Boeing Air Traffic Management, Air Traffic Alliance Agree to Collaborate on Long-Term System Improvements

Partnership's Goals are Global Interoperability for Operational Efficiency, Increased Safety and Security

Boeing's Air Traffic Management business unit and the Air Traffic Alliance, a grouping of EADS, Airbus and Thales, announced today at the Paris Air Show that they will cooperate on issues affecting the interoperability of future air transport systems around the world so they can safely and efficiently handle projected long-term growth in aviation traffic.

Executives for Boeing and the Alliance said they have signed an agreement to work jointly towards accelerating existing air traffic modernization efforts, foster new initiatives, and jointly address issues affecting future global operational efficiency and safety. They said their key objective is to accelerate the definition and adoption by international organizations and governments of new global standards and procedures that enable seamless, safe and efficient global operations.

"We have decided to join together in this important work because we are equally committed to increasing the safety, security, capacity and efficiency of the current air traffic management systems," said John Hayhurst, president of Boeing Air Traffic Management. "Achieving those goals is vitally important to the future of our industry as well as to global economic growth and prosperity," Hayhurst said.

"With an estimated 100,000 flights a day and air traffic growing an average five percent a year, new and interoperable ATM systems are vital to ensuring continued safety and greater capacity in the decades to come," said Lionnel Wonneberger, president of the Air Traffic Alliance. "Globally interoperable systems are desired by all airspace users, who naturally want to be able to efficiently fly their aircraft to, from, and within different regions of the world. We believe that the partnership between Boeing ATM and the Air Traffic Alliance, which already is closely cooperating with European industry, is an important step toward addressing interoperability issues on both sides of the Atlantic," Wonneberger said.

New interoperable ATM systems and greater harmonisation in the implementation of airborne as well as space- and ground-based ATM elements will help reduce travel delays and the average time required to complete a trip. It will lower operational costs for carriers and other system users through more direct routings, and will minimize the environmental impact of aviation.

The companies plan to meet regularly to discuss ways to accelerate and shape global air system changes and to explore opportunities to cooperate, possibly in partnership with other companies and public organizations, on projects that support their mutual goals. Projects envisioned may include joint demonstrations of future air traffic operational concepts utilizing a mix of Boeing and Airbus aircraft.

The companies said they would pursue near-term business opportunities separately, although they left open the possibility of collaborating on specific business opportunities as they arise.

The Air Traffic Alliance is a cooperative effort of EADS, Airbus and Thales, combining leading industry forces to accelerate the evolution of ATM Systems through the integration of air, ground and space expertise. The Alliance is working to bring mutual benefits to passengers, airspace users, air traffic service providers and airports, while improving safety and security in a more efficient air transport system.

Boeing established its ATM business unit in November 2000 with the goal of making flying even safer and more secure, significantly reducing delays, congestion and environmental impact, keeping aviation affordable and accessible for commercial, military, business and general aviation users, and enabling seamless global aviation operations.

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