



SAFE SKIES IN MONTENEGRO



Dragan Djurovic, Director of the Civil Aviation Agency of Montenegro and a member of the European Civil Aviation Conference Coordinating Committee

Three years after Montenegro re-gained its independence in 2006, the Act on Air Transport was adopted, providing for the establishment of the Montenegro Civil Aviation Agency. “That was the key milestone – Montenegro had its own aviation authority for the first time in its history,” said Dragan Djurovic, Director of the Civil Aviation Agency of Montenegro and a member of the European Civil Aviation Conference (ECAC) Coordinating Committee. Speaking to Romana Moares, Mr Djurovic highlighted the Agency’s ongoing development, its key tasks and its role in promoting Europe’s safe and secure air space.



Montenegro, a young country with a population of just 620,000, is impressively keeping pace with European developments in the field of aviation safety and security. Its Civil Aviation Agency is a fully-fledged member of Europe's aviation community, cooperating with major international aviation organisations such as ICAO, ECAC, EUROCONTROL and EASA towards a common goal: a safe aviation industry.

"The main objective of the Civil Aviation Agency, as a national supervisory authority, is to maintain and improve the level of aviation safety and security in Montenegro," affirmed Dragan Djurovic, Director of the Civil Aviation Agency of Montenegro. "This investment in safety is actually an investment in the future. With this in mind, we will continue strengthening our professional capacities and make our control and certification function even more efficient."

He added: "We will also continue harmonising our legal system in the area of aviation with the rules of the ICAO and regulations of the EC and the EASA. Furthermore, regional and international cooperation remains our priority."

At the beginning of 2019, the Agency reached a significant milestone as it was subject to an ICAO Coordinated Validation Mission (ICVM), where its compliance with the ICAO standards and recommended practices was audited.

"The preliminary results were excellent. When compared to 2010, we achieved a fantastic 35% improvement, which is huge progress for any country, and particularly for a small one like Montenegro," noted Mr Djurovic. "After the completion of the mission, I can state that our Agency has become a serious and respectable aviation authority and that our country, regarding aviation safety efficiency and compliance, is at the upper part of the table of state efficiency at European and global level."



Aviation developments

Mr Djurovic has held his position at the Civil Aviation Agency since 2009; before that, an esteemed political career culminated as deputy Prime Minister of Montenegro from 2001 to 2007. The Agency, Mr Djurovic noted, is addressing similar issues as its European peers, including those resulting from the latest sector developments, such as drones.

“Considering all the unquestionable advantages of drones, we have to do everything to avoid compromising the security of state infrastructure, government and military locations, the jeopardising of airport safety, the general security of citizens and property, as well as maintaining respect for citizens’ privacy,” he pointed out, adding that a pro-active response was needed.

In July last year, the Civil Aviation Agency launched the Safe Drone Operations campaign, aiming at introducing to the public regulatory requirements in respect of drone operations.

“During the campaign, we enabled media coverage for a period of 100 days on all the main web portals in Montenegro, as well as in all the country’s main daily newspapers. The Civil Aviation Agency has also signed a Cooperation Agreement with the police department,

ensuring that police officers are entitled to stop unmanned aircraft system operators on sight and to verify information on the registration status of any drones.”

A significant growth in global aviation activity is anticipated in the forthcoming years and decades. Therefore, Mr Djurovic believes it is important for Montenegro to find a successful balance between the economy, environmental issues, safety and security, as well as reliability, punctuality and other performance factors.

“Montenegro’s aviation is growing as well – for the first time, both our airports, Podgorica and Tivat, recently handled over one million passengers in a year, and further growth is expected. This trend, supported by the flag carrier Montenegro Airlines and numerous foreign airlines operating to and from Montenegro, will certainly have a positive influence on the growth of tourism and on the economy as a whole.”

Mr Djurovic affirmed that this development is being adequately supported by increasing competence.

“Investment in human resources is our main investment,” he said. “Our staff attend regular training sessions, and we also provide student scholarships. We have great cooperation with the CAA of France and many of our staff members have attended training at the École Nationale de l’Aviation Civile in Toulouse. We arranged two secondments in EUROCONTROL for this year, and two more for next year.”

Striding forward

Montenegro is fully on-board regarding carbon footprint reduction and other environmental considerations.

“We are implementing a global MBM scheme in the form of the Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSA),” revealed Mr Djurovic.



“We share the opinion that environmental issues may potentially hinder further development of international aviation, and we fully support ICAO’s efforts invested in addressing these issues, including the key strategic challenge, caused by climate change, of achieving sustainable international air transport development.”

He mentioned yet another issue that the Agency has successfully tackled, related to Tivat airport, located on the coastline and considered the tourists’ gateway to Montenegro.

Due to the hilly terrain surrounding the valley in which the airport is located, Tivat is known for its challenging approach and landing procedures. Due to the vicinity of high obstacles, it is not possible to design standard instrument procedures; instead, a procedure based on ground nav aids is used that significantly deviates from typical ICAO standards.

In 2009, in cooperation with EUROCONTROL, the Agency prepared a case study showing the only possible solution was the application of performance-based-navigation (PBN). Through the introduction of the European Geostationary Navigation Overlay Service (EGNOS) system – a satellite based augmentation system developed by the European Space Agency and EUROCONTROL on

behalf of the European Commission – the technical conditions for the implementation of PBN procedures based on a satellite based augmentation system were achieved.

“The Civil Aviation Agency, through transposition of the EU regulations into the legal system of Montenegro and by coordination with the European Union Aviation Safety Agency, has contributed to the conclusion of the EGNOS Working Arrangement and made it possible to use the EGNOS SoL service for flight procedures at airports in Montenegro,” said Mr Djurovic. “That will allow for further implementation of flight procedures based on a satellite system with correction of the GNSS (global navigation satellite system) signal.”

The hard work and focused effort on enhancing aviation safety have been well recognised as Montenegro has been included in the One Stop Security regime of the European Union.

“The European Commission acknowledged that the civil aviation security standards of Montenegro are equivalent to the standards of the EU Member States. Apart from Montenegro, only the USA, Canada and Singapore have that status. This achievement makes us very proud,” concluded Mr Djurovic.

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