THE ASM HANDBOOK: A RELIABLE GUIDE FOR SEAMLESS COLLABORATIVE AIRSPACE MANAGEMENT

Early in February EUROCONTROL emphasised the importance of the ASM Handbook. Twenty years ago, a new page in ATM history was written: the *Airspace Management Handbook*, otherwise known as the *ASM Handbook* was first published. This is the reference guide for the application of the concept of the Flexible Use of Airspace (FUA) by civil and military airspace users.

With the FUA concept, airspace is no longer designated as being either military or civil but is considered as one continuum and is used flexibly on a day-to-day basis. Any airspace segregation should be of a temporary nature. Although the guide gives clear references for all European Civil Aviation Conference (ECAC) States, it is flexible enough to accommodate specific local requirements.

The Airspace Management activity aims at enhancing the Flexible Use of Airspace Concept by developing the European airspace into one continuum that is reactive to changes in airspace users’ needs, with the ultimate objective of enlarging Europe’s Network capacity and optimising performance.

It is based on the seamless and collaborative management of airspace configurations and the continuous sharing of information by all partners who participate in a rolling CDM (collaborative decision-making) process.

A major feature of the *ASM Handbook* is the CDM process, one which involves all stakeholders, exploring their requirements and reaching consensus. The different working arrangements ensure that a fair process is followed: one in which every stakeholder has an opportunity to contribute.

The *ASM Handbook* went through various iterations, reflecting ATM’s dynamic nature, but its basic principles still remain valid today.

One major step took place in 2011 with the inclusion of improved procedures to enable a more dynamic ASM/ATFCM process. Airspace users now have a continuous update on the status of CDRs (conditional routes).

With these new, improved procedures, the *ASM Handbook* is the foundation for the better utilisation of airspace structure, and with the gradual implementation of FUA in States, overall network performance is being enhanced.
The ASM Handbook is an integral part of the Network Manager’s European Route Network Design Function. It falls under Part 3 of the European Route Network Improvement Plan (ERNIP). As the applicable European legislation demands, it provides practical guidelines for civil/military cooperation and coordination.

Picture caption
The ASM Handbook details those general Airspace Management (ASM) functions and Air Traffic Management (ATM) procedures that are needed to apply and fully exploit the concept of the Flexible Use of Airspace in Europe.