In its Single European Sky II legislation, the European Commission created the Network Manager function so as to optimise the aviation network’s performance.

The Network Manager addresses performance issues strategically, operationally and technically. Its overarching mission is to contribute to the delivery of air traffic management’s (ATM) performance in the pan-European network in the areas of safety, capacity, environment/flight efficiency and cost-effectiveness. We are currently in Reference Period 1 (RP1) which goes from 2012 until 2014.

The Network Manager also manages the allocation of scarce resources, such as transponder codes and radio frequencies. It has particular responsibility for crisis management in European ATM.

So as to properly fulfil its role, the Network Manager brings together the different aviation air traffic management actors involved in the design, planning and management of the European ATM network.

The European Commission nominated EUROCONTROL as Network Manager in July 2011 until the end of the second Reference Period of the Performance Scheme – that is, until 31 December 2019. EUROCONTROL will seek re-designation for the period beyond 2019.

With a unique vantage point of the European ATM network and in-depth expertise, the Network Manager’s priority is to forge operational partnerships and to foster cooperative decision-making, both of which are needed to achieve the performance targets.

The European ATM network includes all the European Union’s 28 and EUROCONTROL’s 40 Member States, as well as others which have bilateral agreements with the Network Manager.

The Network Manager’s tasks

The Network Manager is responsible for network capacity planning. It must ensure that air traffic capacity is made available and used in the best possible way in the pan-European network’s daily operations.

It adds value to Europe’s air traffic management (ATM) system by:

- helping air navigation service providers, civil/military airspace users and airports enhance their Europe-wide network performance;
- jointly drawing up a strategy, plans and priorities;
- helping to make routes more efficient;
- balancing demand and capacity;
- managing scarce resources;
- consolidating information into centralised ATM databases;
- helping to underpin collaborative decision-making;
- forecasting, monitoring and analysing network performance;
- dealing with network challenges centrally – weather, major events, hotspots, crises.
Single European Sky Performance Targets 2012-2014

The Network Manager helps build the Single European Sky by contributing to good performance network-wide. It is subject to the European Performance Scheme in three Key Performance Areas.

The Network Manager has these targets:

- **capacity** – a reduction of the average en-route air traffic flow management delay to reach a maximum of 0.5 minute per flight in 2014;
- **environment** – a reduction of 0.75% of the average horizontal en-route flight efficiency indicator as compared with the situation in 2009;
- **cost-efficiency** – a reduction of the average EU-wide determined unit rate for en-route air navigation services from 59.29€ in 2011 down to 53.93€ in 2014 or an average reduction of 3.5% per year.

Although there are no **safety** performance targets for the current reporting period, safety remains the Network Manager’s top priority. The Network Manager uses a safety performance approach to fulfil its role: identifying network hotspots, analysing root causes and proposing action plans to minimise or avoid risk.

Crisis Management

The European Aviation Crisis Coordination Cell (EACCC) was established by EU Transport Ministers in 2010 to facilitate the management of crisis situations affecting aviation in the European Civil Aviation Conference (ECAC) region. Once convened for a crisis, the EACCC proposes, coordinates and implements appropriate measures.

A key function of the Cell is to follow up on all those actions needed to manage the crisis. It is also responsible for keeping all aviation stakeholders informed about developments, decisions and measures to be taken.

Governance

One of the Network Manager’s tasks is to develop, maintain and implement the Network Strategy Plan. The Network Strategy Plan is the strategic tool for managing the European ATM network.

The Network Strategy Plan is endorsed by the Network Management Board, following the Single Sky Committee’s positive opinion, prior to its adoption by the European Commission.

The Network Strategy Plan:

- provides a common understanding of the way the ATM network as a whole will achieve the performance targets, while preparing for the next reference period;
- identifies the roles and responsibilities of the various operational stakeholders in implementing the plan;
- serves as a reference for the activities to be carried out by the Network Manager and its operational stakeholders;
- is aligned with the ATM Master Plan.

“In achieving its network performance objectives, NM has built a strong foundation: solid cooperation with its stakeholders, appropriate governance structures and a network-centric approach aimed at continuous improvement.”

Joe Sultana,
Director Network Manager