

annual report 2006



metalliance

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Foreword

The year 2006 was one of steady progress for the MET Alliance. A significant event however was the incorporation of Deutscher Wetterdienst as a MET Alliance Member. The formal signing ceremony for this event took place in April. The addition of the German Meteorological Service to the MET Alliance will significantly strengthen the ability of the organisation to meet its objectives.

The Mission Statement of the MET Alliance states that its primary purpose is to provide better and more cost-effective service to its customers and to support its constituent organisations. These objectives continued to be realised in 2006 through the development of new initiatives and the ongoing implementation of Projects already agreed. These are described in the main body of the report.

In the administrative area, the MET Alliance Secretariat is now the focal point for all contact with the organisation and provides support for the organisation's activities. In addition, the website has developed as a useful source of information for external users and as a workplace for constituent members. In the operational area, work is continuing on a MET Alliance automated forecast production system and on coordinating developments in automated observations. Performance measurement is of highlight importance for aviation meteorological services with implementation of the Single European Sky and associated quality, safety and security management systems. In this context, the development and implementation of a common MET Alliance forecast verification system is under active consideration, as is the development of common key performance indicators. Cost-efficient initiatives in the delivery of training were also implemented in 2006.

The MET Alliance Steering Committee agreed to the appointment of a full-time research and development officer in 2006. This initiative will provide a new impulse and additional resources to accelerate development and implementation of the objectives of the MET Alliance.

Crucially, the MET Alliance provides a forum for discussion of matters of common interest and the development of common approaches to the challenges and opportunities facing the aviation meteorological community in Europe. The MET Alliance can give significant attention to issues such as meteorological service provision in functional airspace blocks and the implementation and can design solutions to these difficult issues which could form the basis for wider application. This emphasises the ethos of cooperation and sharing which is a fundamental principle of the MET Alliance.

Andre van Lammeren of KNMI and Chairman of the MET Alliance Board relinquished his positions with KNMI and with the MET Alliance in 2006 following his appointment to a new position in the Netherlands. Andre was one of the main driving forces behind the setting up and successful foundation of the MET Alliance.

The MET Alliance is still in its early stages of development, but can claim significant achievements in its short history. In its expanded form, it looks forward with confidence to 2007 for accelerated progress in the delivery of its objectives and in the provision of safe, efficient and cost-effective service to our customers and the travelling public.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Murphy', written in a cursive style.

Declan Murphy
Chairman Steering Committee MET Alliance

Support and Communication

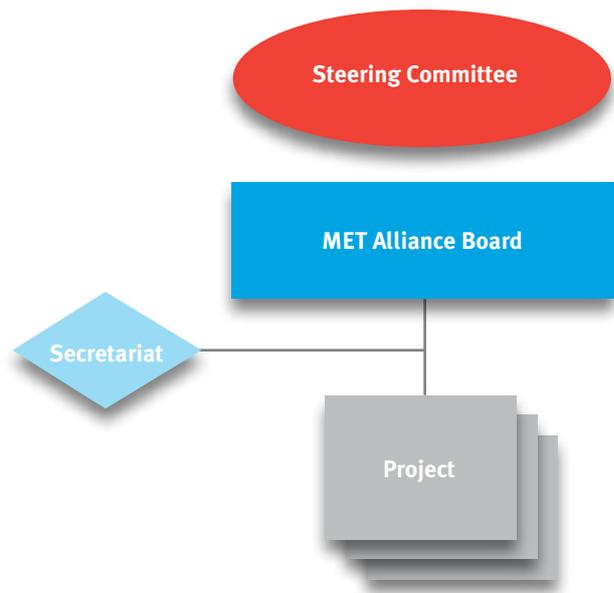
Establishment of the Secretariat

The Secretariat acts as the focal point and clearing house for external and internal communications. All communication with the MET Alliance is now dealt with by the Secretariat.

The Secretariat contact details are:

MET Alliance
Tervuursesteenweg 303
B-1820 Steenokkerzeel
Belgium

phone: +32 2 206 2898
fax: +32 2 206 2899
e-mail: dkn@belgocontrol.be



Website

The website is a useful source of information for external users and an efficient platform for internal communications.

The website address is:

www.met-alliance.com

New Developments in 2006

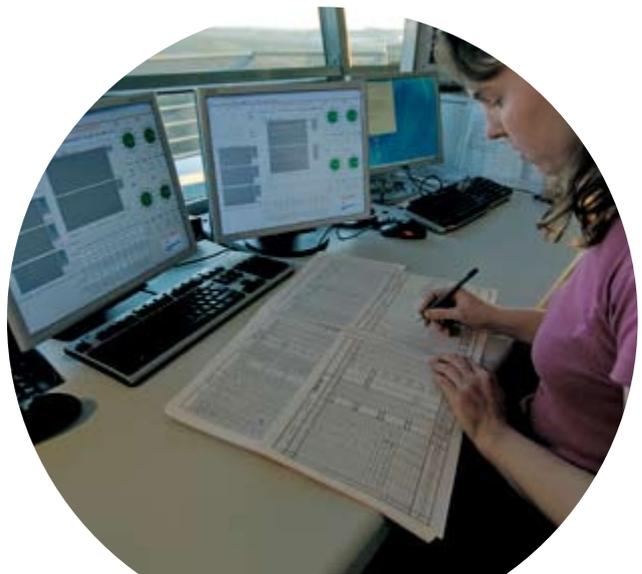


AUTOTAF

2006 saw a major initiative by the MET Alliance in automated forecasts. The Member organisations agreed to base their development of AUTOTAF on the system currently in place in KNMI. This became a Core Project of the MET Alliance. Focal points in each organisation have been assigned and KNMI are producing TAFs for the civil airports in the MET Alliance region. These AUTOTAFs will be assessed by each individual organisation and proposals to develop the system will emanate from this analysis. The system is currently configured to produce short TAFs only. The expansion of the system to long TAFs is one that is also under consideration. A crucial linked development to AUTOTAF is TAF verification. This is also a concept being developed as a centralised Project by the MET Alliance.

TAF Verification

Work began in 2006 on the development of a centralised forecast verification scheme for the MET Alliance organisations. A decision to base this project on the current DWD scheme was taken in principle and this will be developed into a formal project proposal in due course. The development and implementation of internationally accredited and applicable forecast verification systems has long been a great source of difficulty and complexity for aviation MET service providers. In many cases, each organisation carries out its own verification, leading to duplication of effort and dissatisfaction with the results by customers because such individualised schemes do not lend themselves to comparison or the determination of best practice in forecast production. This project will deal with these difficult issues.





Ongoing Activities in 2006

Airport Capacity Forecasting

The issue of weather forecasts to support capacity planning at airports and in the terminal area continues to be of high importance. In many cases, local solutions to this problem have been implemented based largely on the specifications of air traffic services and the capabilities of modern forecasting systems. It is noted that this issue has been re-activated at ICAO level. In the meantime, the MET Alliance Member organisations have placed their capacity forecasting systems on the website. This issue will be kept under continuous review by the MET Alliance but as of now there are no specific proposals – over-and-above those already mentioned - to progress the matter.

Common Key Performance Indicators (cKPI)

Work has continued on the development and implementation of common Key Performance Indicators governing the performance of the systems and outputs of the Member organisations. A survey of the current status of such KPIs has been completed and will form the basis for a detailed proposal in this regard. This development will provide the MET Alliance member organisations with an internationally accredited system of KPIs which can be used for measuring performance and for use in the quality management systems. It is worth noting that in the current state of development the cKPI set spans the range of activities of the Member organisations, from operational and training systems to management and technical support areas.

SIGMET Coordination

Belgocontrol and KNMI, on the one hand, and Austro Control, MeteoSwiss and DWD on the other have implemented SIGMET coordination systems in line with this objective. The respective Meteorological Watch Offices from each of these organisations now have operational coordination procedures to be implemented prior to the issue of a SIGMET. In both cases the systems are operating efficiently.

Sharing Operational Websites

This project has begun with the linking of operational websites of the MET Alliance member organisations. This provides ease of access for users from one aviation MET site to another, a feature of particular value for users in contiguous States of Member organisations. This feature will continue to be developed, in tandem with a continuing detailed examination of the concept of a single MET Alliance operational aviation MET website. This examination will entail a preliminary proof-of-concept and, crucially, a cost-benefit analysis.



Training Cooperation

To ensure the greatest possible level of efficiency in the delivery of training, MET Alliance Member organisations have opened their training events to all Members. This has been piloted for two significant events in 2006 and this process will be extended over the coming years. This development followed from a proposal by a standing group of experts in training from each organisation which will continue to develop proposals for unified and efficient delivery of training. Two other important developments in this area involved consideration of a licencing system for aviation meteorological personnel and discussions with Eumetcal (www.eumetcal.org) to enable cooperation between the two organisations and to avoid unnecessary duplication in either the development or delivery of training.

Automated Aviation Observations

The MET Alliance has a standing group of experts monitoring developments in automated observations. Currently each of the Member organisations is moving or has moved at different rates in this regard. In addition, whilst the basic concepts converge, the architecture and technical systems used tend to differ from one organisation to another. The main task of the MET Alliance in this area is to continue to act as a clearing house for ideas related to automated observations and to set high-level standards and guidance for these developments. An important component of these discussions is the human consequences of automation.

Single European Sky

The year 2006 was a landmark one for international aviation MET service providers in Europe. Apart from the possibility of a six month derogation, MET providers had to obtain a certificate of service provision under Commission Regulation (EC) No 2096/200 of 20 December 2005 laying down common requirements for the provision of air navigation services (the so-called Common Requirements Directive). All the MET Alliance organizations have or will make their relevant deadlines. In addition, the MET Alliance forms an essential discussion forum for SES issues, such as the content and format of business plans and reports and the development and implementation of safety and security management systems. Of course each of the MET Alliance organizations also participates in the work of AVIMET, the consultative group charged with examining and making proposals on the impact of SES on aviation MET service provision.

The Year ahead

The year ahead presents the MET Alliance with great challenges and opportunities. The organisation must continue to look to projects which will ensure maximum safety and efficiency in service provision to customers. It must develop and implement best practice standards that have international recognition and it must continue to ensure the efficient and effective implementation of the Single European Sky. Building on its successful foundation, the MET Alliance looks forward to 2007 with confidence that it can fulfil these challenging objectives.

MET Alliance Activities 2006 – Meetings/Workshops

<i>Date(s)</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Function</i>	<i>Location</i>
March 2006	Workshop	Training and Education	Steenokkerzeel
March 2006	Board	Meeting	Steenokkerzeel
April 2006	Steering Committee	Meeting	Vienna
August 2006	Board	Meeting	De Bilt
November 2006	Steering Committee	Meeting	Steenokkerzeel



Profiles of Member Organisations

Austro Control

The Austrian MET Service Provision for Civil Air Navigation is one of the core processes of the national Air Navigation Service Provider Austro Control. The MET Service Units are located at six international airports (Vienna, Linz, Salzburg, Innsbruck, Graz and Klagenfurt) where the Vienna office is Meteorological Watch Office. Furthermore Austro Control is partly responsible for the service provision for the Austrian Air Force. The Vienna office is also one of the three European OPMET Databanks providing the world with OPMET information.

MeteoSwiss

MeteoSwiss is the national weather service in Switzerland. As such, it fulfils its meteorological tasks for the use of the public, businesses, and public institutions. The MET service units are located at the international airports Zurich and Geneva. MeteoSwiss issues forecasts for these international airports and all the regional airports. Furthermore it provides en-route documentations, briefings and is also responsible for warnings at the aerodromes as well as for the FIR Switzerland.

Met Éireann

Servicing aviation needs under ICAO regulations for Ireland is one of the most important tasks of Met Éireann. It comprises the Central Aviation Office at Shannon Airport together with the meteorological offices at Dublin, Cork, Knock and Casement airports.

It issues forecasts (TAFs and Local Area Forecasts) for the various airports and smaller airfields in the country as well as local warnings, SIGMETs for the Shannon Flight Information Region (FIR), en-route documentation and briefings. Meteorological Services for the Defence Forces and meteorological training are provided at Casement Aerodrome.



Belgocontrol

Belgocontrol is an autonomous public company in charge of the safety of air navigation in the civil airspace for which the Belgian State is responsible. It controls aircraft movements in and around Brussels Airport and the four regional public airports: Antwerp, Charleroi, Liège and Ostend. The company has its own in-house meteorological service. The Belgocontrol's Met Office produces weather forecasts and warnings, while ensuring the meteorological watch for the Flight Information Region of Belgium and Luxembourg. Furthermore, the Brussels office is also one of the three European aeronautical meteorological databases serving aeronautical users.

KNMI

KNMI is responsible for the service provision in Dutch Airspace and at all the international and regional airports of the Netherlands. The central forecasting unit of KNMI, located in De Bilt, is the central production facility for all the forecasts and warning. Supported by small units at the regional airports and the weather dependant deployment of forecasters at the Schiphol Airport site. Furthermore, the central office is performing the task of Meteorological Watch Office for the Dutch FIR and for the Dutch Continental Shelf (North Sea).

DWD

The German Meteorological Service Deutscher Wetterdienst (DWD) is a federal authority under the Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Affairs. As a statutory task laid down in the Law on Aviation and the Law on Deutscher Wetterdienst the Department Aviation Meteorology of DWD is responsible for the meteorological support of the Civil Aviation in Germany. To fulfil this task DWD operates seven regional advisory centres for IFR and VFR traffic. Five of them act as meteorological watch offices for aviation weather watch and warning. Additionally, the Department Aviation Meteorology provides special meteorological services for summer and winter field operations at the German HUB airports and for ATCs.



Photos (from left to right):
Shannon Aerials, Vienna Tower, Brussels Airport, Zurich Airport, Schiphol Airport



MET Alliance, Secretariat
Tervuursesteenweg 303
B-1820 Steenokkerzeel
Belgium

Phone: +32 2 206 2898
Fax: +32 2 206 2899
e-mail: dkn@belgocontrol.be
www.met-alliance.com

Partners:



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Confederation

Federal Department of Home Affairs FDHA
Federal Office of Meteorology and Climatology
MeteoSwiss

