

# European Air Transport Fleet (EATF)



- The signature of the European Air Transport Fleet (EATF) Letter of Intent (LoI) on 17 November 2009 by fourteen Ministers of Defence (Belgium, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain and Sweden) and by the Minister of Defence of Romania a few months later expressed the clear political will to move forward and enhance efforts to increase the military airlift provision within Europe.
- The main objectives of EATF are: to improve airlift provision within the European Union; to develop concrete solutions for better use of existing and future airlift assets made available by the pMS for military needs to meet operational requirements; to develop means for optimisation of interested existing and future air transport organisations and structures; and, finally, to be able to transport any personnel/equipment by any asset with a minimum of constraints.
- EATF will consist of a framework federating different projects identified, different structures and different types of assets, in order to create synergies through far-reaching cooperation and coordination. It will be a flexible and inclusive partnership between national and multinational military air transport fleets and organisations in Europe aimed at the enhancement of standardised air transport services through cost-effective pooling, sharing, exchange and/or acquisition of various capabilities, including aircraft, training programmes, cross-servicing activities, cargo handling, maintenance activities, spare parts.
- Currently, the work of the Project Team EATF is focused on identified and prioritised air transport issues to improve the efficiency of the European air transport, avoiding duplication of effort and sharing outcomes and information with as many entities as possible. Three Ad Hoc Working Groups (AHWG) are active under the umbrella of PT EATF working on specific work strands: the AHWG Governance to address the governance and legal issues, the AHWG Operations and Training Tactical Air Transport looking at improving interoperability between partners and the AHWG Diplomatic Clearances (DIC) to develop a simplified/harmonised mechanism for diplomatic clearances inside and outside the EU. Common arrangements and harmonised procedures for DIC for EU registered military transport aircraft within the EU are under development by the AHWG Diplomatic Clearances. This work will be to the benefit of all pMS.
- In the meantime, contacts have been established and meetings organised with different organisations (European Commission, EUROCONTROL, EATC, MCCE, EAG etc.) to avoid any duplication of work and combine efforts as much as possible.
- The European Defence Agency's EATF initiative is an example of pooling and sharing, through aiming at increased military airlift provision for European countries. The programme focuses on pooling and sharing of services, training, maintenance and logistics among its contributors for both existing transport aircraft and future transport aircraft like the A400M.
- Work is on-going in the area of common diplomatic clearances (DIC) rules for military aircraft within the borders of willing pMS, with a view to streamlining an often time-consuming process for allowing cross-border national borders. Common arrangements, harmonised procedures and a common DIC format for EU registered military transport aircraft within the EU are under development through the AHWG Diplomatic Clearances.
- A first EATF flying event will take place in Spain in June 2012 to increase interoperability between EATF crews and enhance common procedures. This event should lead in the near future to the creation of a European advanced tactical airlift course, similar to the one existing in the US and in line with what is organised for the fighter aircraft at the Tactical Leadership Programme in Albacete/Spain.
- The Steering Board in Capabilities formation approved on 09 March 2011 the establishment of the EATF Category A Programme linked to a set of separately launched subordinate EATF Category B projects and other subordinate EATF work

strands by approving the Outline Description (OD) for this Programme. Since then, the AHWG Governance, consisting of EDA and experts of all interested participating Member States, finalised the Programme Arrangement for this Programme.

- On 23 May 2011 the Ministers of Defence of Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxemburg, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Romania, Spain and Sweden decided to launch the EATF Category A Programme by signing the EATF CAT A Programme Arrangement (PA) and establishing a Management Committee (MC) for supervising its management and implementation for its total duration. The EATF Category A Programme contributing Member States (cMS) are encouraged to actively engage in this Programme and initiate subordinate EATF Category B
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European Defence Agency

# Air Transport



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