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# NEFAB Annual Report 2015

Version 1.1

## Revision history

Version	Date	Description/Change	Author	Approved
0.1	20.11.2015	First draft	FI	
0.2	17.12.2015	Second draft	FI	
	18.12.2015	Initiation of written procedure		
	14.01.2016	Comments from Norway	NO	
	14.01.2016	Comments from ANSPs	ANSPs	
1.0	19.02.2016	Inclusion of NO comments	FI	
1.1	26.02.2016	Finalisation with ANSP comments	FI	
	26.02.2016	Second round of written procedure		

## Main developments in 2015

### NEFAB Strategy Implementation Plan

One of the main issues in the NEFAB cooperation was the NEFAB Strategy Implementation. The original idea of the Performance and Financial Committee was to prioritise the existing concrete projects or actions that would contribute to the goals set in the Strategy. In the November Council meeting the approach was to limit the level of detail of the plan. It should list only the main activities. Furthermore a prioritisation of actions should be made visible under each target area. The intention was to approve the renewed Implementation Plan by written procedure early in 2016.

### NEFAB Target Concept

NEFAB Target Concept was implemented with Scenario 6 and key elements from the NEFAB Network Plan on 12 November 2015. The key elements are:

- ▲ Continuous and seamless free route airspace (FRA) above FL95 in Estonia, Finland and Latvia, and FRA in Norway FIR above FL135;
- ▲ Common flight planning rules and procedures to operate in NEFAB FRA, including harmonized Flight Planning rules with DK-SE FAB in the interface of the FRA volumes of the two FABs (NEFRA concept, see below);
- ▲ Upgrading of ATM systems to facilitate FRA operations.

Implementation of Scenario 8 with continuous FRA across all FIRs in NEFAB and a seamless FRA above FL285 with DK-SE FAB is scheduled for 23 June 2016.

### NEFRA Phase 1

The North European Free Route Airspace NEFRA – covering the airspace of Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Norway and Sweden – was launched on 12 November 2015. The initial implementation of NEFRA (called "scenario 6") fulfils the target set in the joint ministerial declaration from the six States of 11 March 2013. A press release was issued on the implementation of NEFRA phase 1.

NEFRA scenario 6 is composed of three FRA volumes: Finland, Estonia and Latvia as one seamless FRA, Norway (Oceanic excluded) as one FRA, and DK-SE FAB. Airspace users are now able to plan and operate across these FRA volumes with harmonized Flight Planning rules. In scenario 6 border crossing points between the volumes are required. In the next step Scenario 8 will introduce continuous and seamless Free Route Airspace across the two FABs above FL285, scheduled to be implemented in June 2016.

### NEFRA Phase 2

Phase 2 contains the necessary system upgrades to allow for greater automation (processing and exchange) of traffic information. It is foreseen to be implemented by end of the year 2017.

The development of NEFRA phase 2 takes place within the Borealis industrial partnership (Borealis Alliance) as part of an EU-funded project. The operational concept of NEFRA will later be expanded to include also the airspaces of UK, Ireland and Iceland.

### Borealis

The Borealis Alliance includes the ANSPs of Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Latvia, Norway, Sweden and the UK. The Borealis Board approved in January 2015 the start of the Borealis Free Route Airspace (FRA) programme. Following a workshop in March with the NSA and ANSP representatives, the NSAs of Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Latvia, Norway, Sweden and the UK formalized their cooperation towards the achievement of the Borealis Free Route Airspace (FRA) vision and future common Borealis initiatives by establishing the "9-State NSA group".

The Commission is very interested in the Borealis as it fulfils the spirit of SES.

## **NAMCON**

The National Meteorological Services of Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Norway and Sweden have a long history of cooperation. This includes e.g. numerical weather prediction, weather radar data exchange, lightning data exchange, professional training and aviation weather services. With the introduction of new SES policies and the emergence of the Functional Airspace Blocks, the Directors of these seven services decided to embark upon a more profound cooperation in aviation weather services, establishing NAMCon.

The consortium set two major milestones for 2015, which have been reported to respective FABs: joint production of Significant Weather Charts (SWC) between the Finnish Meteorological Institute (FMI) and the Swedish Meteorological and Hydrological Institute (SMHI) and a NAMCon-wide aviation weather briefing portal.

The joint production of SWCs started on 2 June 2015. The charts are produced four times a day. The night charts are produced by one and the day charts by the other provider. They switch the production every two weeks to maintain forecasting competency in all situations.

The NAMCon Aviation Weather Briefing portal has been developed by the Danish Meteorological Institute and will be completed in Q1 of 2016. The new portal will include all weather information relevant for airspace users from the seven NAMCon member countries. The portal is designed to meet general aviation users' needs and assist flight planning in Northern Europe for all concerned parties.

## **FinEst**

The ANSPs of Estonia and Finland looked for potential areas for synergies and made a feasibility study on cross border services. They found a concrete business case where both would be able to improve their utilization of resources and thus gain savings and improve service quality at the same time. The idea is that EANS offers service to Finavia during peak hours and Finavia offers service to EANS during night.

There are a lot of issues to be solved before preconditions for cross border services are cleared. The FinEst case will be studied in the NEFAB committees with great interest as the solutions may be generalized and help to find corresponding benefits elsewhere.

## **Cooperation with Denmark and Sweden**

During the two NEFAB – DK-SE FAB ministerial network meetings the main issue was the implementation of NEFRA. Denmark and Sweden raised concerns about not fulfilling the political declaration on establishing the Free Route Airspace in time, although the political declaration does not set any technical requirements.

The idea of a new ambitious political declaration was raised by Norway. The purpose would be to express more concrete aims with regard to providing Air Traffic Services across national borders between the NEFAB States and Denmark-Sweden. This will be discussed within the ministerial network during 2016.

## **Cooperation with other states/FABs**

The second Inter-FAB Cooperation Workshop was hosted by DANUBE FAB in Bucharest, October 2015. More than 50 delegates from all nine Functional Airspace Blocks attended and NEFAB was represented at Ministry level. There was some willingness to wider cooperation between the FABs and a work program for the platform was expected to be created. There was no NEFAB level cooperation with Russia this year because of the political situation.

## Activities in the NEFAB governance bodies during 2015

### NEFAB Council

NEFAB Council had two meetings, in May and November in Helsinki. In May the Council decided to arrange a workshop with the ANSP CEOs on the future development of NEFAB. The workshop was held in Helsinki in September and it was considered successful. In November the Council decided to arrange another workshop in 2016, where also the directors of civil aviation will be invited.

During the meetings the Council discussed the accomplishments and future development of NEFAB. In view of contributing to the Single European Sky, the major milestone NEFRA is implemented. The Council also reviewed the NEFAB Strategy Implementation Plan and the airspace policy for NEFAB.

### The NSA Committee

There were six meetings during 2015. NEFAB NSAs share information of all international meetings the members are attending. The main purpose is to exchange relevant information and as appropriate find common/harmonised NEFAB views on the relevant issues.

The NSA Committee has five expert subgroups: performance, change management, reporting, airspace management and oversight. The subgroups have produced the following deliverables:

- First draft of Airspace policy
- Building up the monitoring and reporting process of the RP 2 performance plan
- Exchange of safety information
- NEFAB procedure on change management process

The NSA Committee is making use of the EUROCONTROL State support for the development of the NEFAB NSA handbook.

### The Civil-Military Committee

The committee had three meetings. Main focus was the militaries' concern about the FRA implementation. A military-military expert group evaluated the effects of FRA on military interests and found out that the free route concept fully respects the needs and requirements that are set by each country to safeguard military needs and national sovereignty.

CMCs conclusion in FUA application is that each State has the responsibility to be in compliance with the requirements in EU legislation concerning FUA, e.g. EU regulation 2150/2005. CMC has not been able to identify added value for the Civil-Military cooperation by harmonizing each State's FUA application at this time. Future FUA harmonization is closely related to the work on drawing up the NEFAB Airspace Policy. This task is the NSA Committee's responsibility.

CMC produced guidance material for monitoring the Performance Indicators relating to the Civil-Military dimension of the Performance Plan for RP2 in NEFAB. The material was handed over to the expert group under NSAC responsible for measuring the performance in NEFAB.

Majority of the states have reported that LARA is expected to be implemented during 2016.

PRISMIL implementation is currently on hold in some States due to legal and security aspects related to publishing and sharing military airspace usage information. In general the PRISMIL implementation is expected to be executed after LARA implementation.

### The Financial and Performance Committee

The Financial and Performance Committee had four meetings. Three meetings were held in Riga and one in Helsinki. The main focus was on preparing the NEFAB strategy implementation plan and the Council meetings.

**The Air Navigation Services Consultative Board**

The third NEFAB Air Navigation Services Consultative Board (ANSCB) took place in Helsinki on 12 October and was attended by representatives of the ministries and national supervisory authorities of the NEFAB States, as well as air navigation service providers, airspace users and staff associations. Mr. Anders Sætre from the NEFAB Programme Office briefed stakeholders about the upcoming major changes in airspace structure and airspace management as a consequence of NEFRA. Mr. Jakub Kepa, Civil ANSPs Liaison Officer within the SESAR Deployment Manager, informed the participants on SESAR Deployment Manager and the Deployment Programme. The airlines and labour unions presented their points of view regarding the NEFAB cooperation and the upcoming free route airspace.

**The High Level Workshop on the development of air navigation services.**

NEFAB Council invited ANSP CEO Members to a joint workshop to discuss and have an open dialog about the development of air navigation services in NEFAB. The workshop was held in Helsinki on Sep 7. In the workshop there were open and straight forward discussions and the ANSP challenged the states with critical questions.

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