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Operational complexity & human factors

A Swiss perspective

What *Swiss Made* air traffic control looks like

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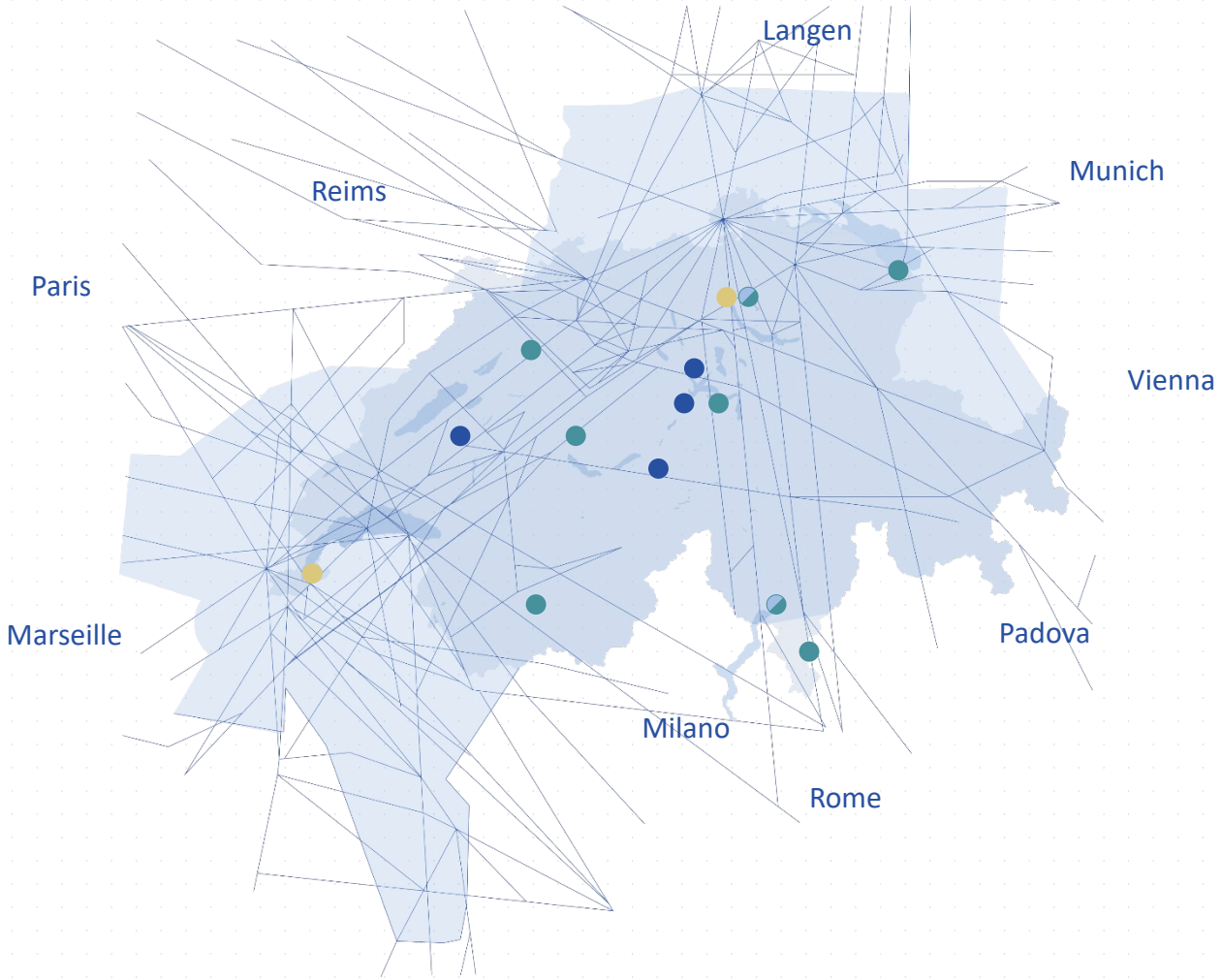

- A complex (but tiny) airspace at the heart of Europe
- 1.35M en-route flights, 480k departures and take-off, 85k military flights
- Multiple interfaces with neighboring ANSPs

The opportunity: handover between France and Switzerland

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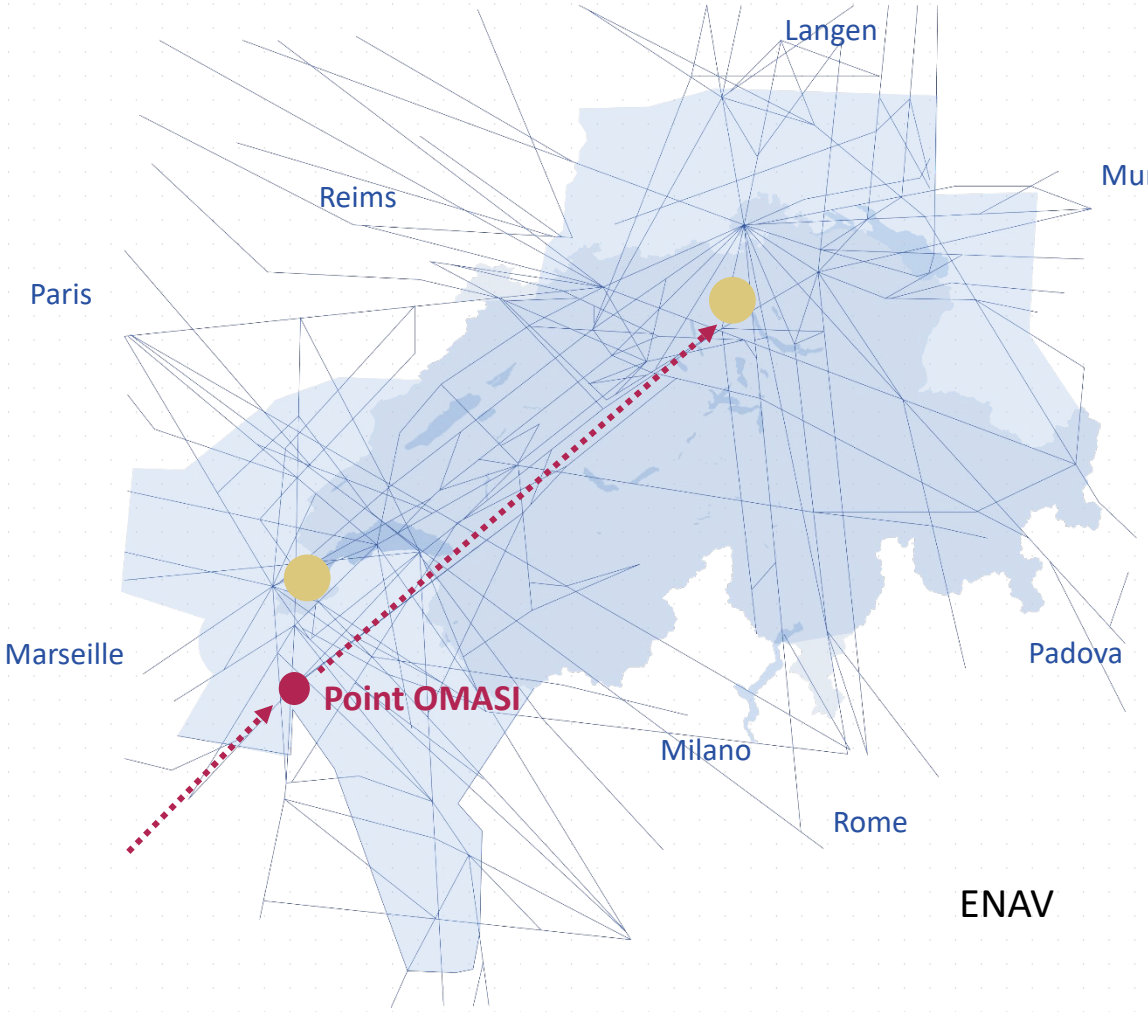
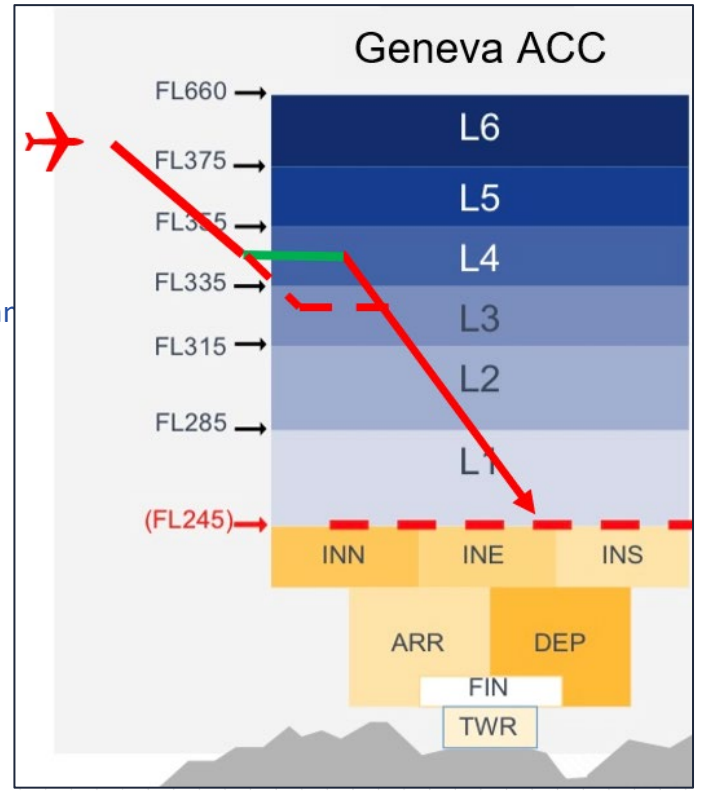
DFS

DSNA

ENAV





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Planes are descending 40-60nm before top of descent due to the handover between French and Swiss airspace.

What if we could do the handover at FL340, not 320?

Trials over two successive winters **(23-24,24-25)**, with a dynamic RAD: let’s allow for a late descent outside of peak traffic.

Possible increased complexity due to new conflicting traffic and coordination workload.

- Traffic moved from FL320 to FL340.
- Approximately 940 flights impacted.
- Large saving of fuel and CO2
  - 40kg fuel savings per flight
  - 35t fuel for the partner airline (111t CO_2/year)
  - 252t CO_2/year for all airlines using OMASI

Only in Winter due to lower traffic… but higher complexity due to multiple other constraints

- Ski charter flights to/from Geneva during the week-end
- Active military zone during the week
- Negative impact on direct departures from Zurich and Milan
- Handover between Geneva and Zurich ACC at FL220
- Overall increase of traffic even during Winter

At the end, complexity forces a choice between conflicting objectives.

Multiple complexities, overlapping

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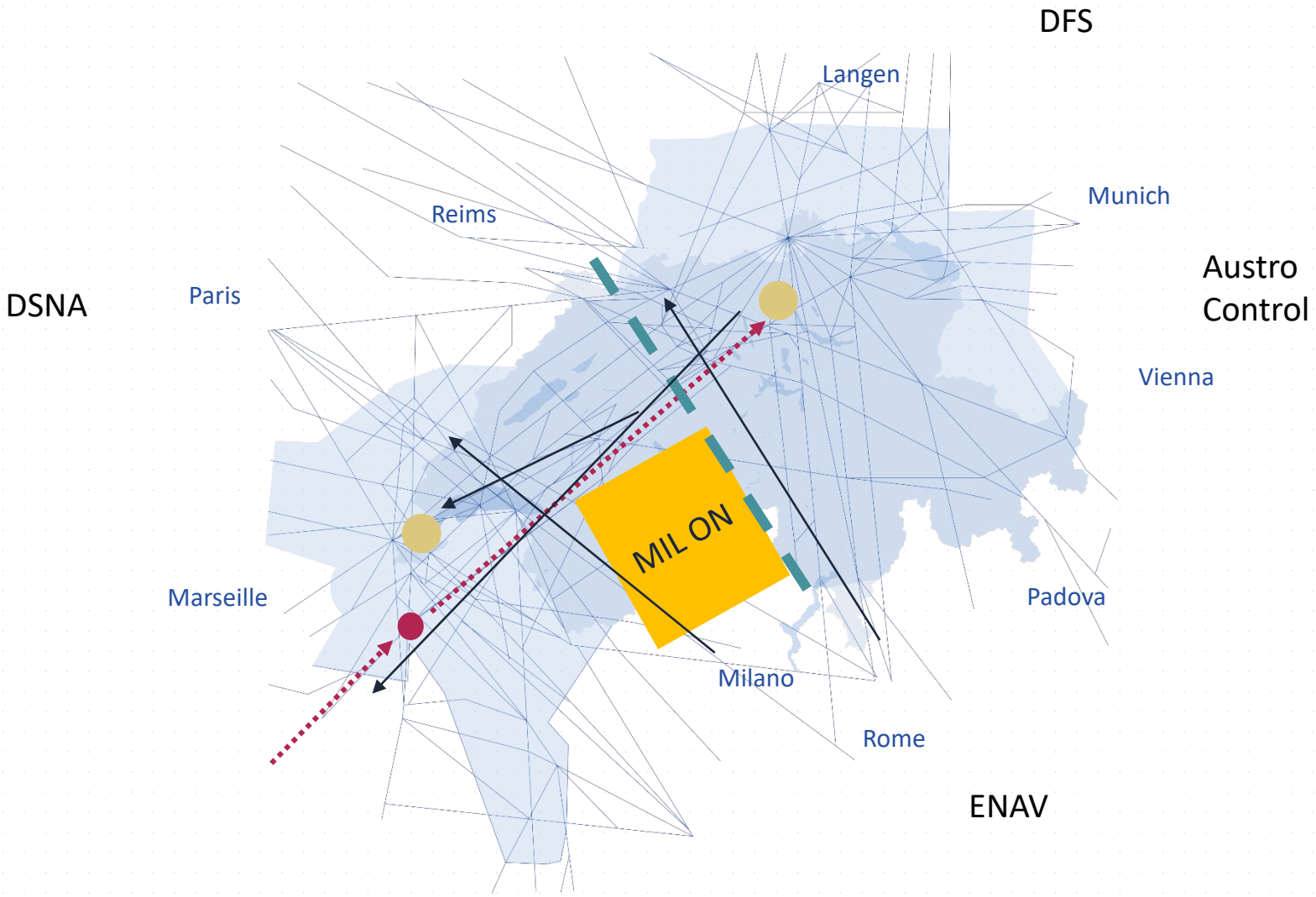

⛔ Decision was made to stop the trial. Handover at FL340 is possible with tactical coordination.

1. We need a systemic approach to finding inefficiencies and constraints, and testing solutions. We can still find substantial benefits in our network.

2. To know if we can do something about it, we need to test it in live operations. Complexity is often hidden. The human element matters.

3. Anything that we can improve is with other partners: our ATCOs and experts, neighboring ANSPs, airports, pilots and airlines.

4. We need to be honest about what works, what can be improved, and what is not possible. Sharing is caring.