><i>This report is elaborated by the SW FAB governing bodies, namely the Supervisory Authorities Committee (SAC), the Operational Board (OB) and the Council, taking into account the contributions and comments provided by all SW FAB experts under the coordination of the SW FAB Standing Secretariat.</i></p> <p><i>The Annual Report is approved by the SW FAB Council and included in the SW FAB web page (www.swfab.eu) for transparency.</i></p>	

DOCUMENT CHANGE RECORD

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HIGHLIGHTS

After a complicated year 2020 for air transport due to COVID-19, hopes were high for a strong recovery in 2021. However, 2021 has turned out to be another difficult year. Although air traffic greatly surpassed 2020 levels during the year, traffic figures are still well below those of 2019, which is considered to be the year of reference for normal activity before the coronavirus.

Air transport in the SW FAB, although moving in this same overall scenario, has shown a somewhat better recovery behavior than in the rest of Europe. In both Portugal and Spain, from the second quarter of 2021, a change in trend was evident, starting a recovery that was confirmed during the rest of the year, that mainly took place in the summer months.

Despite the limitations derived from the restrictions imposed by COVID-19, the tasks and activities of all the SW FAB bodies have been maintained in a very collaborative atmosphere. As a result, progress has continued to be made towards the objectives established.

It is worth highlighting the activities carried out by the SW FAB service providers to try to mitigate the effects of the pandemic and to allow a gradual increase in air traffic levels with the establishment of recovery plans for air navigation services in collaboration with the European Network Manager.

At the institutional level, the year 2021 has been marked by the continuation of negotiations on SES2+, with strong participation of the Spanish and Portuguese aviation authorities, especially the latter, which took over the Presidency of the Council during the first half of the year and carried out a great job in its intention to integrate and reach consensus on proposals.

As for the performance targets, and although they are now set as individual targets for each State and not for the SW FAB as a whole, it should be noted that both Portugal and Spain have fully committed to doing their best to meet the targets set by the Commission.

Regarding one of the most important activities carried out in the SW FAB, the Operational Board Common Plan, it should be noted that despite the difficult circumstances, progress has been made in the implementation of various technical and operational projects in 2021. A new edition 2022-2026 has been approved by the SW FAB Council.

As in previous years, a new online consultation has been sent to our users and stakeholders. In this seventh edition of the Stakeholders Consultation Forum (SCF), the interested parties have been asked for their opinion on the functioning of the SW FAB and also, in connection with the SES2+ negotiations where the role of FABs is being debated, their point of view about the relevance of FABs and their future.



SW FAB: The Europe Gate to the Atlantic

The members of the SW FAB Council in 2021 were:

- ***Luis Miguel Ribeiro*** – *Chairman of the Board . CEO – ANAC Portugal;*
- ***Raúl Medina Caballero,***. *Director General of Civil Aviation – DGAC Spain;*
- ***Lieutenant General Ignacio Bengoechea Martí,*** *Deputy Chief of the Air Force Staff – Spanish Air Force;*
- ***Major-General Piloto Aviador Teodorico Dias Lopes,*** *Chief of the Office of the National Aeronautical Authority.*

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1 Introduction

This document contains the yearly report of the SW FAB initiative, as required by the article 10 of the SW FAB State Agreement. It summarizes the main activities developed by the different bodies of the SW FAB in 2021.

This report is elaborated by the SW FAB governing bodies, namely the Supervisory Authorities Committee (SAC), the Operational Board (OB) and the Council, taking into account the contributions and comments provided by all SW FAB experts under the coordination of the SW FAB Standing Secretariat.

The Annual Report is approved by the SW FAB Council and included in the SW FAB web page (www.swfab.eu) for transparency.

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2 SW FAB Council

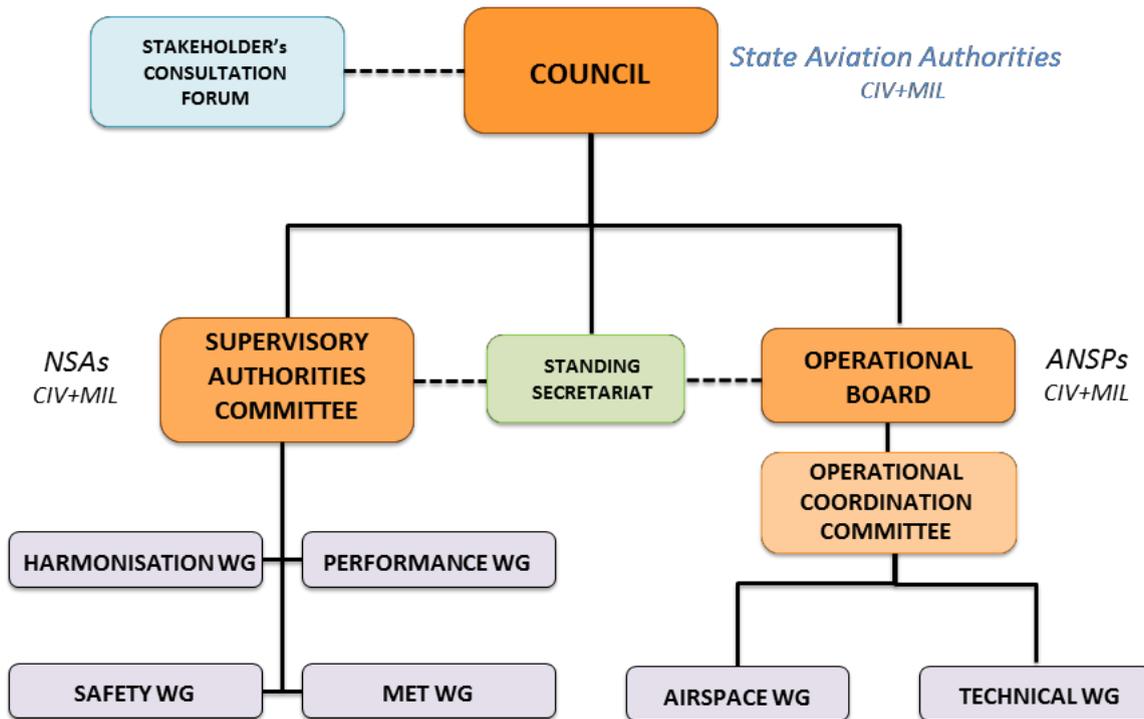
The SW FAB Council (the “Council”) is the highest governing body. It was created by Article 9 “Bodies of the SW FAB” of Chapter 3 “Bodies and Operation” of the SW FAB State Agreement signed between the Republic of Portugal and the Kingdom of Spain, on 17th May 2013.

This SW FAB body is established as a joint decision-making body for the purposes of the implementation, operation and further development of the SW FAB State Agreement. It is composed of one representative from the authority responsible for military aviation and one representative from each Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) of each SW FAB State.

By Portugal, the Autoridade Aeronáutica Nacional (**AAN**) and the Autoridade Nacional da Aviação Civil (**ANAC**) and, by Spain, the Estado Mayor del Ejército del Aire (**EMA**) and the Dirección General de Aviación Civil (**DGAC**) are the four members in the Council.

The Council Chair rotates annually between the two CAAs. During 2021 it fell to ANAC.

The structure of the SW FAB bodies is shown in the figure:



Main facts and activities at institutional level in 2021

In its role of governing body of the SW FAB, the Council carried out all the required tasks for the steering, coordination and strategic decision-making of the SW FAB development.

Institutional matters

As relevant decisions of this year, the Council undertook the review and final approval of the SW FAB OB Common Plan 2022-2026. This document was sent to the European Commission. Also, the Council carried out a review of the Monitoring Report of the previous edition of the Common Plan, the OB Common Plan 2021-2025.

In 2021, the drop in air traffic figures suffered in the previous year due to COVID-19 has slowed down thanks to vaccination and EU digital COVID certificates to travel. Although at a slower pace than expected, this recovery trend in Portugal and Spain in the last months of the year, despite the Omicron variant, brought air traffic closer to pre-pandemic levels, heralding, with some uncertainty, better prospects for 2022.

Collaboration at all national and European institutional levels has proven to be an essential factor in achieving progressive recovery and greater stability for air operations.

Consultation with users

Due to the continuity of the restrictions and after the experience gained with the previous SCF, the Council decided that it was important to keep in close collaboration with users and stakeholders and to get their feedback on the SW FAB. Consequently, a new online questionnaire was sent to them to gather their vision and feedback. In addition, the opportunity was taken to ask for their opinion on the future of the FABs.

Council meetings

The SW FAB Council met twice in 2021.

Meeting	Date	Location
18th Council meeting	9th June 2021	Videoconference
19th Council meeting	10th November 2021	Videoconference

At the Council meetings, issues related to the coordination and implementation of the SW FAB and its progress, the decision-making process or the approval of strategic documents, were addressed.

Although the performance plan is no longer developed at SW FAB level, the evolution of the performance targets of both States has continued to be shared at the Council meetings, thus allowing for an overview of the SW FAB airspace and strengthening collaboration where necessary. The impact of COVID-19 on air traffic, as well as recovery measures, were understandably at the center of the debates held in those meetings.

The presentation of the results of the meetings held by the Portuguese delegation with Eurocontrol, concerning the issues with the KEA indicator calculation and its affection for the ATFM delays, was of particular interest. The military authorities' representatives expressed also their willingness to understand how the indicators are measured and how the different situations could be addressed, in order to assess and improve the system with the help of the military.

Besides, the aspects mentioned in the preceding points, other FAB related matters or issues affecting the SW FAB initiative progress were also treated in the Council meetings seeking the greatest possible coordination between Portugal and Spain.

One of the most relevant issues discussed at the 2021 Council meetings was the state of play of the SES2+ negotiations. Portugal held the Presidency of the Council during the first half of the year having a steering role in the complex negotiation process between the Member States in the AVIA WG. As a result of the great work done, a general approach and a compromised text proposal were submitted and adopted by the TTE Council on the 3rd of June 2021.

Also involved, Spain raised comments to the texts developed and stated the full intention to be involved and cooperative with Portugal, about the high-level objectives, regarding the future dialogues.

The FABs are still included in the text not as a mandatory structure, but as a voluntary way of cooperation. With this regard and having in mind what the future of the FABs may be, the SW FAB Council agreed to jointly analyze the way to proceed, how this cooperation can be improved and how it is going to be settled in the future.

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3 SW FAB Supervisory Authorities Committee

The **SW FAB Supervisory Authorities Committee (SAC)** was created by Article 9 “Bodies of the SW FAB” of Chapter 3 “Bodies and Operation” of the SW FAB State Agreement, between the Republic of Portugal and the Kingdom of Spain, signed on 17th of May 2013.

The SAC, in accordance with the framework of the State Agreement, addresses all matters related to the supervision, performance and harmonization of rules and procedures within the SW FAB. It is made up of representatives of each NSA and of the military aviation authorities that are not established as NSAs.

As operational arms of the SAC, four Standing Working Groups (WGs) have been set up to develop the matters that fall under the remit of the SAC: the Safety WG (SAF WG), the Harmonization WG (HAR WG), the Performance WG (PER WG) and the Meteorological WG (MET WG).

SAC activities

Two meetings of the Committee were held along 2021, the sixteenth meeting was celebrated on the 8th of June and the seventeenth meeting took place on the 5th of November. Both were supposed to be held at ANAC premises in Lisbon, but those were finally held via teleconference due to the COVID-19 pandemic crisis.

The following points were debated during the SAC meetings:

NSA Agreement and all associated procedures:

Upon the signature of the new NSA Agreement in 2020, as approved on SAC 15th, along with the derived procedures, the final versions of the documents, listed below, were completed and distributed to the Council, on the 19th of April 2021.

- “NSA Agreement in Compliance with Regulation 2017/373”: (signed on December 2020 and distributed on January 2021).
- “Procedure for Safety Oversight of Air Navigation Service Providers (ANSPs)”: (edition no.2 with date of approval 10th of November 2020, SAC 15th).
- “Procedure for Safety Oversight of Meteorological Providers”: (edition no.2 with date of approval 10th of November 2020, SAC 15th).
- “Procedure for the Review coordination between competent Authorities for changes to functional systems related to the SW FAB”: (edition no.4 with date of approval 10th of November 2020, SAC 15th).

Monitoring

Since 2020 the Performance Plans are set at national level and consequently, the Monitoring Process and the follow-up of the targets are also held at national level as part of the continuous monitoring process and to prepare the Annual Monitoring Report to be submitted to the European Commission.

a) Regarding ANAC monitoring activities during 2021, the key conclusions presented were:

- ✓ Traffic, measured in service units, until the third quarter of 2021 versus the first nine months of 2020 increased by 88,8% for enroute and 60,8% for terminal. When comparing figures of up to the third quarter of 2021 with the same period of 2019 enroute service units were 38,7% below and terminal

service units 32.3% below.

- ✓ The horizontal enroute flight efficiency in actual flown trajectories (KEA), at Lisbon FIR was 1.72% in September, which at that moment was better than the target of 1,8% for 2021.
- ✓ En-Route and Terminal Delay figures up to the third quarter 2021 were 0,06 min/flight and 0,60 min/flight respectively, below the established targets of 0,09 min/flight (enroute) and 3,47 min/flight (arrival).
- ✓ ANAC also informed the Committee about the results of the analysis performed with Eurocontrol, regarding the evolution of the KEA indicators, which indicates that a methodological improvement in the data gathering process led to an overall increase of KEA for Portugal.

b) Regarding AESA monitoring activities during 2021 the key conclusions presented were:

- ✓ **KEA Target.** Data shared until September (3.24%) showed a result that anticipated a possible non-compliance by the end of the year (above the 2021 SPA target of 3,08).
- ✓ **En-Route Delay values.** Given the traffic reduction caused by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in Spain the number of minutes of delay generated was significantly lower than in previous years. In September, the value obtained was 0,07, anticipating a final value below the SPA ERD Target 0,12 considered in the Spanish Revised Performance Plan.
- ✓ **Traffic Arrival Delay values.** The number of minutes of delay generated within Spanish airports was also lower than in previous years, despite the exceptional weather situation caused by Filomena in Adolfo Suárez Madrid Barajas airport in January 2021 (main reason for delay results during 2021). In September, the value obtained was 0,21, foreseeing a final value below the SPA ERD Target 0,44 considered in the Spanish revised Performance Plan.

Oversight Plan Execution

Due to the pandemic situation in 2021, it was not possible to follow the NSA agreement to carry out cooperative joint safety oversight inspections to the ANSPs, on MET and ATS domains. The process has been frozen, but the proposal is to resume the exchange of experiences and best practices through the participation of inspectors in the oversight visits performed by the other NSA.

The Authorities expressed their willingness to follow the established procedures sharing the NSA's national inspection plans to determine which inspections are of interest for each to participate in during 2022.

4 SW FAB Operational Board

The SW FAB Operational Board (OB) was created by Article 9 “Bodies of the SW FAB” of Chapter 3 “Bodies and Operation” of the SW FAB State Agreement, between the Republic of Portugal and the Kingdom of Spain, signed on May 17th, 2013.

The OB is the body established in the framework of the State Agreement to address all matters related to the technical and operational functioning of the SW FAB. It is made up of representatives of each SW FAB ANSP (NAV Portugal, ENAIRE, EMFA, EA-ANSP, AEMET and IPMA).

The Organizational Structure for the Operational Board is as follows:

- **Operational Board Coordination Committee (OCC):** mainly responsible for preparing conclusions, recommendations and giving advice to the Operational Board as well as direct the development of the working groups under its umbrella, by validating and approving the recommendations made, as well as monitoring the work done;
- **Airspace Working Group (AWG):** mainly responsible for the identification, harmonization and development of airspace structure taking into account civil and military air traffic flows, European route network, Network Manager (NM) and Performance Plans established at national level, ensuring optimum airspace utilization and military mission effectiveness in the application of the FUA concept;
- **Technical Working Group (TWG):** mainly responsible for proposing activities or plans towards harmonized and interoperable technical systems for the provision of air traffic management, communication, navigation, surveillance and meteorological services by the civil and military air navigation service providers,

providing a high level of safety operations and making optimal use of technical resources.

The work is carried out ensuring technical coordination between ANSPs of the SW FAB, as well as between SW FAB ANSP(s) and ANSP(s) of neighboring States, including the elaboration of technical written agreements of relevance for the provision of ANS.

OB/OCC activities.

During 2021 the OB/OCC held two coordination meetings on 11th May and 01st October.

The work of the OB/OCC was mainly oriented to produce the new edition of the SW FAB Operational Board Common Plan, SW FAB OB CP 2022-2026. This rolling annual plan contains an overview of those technical and operational activities planned to be implemented by the SW FAB ANSPs, and the monitoring of the implementation of the projects included in the SW FAB Operational Board (OB) Common Plan 2021-2025, aiming to improve the performance of the airspace under its responsibility as part of the whole European Network. The OB/OCC monitors the developments of these projects and, likewise, periodically provides reports to the SW FAB Council regarding the status of the SW FAB OB CP, to be afterwards released to the EC.

Along 2021, the SW FAB OB CP in force covered the period 2021-2025, and the OB developed the new edition of this plan, the SW FAB OB CP 2022-2026, covering the period 2022-2026. This new edition was agreed by the bodies that compose the SW FAB (the OB, the SAC and the Council), and is already in force during this year 2022.

From an institutional point of view, it is recognized the success of the AEFMP regional cooperation where the members of the SW FAB, Spain and Portugal, have a long- lasting history of inter-FAB/regional collaboration, since the '90s, well before the SES legislation.

In this framework of collaboration that can be considered the precursor of the FAB concept, Spain and Portugal (ENAIRE, NAV Portugal, ANAC and the Spanish DGAC) work with Algeria, Morocco, France, and Tunisia. AEFMP aims to the harmonization of procedures, improvement of interoperability and management of implementation of new systems.

Furthermore, among the several activities carried out by the OB/OCC during 2021, it is important to mention the participation in the elaboration of the LSSIP (end of the 2020 cycle and beginning of 2021 cycle).

In this year, the 2020 LSSIP cycle has been successfully completed by agreeing a joint report on 16 out of 57 objectives included in the European ATM Master Plan (MP) Level 3 Implementation Plan, edition 2020. Further to the coordination of the common report for the LSSIP database, the content of LSSIP level 1 section 4.1 'FAB Co-ordination' and section 4.2 'Regional Multinational cooperation initiatives' have also been jointly agreed.

Moreover, in the last quarter of 2021, as foreseen in the SW FAB OB Common Plan, the coordination of civil ANSPs contribution to national LSSIP for cycle 2021 was initiated between ENAIRE and NAV Portugal. Both, a detailed working schedule for the 2021 cycle and a list containing the proposed FAB dimension objectives for common reporting, were elaborated as the starting point for the LSSIP 2021 cycle.

This is an ongoing project that is yearly updated to be aligned with the ATM MP level 3 report and national LSSIPs elaboration processes.

AWG activities

The Airspace Working Group (AWG) projects defined in the Operational Board Common Plan 2021-2025 edition 1.0 (November 2020) comprise 10 projects, distributed into 5 sub-

areas of work, to be developed and implemented up to 2025.

In May 2021, it should be noted that, regarding the TMA 6 project “SW FAB RNP APCH Implementation Plan”, the activity 4 was successfully finished with the RNP APCH implementation in Madeira (RWY 05 and 23) and Porto Santo (RWY 18 and 36).

The AWG actively participated in the preparation of the operational component of the new 2022-2026 edition of the SW FAB Common Plan, within four main operational areas:

- Free route airspace (FRA) concept
- Network management (NMP)
- Civil-military coordination (CMC)
- Terminal area management (TMA)

Regarding the new edition of the SW FAB OB CP, the AWG has developed a new project named “SW FAB Cross Border FRA”. The aim of this project is to implement a cross-border FRA, between Lisbon FIR and Madrid FIR by 2025.

TWG activities.

The Technical Working Group (TWG) projects defined in the Operational Board Common Plan 2021-2025 edition 1.0 (November 2020) comprise 7 projects, distributed into 2 sub-areas of work, to be developed and implemented until the end of 2022.

Along 2021, it should be noted that three technical projects of the SW FAB OB CP 2021-2025, have been finished.

CNS 12 Datalink (Phase II)

Project finalised in the proposed scheduled date, March 2021. The project covered the identification, definition and provision of an overall deployment picture of target solution according to Addendum 1 of DP2016 and DLS Recovery plan.

CNS 13 New Surveillance Sensors (Phase III)

Project successfully completed in the proposed scheduled date, December 2021 with the operational deployment of new Mode S, ADS-B, WAM and LAM systems in the SW FAB area. In Spain, it was implemented in Peñas del Chache (Lanzarote), Turrillas (Almería), Málaga I, Valdespina (Palencia), Barcelona, CED Madrid, Alicante, Granada, Bilbao, Menorca and Ibiza. In Portugal, it was implemented in Montejunto and Fóia Sites towards the high seas and in the Porto TMA.

CNS 14 CIVIL/MIL ATC Network

Project completed in the proposed scheduled date, June 2021. The project covered successfully the deployment of the new network infrastructure in remote civil and military sites, the user integration, and support for the local and inter-centre contingency requirements, with one of the five planned inter-centre contingencies implemented operationally (between Palma and Barcelona).

The TWG actively participated in the preparation of the operational component of the new 2022-2026 of the SW FAB Common Plan, within one main technical area:

- CNS sub-area of work.

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5 List of Abbreviations/Acronyms

AAN – Autoridade Aeronáutica Nacional
ADS-B – Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast
AEFMP – ATM Evolution Framework through Multipurpose Partnership
AEMET – Agencia Estatal de Meteorología
AESA – Agencia Estatal de Seguridad Aérea
ANAC – Autoridade Nacional da Aviação Civil
ANSP – Air Navigation Service Provider
ATC – Air Traffic Control
ATFM – Air Traffic Flow Management
ATM – Air Traffic Management
AWG – Airspace Working Group
CAA – Civil Aviation Authority
CP – Common Plan
DLS – Datalink Services
EA-ANSP – Ejército del Aire, Air Navigation Service Provider
EASA – European Aviation Safety Agency
EC – European Commission
EMA – Estado Mayor del Ejército del Aire
EMFA – Estado-Maior da Força Aérea
EU – European Union
FAB – Functional Airspace Block
FIR – Flight Information Region
FRA – Free Route Airspace
FUA – Flexible Use of Airspace
HAR WG – Harmonisation Working Group
IP – Internet Protocol
IPMA – Instituto Português do Mar e da Atmosfera
KEA – Key performance Environment indicator based on Actual trajectory
LSSIP – Local Single Sky Implementation
MP – Master Plan
MET WG – Meteorological Working Group

NM – Network Manager / Nautical Miles
NSA– National Supervisory Authorities
OB – Operational Board
OCC– Operational Coordination Committee
PER WG – Performance Working Group
RNP APCH – Required Navigation Performance Approach
RP2 – Reference Period 2
RP3 – Reference Period 3
RWY – Runway
SAC – Supervisory Authorities Committee
SAF WG – Safety Working Group
SCF – Stakeholder Consultation Forum
SES – Single European Sky
SPA ERD – Spanish En route Delay
SW – South West SW FAB – South West FAB
TMA – Terminal Movement Area
TTE Council – Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council
TWG – Technical Working Group
WAM – Wide Area Multilateration