



NATO cargo being loaded onto a Luxembourg-sponsored flight by an Italian Air Force C27J.
(Photo: Italian Air Force)



EATC Sponsor Nation Concept How to Sponsor a Mission Within EATC?

EATC's cooperative and coordinated efforts go far beyond planning and commanding missions for its seven member nations: EATC can also support non-EATC nations and multinational entities such as NATO or the EU. This support is based on a dedicated and well-thought-out strand, called EATC's "Sponsor Nation Concept". The concept aims at creating avenues to work closely together and to meet the defence challenges beyond a seven-nation pooling and sharing concept.

How Does This Sponsorship Work?

If third parties – be it a non-EATC nation or a multinational entity – are in need of AT, AAR or AE, they contact one of the EATC member nations to stage as a sponsor. They may also contact the MCCE to coordinate a sponsorship with an EATC nation. This is a prerequisite, as only EATC member nations can directly request air transport within EATC. First of all, the third party and the EATC sponsor establish a bi-lateral agreement.



Then, the operational process starts: the EATC sponsor introduces the request into EATC's dedicated IT tool called MEAT. This tool lies at the heart of EATC's operational process, connecting EATC's experts and national actors. Subsequently, EATC's tasking branch plans and prepares the required mission on behalf of the EATC requestor and for the benefit of the non-EATC nation or multinational entity. At the end of the operational process, the tasking branch hands over the approved mission to the mission control centre, that monitors the flight activity in the interest of

Germany's Sponsorship for Tunisia During the COVID-19 Pandemic

When Tunisia expressed an urgent need for the transportation of medical diagnostic equipment to a military hospital in Tunis, Germany volunteered without hesitation to sponsor the mission within EATC. The Sponsor Nation Concept took its course and the German National Movement Transport Coordination Centre (NMTCC) requested EATC to plan and conduct the mission on its behalf. EATC established the urgency and sensitivity of the mission, among others, as some cargo needed continuous cooling. The experts rapidly identified an already existing mission to Djibouti and decided to reroute this mission via Tunisia. On 17 June 2020, at 08.30 local time, a German A400M aircraft left Wunstorf with the requested cargo on board and landed a few hours later on Cathage Airport near Tunis. On the ground, the German Military Attaché in Tunisia closely coordinated the handling and management of the cargo with the local authorities and the military hospital.

A full success thanks to close cooperation between all actors!

the parties involved. This is a smooth process, where actors are working hand in hand, striving to fulfil national requests as efficiently as possible.

Different Levels of Sponsorship

One single EATC member nation can stage as a sponsor, but EATC also foresees the possibilities that more than one or even all EATC member nations co-sponsor missions. The level of sponsorship depends on different factors, such as the scope and extent of the request or national political decisions.

What About Refunding for the Services?

The "refunding" for the service is negotiated exclusively between the sponsor nation(s) and the third party, not involving EATC. The options include *pro bono* flights ("free of charge"), payment via the ATARES arrangement, "cash flow" refunding or any other bilateral agreement. The ATARES arrangement offers its members a cash-free invoicing system where the members invoice each other with a virtual currency (01 Equivalent Flying Hour C130). The accounts are managed by MCCE on behalf of the 28 ATARES members.

EATC Sponsor Nation Concept and the COVID-19 Pandemic

The Sponsor Nation Concept highly demonstrates how invaluable global cooperative effort is in times of an unpredictable crisis. As of the beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak, EATC stepped up its efforts to comprehensive support. The first missions were requested with urgency to evacuate EU citizens from Wuhan in the People's Republic of China back to their home countries in Europe. But EATC was not to rest on

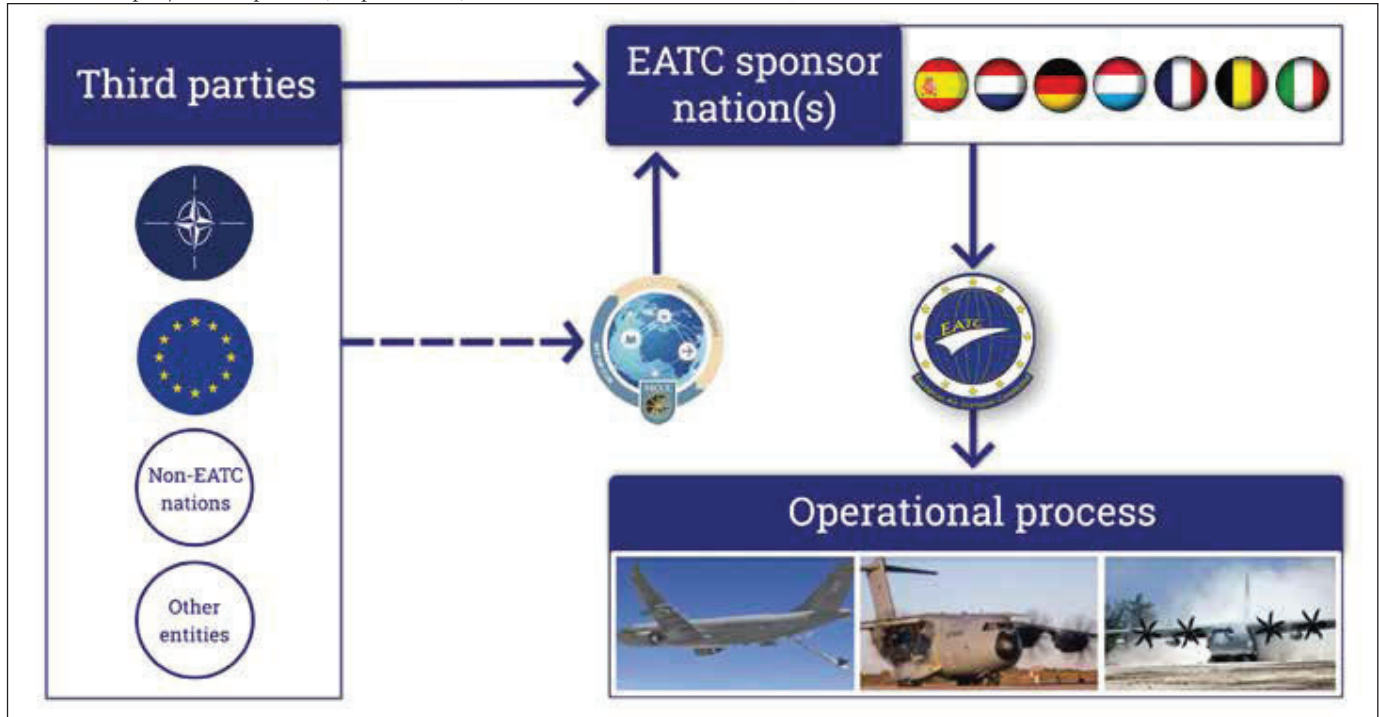
Luxembourg Sponsors a Mission for NSPA/NATO

In October 2020, when the pandemic took another upturn, NSPA was looking for a sponsor to transport U.S.-sponsored medical equipment to the Balkan region. Luxembourg agreed to sponsor the mission and addressed an air transport request to EATC. EATC looked for the best solution to swiftly transport the urgently needed equipment to its destination. They decided on an Italian C27J and Italy agreed to fly the mission. The service provided by Italy was refunded by Luxembourg via the ATARES arrangement.

Another example of cooperation success through a comprehensive multinational approach.



Illustration steps of how to sponsor. (Graphic: EATC)



its laurels. Immediate missions to transport medical supplies, to evacuate and relocate patients or bring back personnel from theatre of operations followed. In this respect, EATC member nations took up the role of sponsor-nation for other EU nations, or for partners such as NSPA (NATO Support and Procurement Agency)/NATO, Tunisia, South Korea and

Balkan states. To the Commander EATC, Major-General Andreas Schick, *“the pandemic outbreak emphasizes the value of the sponsor nation concept. EATC’s concept is an important step to strengthen, in real terms, defence cooperation and to create effective, cooperative opportunities in air transport.”*



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