

Workshop: Why is it important to get more common rules for AFIS around the world and which areas have to be top priority?

At the third annual AFIS Seminar held at Entry Point North, Mr. Emanuil Radev representing EASA (European Aviation Safety Agency) gave a presentation on the European rulemaking process.

Following this presentation, the participants held a brief workshop, discussing few essential questions in the possible process of making common international rules for AFIS. This paper highlights the essence of the discussions at the workshop.

Question # 1: Is common regulation for AFIS needed?

Comments:

- There are common rules for so many things within aviation – why not for AFIS?
- There is no doubt that common rules – if followed – will raise the overall aviation safety
- It is not possible to make common rules for AFIS as long as AFIS itself is so many very different things around the world. Clear definition is needed.
- There is a fear that:
 - o Setting common rules too strict will lead many small aerodromes that have AFIS today to reduce and to be only a radio because of raising costs.
 - o Setting common rules too weak will lead to a decrease in service and safety level at aerodromes that have “high level” AFIS today, because no-one will pay for a level not required by law.

Conclusion:

The 3 years’ experiences of international AFIS seminars have very clearly showed that the difference on all issues with AFIS – from Training over Phraseology to actual Performing – is extreme.

This fact scares a lot when talking about the common rules – where to start and on what basis. Everyone is afraid that the level that their individual country has set for AFIS will undergo remarkable changes – up or down – and the cost will change as well. Regardless of up or down, everybody is afraid that it will be a “loose/loose situation” for them.

On the other hand everybody also agreed that the overall safety level within aviation will rise if a set of common AFIS rules where to be implemented and – not least – followed.

At the end all believed that common rules will come one day – still no-one would say when or how.

Question # 2: How can the rule- and decision makers be influenced?

Comments:

- As stated in the presentation – they need all the input they can get.
- Find out what it takes to be part of the process.
- Build an International AFIS organization to make sure to be heard.

Conclusion:

UK and Germany has proved that by getting together in larger groups/associations it is possible to get influence and to be heard in the society. If someone with a lot of “drive” and “time available” would start an International AFIS organization, this would for sure be the right way of getting influence.

Question # 3: Which issues will have high priority if starting out common rule making?

Comments:

- The definition of AFIS
- Standard Phraseology
- Define what to regulate and what not
- Produce a minimum equipment list for a regulated AFIS TWR

Conclusion:

The first and really effective step would be to make a harmonized Standard Phraseology for AFIS operations. In this way pilots would always get to hear the same types of information, whenever they go to an AFIS site.

It was also a great wish, to get a unified definition of AFIS.

Notes taken from AFIS Seminar 2012 September 5-6.