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Hungarian-Romanian-Bulgarian Free Route: further decrease in the emission of airplanes

HungaroControl Zrt. and ROMATSA, the Romanian air navigation service provider helped to establish the free route conception in Bulgaria, which allows the free use of Bulgarian airspace from 30th March. Airplanes may freely use the airspace between the defined entry points and exit points without restrictions, even following the shortest route possible. Based on the experiences, this results in a decrease of fuel consumption and emissions of airplanes.

The total length of the routes taken by the airplanes flying across Hungary has been decreased by 1.5 million kilometres, the airlines spare kerosene in the amount of more than 3 million USD, while 16 million kilograms less CO₂ is emitted into the air – shows the result of the HUFRA (Hungarian Free Route) initiative implemented by HungaroControl Zrt. in February, 2015.

The main point of the solution developed and implemented first in Europe in February, 2015 by HungaroControl Zrt. is to allow the free use of Hungarian airspace between the defined entry points and exit points without restrictions, by removing the whole air route system. The European Organization for Quality has awarded an Innovation for Quality international award in the 'Responsible innovations for sustainability' category to HungaroControl Zrt. for their innovative and green implementation.

The introduction of HUFRA has been followed by the implementation of N-FRAB (Night Free Route Airspace Budapest/Bukarest) in the Hungarian and Romanian airspace in August, 2015. The Hungarian HungaroControl Zrt. and ROMATSA air navigation service provider jointly run the program that ensures the free use of the airspaces of both countries – now 24/7.

The same logic applies to the creation of SEEN FRA (South Eastern Europe Night Free Route Airspace), which expands 'free route' conception to the airspace of Bulgaria in co-operation with BULATSA, the Bulgarian air navigation service provider. The first step in this process was to enable the free use of airspace across the 3 countries at night on 30th March, while the second step will be the free use of airspace during the whole day. The implementation of our system of free airspace usage above 9000 meters shall be mandatory by 2022 in whole Europe.

Joining the 3 countries result in further decrease in fuel consumption and emissions of airplanes.

About HungaroControl

HungaroControl Hungarian Air Navigation Services Pte. Ltd. Co. is a recognized member of international air navigation service providers due to our world-class technology, developments and services, and in the same time, we are active initiators and partners in the integration of Single European Sky initiative in this region.

According to the statistics and forecasts of EUROCONTROL, almost 10 million flights travel over Europe every year, but this figure may be doubled in the next 20 years. HungaroControl has started several major projects aiming to improve our air navigation services, to guarantee the safe management of increasing air traffic, and to facilitate the success of the upcoming integration.

Due to the constant innovations, and the application of R+D results, HungaroControl achieves outstanding results in the fields of improving air travel safety, increasing capacity, decreasing the costs of airlines, and protecting the nature, even on European level. Thanks to our efforts, HungaroControl controls the transit traffic in the upper airspace of Kosovo since 03/04/2014 based on an assignment given by NATO. HungaroControl was the first service provider in Europe, which implemented Free Route Airspace in the whole Hungarian airspace without restrictions in February, 2015—long before the due date (01/01/2022) specified by the European Union.

In addition to improving our traditional air navigation control services, one other strategic objective of HungaroControl is to create a Central-European air navigation knowledge centre in co-operation with our regional partners.

All investments of HungaroControl aim that Central-European Functional Airspace Block (FAB CE), which is a joint Initiative of 7 states and ANSPs from Central Europe, is to provide competitive services using solutions conforming to the highest standards of technics and technology.

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