



EATC – The Heart and Soul of Air Mobility

In 2020, EATC has celebrated its 10th anniversary and is now preparing for the next decade. EATC is still a young organisation but it is the unique operational reality for effective pooling and sharing of air mobility assets.



Air Mobility
Together we go beyond

Who Are We ...

... in a few words: EATC is a single multinational command of seven member nations, 200+ experts, 20 types of aircraft and more than 170 aircraft located on 15 national airbases. We plan, task, command and control on a 24/7/365 basis worldwide missions from our headquarters hosted at Eindhoven air base in the Netherlands.

EATC's overall mission is to enhance the combined operational capabilities of the member nations, through effectiveness, efficiency and an increased level of interoperability. EATC is the centrepiece for Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, The Netherlands and Spain, to operate their military air mobility assets under one single command with one common set of rules and regulations. In this framework, the nations can pool and share air mobility capabilities, exchange experiences and train together in multinational environments.

The key to EATC's success is the trust and confidence gained from the member nations. The relationship between the partners is founded on an innovative business model where nations transfer authority to EATC over designated assets (Transfer of Authority; TOA). On the other hand, they can revoke this transfer of authority at any moment and safeguard national caveats via the "red card holders" (being the Senior National Representatives at EATC). Services between nations are exchanged via the ATARES system, involving no money exchange.

EATC is not an independent body governing the assigned assets, but is integrated in the national command structures. Consequently, the people working at EATC in fact operate for the nations. They are the link between the national air force/joint operational commands and the executing level.

A Look at the Organisational Structure

EATC's organisational structure includes the command group and three divisions: the operational division; the functional division; and the policy and support division. All entities are closely interacting and working hand in hand to increase effectiveness and efficiency, and to foster interoperability.

The Commander and the Chief of Staff rotate on a three-year basis between France and Germany. As of 24 September 2020, the Commander is **German Major General (OF-7) Andreas Schick**. The Chief of Staff

Governance: the MATraC

The Multinational Air Transport Committee or MATraC is the highest decision level and composed of the air chiefs of the member nations. The chairperson is chosen among the air chiefs for a two years term. MATraC issues directives to the EATC Commander, takes common decisions on policy issues and approves the budget as well as the peace time establishment.

EATC Headquarters located at Eindhoven Air Base.
(Photo: EATC)





History

- EATC's origins retrace to decisive statements from 1999. The NATO Summit in Washington D.C. identified shortfalls regarding strategic means of transportation. The EU Helsinki Summit declared strategic transport a priority capability gap to be included into the "European Capability Action Plan" and welcomed the decisions announced by some nations to establish a European Air Transport Command. France and Germany launched the initiative to "start preparing the establishment of a European Air Transport Command."
- They mandated the European Air Group (EAG) to study the European cooperation in the military air transport domain and only one year later, in June 2001, the "European Airlift Coordination Cell" was established. This cell was exclusively in charge of coordinating airlift missions for the seven EAG member nations. In 2004, the nations decided to go a step further and created the European Airlift Centre (EAC) with a broader planning authority and capability. The EAC was also mandated to harmonise procedures and regulations. However, the EAC and the still existing national structures were competing and the results did not tally with the expectations.
- In 2006, the nations decided to take another step forward. On the one hand they merged the EAC with the "Sealift Coordination Centre" to launch the "Movement Coordination Centre Europe". On the other hand, France and Germany decided to replace national structures and create a multinational air transport command. Belgium and The Netherlands joined the initiative within months.
- The four nations laid out their ideas in a common concept and tasked an implementation team based at Beauvechain Air Base in Belgium, to translate the concept into reality. They also decided to establish the future EATC on the military airbase in Eindhoven, the Netherlands.
- The efforts of the implementation team drew to a close on 30 June 2010, when the four Ministers of Defence signed the "Technical Arrangement" officially establishing EATC. Two months later, on 1 September 2010, EATC was formally inaugurated. In only one month, it ramped up to the full strength of 155 personnel under the command of the German Commander, Major General Both. Luxembourg and Spain were granted observer status during the whole process and they formalised their accession respectively in 2012 and 2014, respectively. Italy joined EATC at the end of 2014.

is French **Brigadier General (OF-6) Stéphane Gourg**. The Deputy Commander rotates on a three-year basis between Italy, Belgium, Spain and The Netherlands. On 28 September 2020, Belgian **Brigadier General (OF-6) Paul Desair** took over the position as Deputy Commander.

The member nations are represented within the headquarters by SNRs. These positions are double-hatted: on the one hand SNRs act as national superior for their personnel assigned to EATC and interface between EATC and their respective nation. On the other hand, they hold the rotational positions of the division heads and the deputy division heads, as well as head Public Affairs Office.

The Operational Division manages all processes related to the execution of EATC air mobility missions. The division runs a daily average of 60 missions throughout the world thanks to its five integrated branches. The tasking branch plans and prepares the air transport and AAR missions, whereas the aeromedical evacuation branch manages the strategic medical missions. All choose the asset which fits the requirements of the mission at hand best, thus striving to fulfil the national request as efficiently as possible. In parallel, the intelligence branch monitors, analyses and disseminates information with regard to areas of interest or strategic relevant domains. The branch also delivers threat assessment to the mission control, thus playing a crucial role in a successful mission execution.

At the end of the process, they hand over the approved mission to the mission control branch. This centre works on 24/7 duty. It monitors all flight activities under the responsibility of EATC, pro-actively manages unplanned circumstances impacting the schedule, as well as provides quality service and cost-effective plans in the interest of the member nations' requirements.

The division is also supported by the MEAT branch. MEAT is a unique C2 software at the heart of the EATC's air mobility process. It is regularly re-tailored to the national needs. An evolutionary step will be introduced with "MEAT New Generation" leading EATC into the future.

The Functional Division acts as the key enabler to promote harmonisation, standardisation and interoperability. The division fosters interoperability through harmonisation of procedures and joint multinational training. It is divided into three branches: employment, technical & logistics and training & exercises. The branches are strongly interrelated and work in close interdependent coordination, with in particular the operational division, as well as national partners.

The Employment and Technical & Logistics branch translates the operational results into concepts, procedures, common standards and innovative opportunities regarding the utilisation of assets, logistics, airlift,



EATC's state-of-art assets. (Graphic. EATC/MMU/respective air forces)

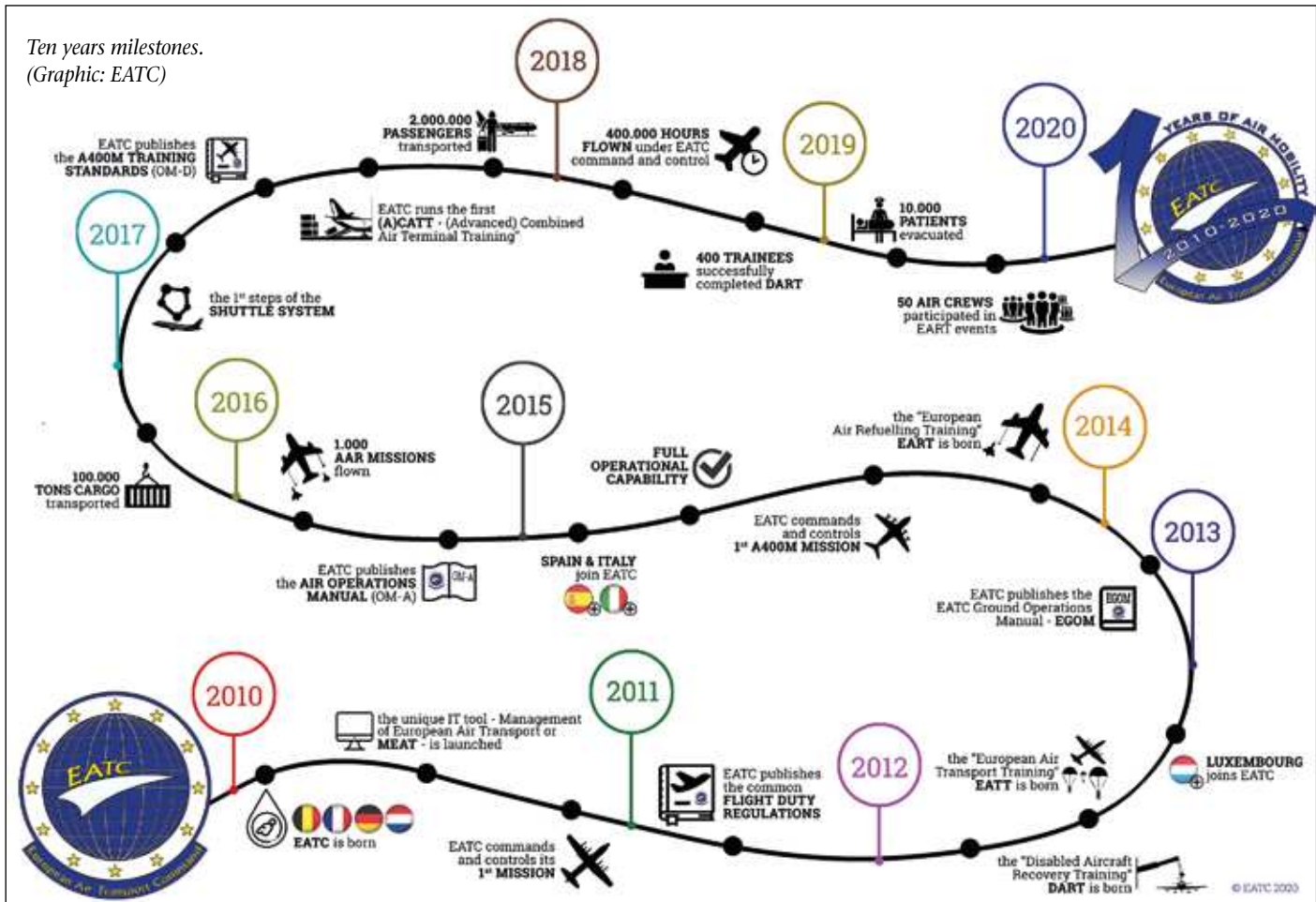


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EATC's organisational structure
(Graphic: EATC)



Ten years milestones.
(Graphic: EATC)





Statistics		
	2019	2020
• Total flying hours:	47,166	47,203
• Flying hours per domain:	45,041 (air transport) 2,125 (AAR)	45,247 1,956
• Missions flown:	7,434	7,633
• Passengers transported:	188,085	154,900
• Paratroopers dropped:	93,873	78,691
• AAR missions:	469	516
• Tonnes of cargo transported:	19,942	22,215

airdrops, AAR, ground maintenance and much more. The output is laid down in documents such as the EATC Operations Manual, the EATC Ground Operations Manual (EGOM), the cross-para booklet, the yearly fleet review or concepts for A400M cross-exchange of technicians.

The Training & Exercises branch translates these achievements into multinational training events, such as EART, DART or CATO courses, CATT and ACATT. The branch also supports ETAP.

The Policy and Support Division liaises with external actors and supports the activities of the headquarters. The division is structured in five branches: Policy & Legal, Communication and Information Systems (CIS), Analysis & Reporting, Quality Management and General Support. The Policy and Legal affairs branch plays a leading role coordinating with the member nations and third parties. This is of utmost importance, as EATC draws on strong cooperation with other European stakeholders in the air mobility domain. The branch also develops long and medium-term strategies, common policy and legal frameworks. EATC CIS experts support the set-up the EATC IT and prepare it to the requirements of this new decade.

The Analysis and Reporting branch offers mission analysis and statistics to the member nations to facilitate the identification and monitoring of

critical indicators. It is also responsible for the ATARES accountability of exchanged flying hours and services between the EATC member nations.

The Quality Management branch oversees and coordinates all activities and processes in EATC, whereas the administrative and financial support is managed through the General Support branch. The latter is also the liaison to the host nation and Eindhoven airbase.

What Do We Do? AIR MOBILITY!

EATC delivers air transport solutions in the domain of air mobility: air transport, AAR and aeromedical evacuation. Moreover, EATC looks beyond the daily business and works on smarter solutions to pool and share, harmonises processes, standardises procedures and facilitates interoperability.

Air transport includes cargo and passenger transportation among others supporting troops in operations and trainings all over the globe, VIP flights, paratroopers or cargo drops and much more. EATC also aims to increase the performance level of the nation's air transport capabilities and provides concepts on how to proceed in the future. One example is the introduction of a shared inter-theatre shuttle system combined in the long term with a so-called hub-and-spoke system.

AAR is a major air power force multiplier: it enables the ability to extend the range, endurance, payload and flexibility of a receiver aircraft. Today, all EATC member nations own AAR assets, either on a national basis or through multinational units. During operations, AAR tankers are often a pooled asset: a tanker from one nation may be required to refuel an aircraft from another nation. Interoperability is, therefore, essential for success.

Aeromedical evacuation is a tremendous morale booster for deployed troops. EATC plans strategic aeromedical evacuations of injured or sick persons by air assets from anywhere in the world to the patient's home country, or to a safe place where appropriate medical care is available. Cross-national missions – where a patient is transported by another nation's asset – have proven to be an effective tool to cope with the current pandemic challenges.



*EATC's mission control experts on their 24/7 duty.
(Photo: EATC)*