

**COMMISSION  
"RESCUE AND FIRE FIGHTING AT AIRPORTS"**

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## **CTIF Commission "Rescue and Fire Fighting at Airports" virtual spring meeting**

### **MEMO**

#### **Participants:**

Veli-Matti Sääskilahti, chair

Trond Joranger

Ole Jakob Hansen

Andreas Herndler

Manfred Sommerer

Martin Gorski

Hans Schmid

Scot Young

Peter Tschümperlin

Octávio Teixeira

Florian Monthoux

Ørnulf Rønningen

Aleksander Gumdal

Andreas Rudlof

Gábor Nagy

Peter Gould

**SBMUL**

Simo Ekman

Wolfgang Voraberger

Taina Hanhikoski, secretary

#### **Welcome and meeting rules**

##### **Introduction of participants**

CTIF Airport Commission chairman, *Veli-Matti Sääskilahti*

Veli-Matti welcomed everybody to the meeting. There had been some technical difficulties when sending the invitation to the meeting which is unfortunate. Veli-Matti presented a recently discovered document about the Commission's history which will be shared among the members. There is also a new member from Portugal who joined the meeting towards the end of the session.

## **Situation in airports and CAA's during this Covid-19 time. Roundtable discussion.**

Everybody

**Manfred Sommerer:** There has been a lot of financial and medical issues. Vienna airport needs to be open 24/7, some other airports have closed, and some are using this time for renovations etc. Traffic is slightly increasing – airlines are optimistic about the coming summer. There has been no decrease to firefighter resources at the airport. Vaccines were received in February.

**Andreas Herndler?:** Some areas of Austria are still in lockdown and no unnecessary risks are taken with regards to inspections, but some inspections will be done this year. The approach is different to normal situation.

**Trond Joranger:** Traffic is down 67 % compared to 2020. There has been close cooperation with central and local health authorities, this has been a good thing. There are infection control measures taken at every airport with the focus on operations and passengers. There are also extremely strict infection control measures when travelling and when using hot exercise fields. Cooperation with CAA is good and close; they have given flexibility provisions during the period on training (hot checks, alternative system for proficiency check); use of temporary downgrades is allowed; opening hours (more or less like 2019); rearranging personnel resources national alternates due to difficulties in inland travel; also parking of airplanes. Internal risk assessments have been conducted with questionnaires concerning handling operations and other operations at site. There is readiness for start up at full capacity with a satisfactory level of safety. All 43 airports are up and running.

**Florian Monthoux:** In Switzerland, the situation is similar to that in Austria and Norway, no major safety issues but more financial due to COVID-19. Maybe safety issues will arise later on as a result of economic issues? This remains to be seen.

In Switzerland there are 5 major airports under EASA requirements, 12 airports with ICAO requirements and a lot of smaller airports without ARFF requirements. This has led to a development of a national requirement for airfields including heliports which states at minimum the emergency plan and number of fire extinguishers etc. The future amendment of ICAO Annex 14, vol 1 wanted to be taken into consideration in the national requirements but this raised some questions, like are these applicable regardless of the size of the aircraft, how to deal with aerodromes that only serve few CAT operations, and should CAT operations be prohibited at aerodromes without RFFS? An updated version was prepared based on stakeholder involvement. National requirements do not apply to EASA airports (yet). CAT only applies to ICAOs and those without requirements at the moment. Hopefully in few years EASA will update the requirements to address this.

A new feature is real accidents as emergency exercise. Real emergencies can be considered as an equivalent to an emergency exercise if the emergency response plan is fully developed, the event is fully debriefed, and lessons learned are documented in a formal report. Only FOCA can decide if a particular accident can be accepted as an equivalent of a full-scale or partial exercise. EASA airports have a full-scale exercise every 2 years, ICAO airports every 3 years. The aim is to get local police, hospitals and firefighters involved in these exercises, but this is sometimes problematic (especially during COVID-19). One thing to consider is that real accidents do not have a schedule, so you still have to have an exercise plan prepared. CAA audit has been postponed to later.

**Discussion:** There should be different requirements for smaller airplanes. This topic should be discussed with Vasileo.

**Hans Schmid:** All training has been cancelled. We have looked for Switzerland for some alternatives and some training facilities used in small airports. Our own training facility will be ready on Jan 1<sup>st</sup> 2022. Next training is expected in September. Foam tests are usually done in March, new foam (ICAO level C) was tested, and the results were not what was expected. The evaluation of this test is still in progress, and the presentation will be given in the next Commission meeting in October.

**Gábor Nagy:** There has been more COVID-19 infections this year than last year but this hasn't affected firefighters, their numbers have remained the same. Vaccination is not mandatory, but most firefighters have taken it.

**Scot Young:** A lot of training on hold at the moment. Instructors have received COVID-19 vaccination. Some restructuring has also happened in the organization.

**Martin Gorski:** Lockdowns are still ongoing. Company travel has been restricted. There are a lot of new projects; transition from A FFF foams, different fuel tests etc.

**Wolfgang Voraberger:** Strict internal rules have resulted in low number of COVID-19 infections in our group. Business is going good as there has been incoming orders. However, there has been a big decline in business in airports.

**Peter Gould:** Majority of employees have been vaccinated as they are considered as essential workers. This status has also allowed travel. The main hindrance has been the lack of transport. UK airports have been hit badly and the recovery will take time. Domestic, military, and industrial fire brigades are slowly getting back to normal.

**Alexander Gumdal:** The situation is slowly getting back to normal. Last month there were 4-5 audits.

**Veli-Matti Sääskilahti:** In Finland, airports work partly: some are closed, and people are laid off. There have been difficulties to fulfill training requirements. Helsinki-Vantaa firefighters work almost like normal. There is more work with regards to CAA than normally, times are economically challenging, and some people or their duties might be laid off or deleted.

#### **TRA (Task Resource Analysis)**

- CAA's and Airports opinions in each countries
- Handle of Reduction ARFF Category during Covid-19 and normal situations
  - o ICAO Annex 14, Vol. I, chapter 9.2
  - o EASA AMC2 ADR.OPS.B.010(a)(2), paragraph 3

There are some recommendations in ICAO annex and also a guideline on EASA concerning TRA. In Switzerland, national ARFF directive states specific number of personnel for categories 1-3 (no TRA needed) – this is done so that small airports do not need to perform TRA. For all other categories that number is based according to TRA. A TRA contains, for example, general information, ARFF category, response time, aircraft types, operational hours etc.

Some key points for FOCA approval: are aeronautical traffic statistics in relation to ARFF categories, worst case scenario, is the approval done by ARFF chief or accountable manager, is there a realistic number of personnel for each ARFF category, are requirements (EASA/ICAO/national) met, comparison to other TRAs, guidance on response time: category 1 → 1 minute, category 2 → 2 minutes etc.

## Discussion

In Switzerland there is no requirement on who does TRA. All certified airports need TRA and the number of firefighters needs to correlate with their category. The Commander of the fire brigade and people working in the accident site need to know how many firefighters are actually needed. CAA monitors that the correlation is correct.

In Norway TRA is required for all airports. There are mostly small airports, most in category 4, Oslo is category 9. One analysis is done for each category. All airports are described; this includes staffing, equipment, layout, traffic etc. TRA only focuses on airport staff. A worst credible scenario is chosen (runway excursion with an outside fire and with a small number of injured passengers). Statistically there are very few fires inside the aircraft – putting out outside fire and stopping smoke entering the aircraft gives more time for evacuation.

In Finland TRA is done at three airports. However, there is no TRA requirement, but there is a discussion on future instructions and guidance material (what an airport needs to fulfill). In Helsinki-Vantaa, there are 1+6 staff (category 9). The number of personnel is not maybe enough. In category 7 in Finland the number of personnel is 1+3. There are some challenges concerning surviving passengers, it is not clearly defined how e.g. municipal firefighters come into the picture, time definitions are also unclear.

Response time should be 2 minutes to 1<sup>st</sup> truck anywhere in the airfield. In category 9 airport with 6 staff, how do you save 30 % of the passengers? With interior fire and 6 minutes response time the survival rate is low. There is a lot to improve in terms of seconds used and to optimize time we could use some special training.

In winter there are difficulties in reaching the aircraft – this has also been tested in Norway. More training is needed.

What do we want to do in case of an accident? What is the equipment like? If there is a need to go into the aircraft, 3 firefighters are not enough. There needs to be a minimum four when working with breathing apparatus. Will we wait for municipal firefighters? And let people die?

Without the minimum number of firefighters there might be even fewer of them. There could also be a reserve, e.g. 20 firefighters 5 minutes away. A TRA should indicate if there is a need for more firefighters and TRA should include the most realistic scenario.

Targets and goals need to be met, but they are just numbers. To rescue people is just a recommendation, not a requirement. We only talk about fire extinguishers, response time etc. The rest is risk management. If you want more, you need more resources.

The number of firefighters per category varies greatly – e.g. category 7 in Finland has 3, in the US 12. National differences are big.

## **EASA regulation for aerodromes**

Regulation states that if you have less than 700 movements in the aerodrome during the last three months, you can decrease your level.

There are some questions. Does the three months refer to certain months or just 90 days per year (the busiest months)? If there is only one movement per month, is an aerodrome in active use?

Only three units in Norway have utilized this (C5) but not due COVID-19. In Norway, the three months is used forwards and backwards at a certain point. Some difficulties in some definitions still remain.

## **Conclusion**

A questionnaire about **TRA?** will be sent to airports prior to the next meeting. The questionnaire will be sent for comments before that.

A list of Commission members and contact details will be updated and shared. The Commission website will be updated but without the contact details.

Taina will create a short introduction on how to install WhatsApp on your computer.

Next meeting will be an online meeting on October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021. Topics for the meeting: the airport questionnaire, foam test results, virtual training (simulator, VR) and response time.

On 10th April 2021, a fire broke out in containers with Vivo 20 phones in Hong Kong air cargo area. You can watch the video here: <https://youtu.be/6QfiJ7WbQUg>.