



INTERNATIONAL ADVISORY GROUP AIR NAVIGATION SERVICES

established in 1967 as a professional non-profit organization
vormals Studiengemeinschaft für Flugsicherung

THE 50 YEARS OF ANSA

On February 27, 2017 the ANSA group celebrates its 50th anniversary. Smoke signals are nowadays no longer in use in air navigation. Electro-mechanical systems are also outmoded, but digital data processing, however, has not ceased to cause problems.

Back then a small group of german air traffic controllers on the initiative of the present chairman in the small city of Birkenfeld in Rhineland-Palatinate concluded to set-up a legal instrument with european objectives for the representation of technical demands on air navigation and air traffic control and the imminently required increase of flight safety.

Designated as „Studiengemeinschaft für Flugsicherung“ and, for the sake of internationalism, also called „Evaluation Group Air Navigation Services - Europe“, ANSE for short, the group became active immediately in side-line activity.

The european flag symbol was chosen as its emblem, since not only national, but also international problems had to be tackled by this first unique professional association of the aviation industry sector in Germany.



At this time already the European Communities (EG) existed, but not so the European Union (EU). And air navigation, respectively air traffic control did not function borderless, but mostly in a border crossing manner, to the west as well as to the east in crossing the Iron Curtain.

The original aim and objectives of the group, therefore, read:

„The association aims at the representation of the interests of those persons, who have been charged with the fulfilment of the tasks of the EUROCONTROL agency in the upper airspace of the Federal Republic of Germany and, within this context, to cater for the advanced professional instruction of the air traffic services personnel ;and to support the exchange of experience between air traffic controllers and other professionals, charged with the management of air traffic, and airspace users for the enhancement of flight safety in the upper airspace in the field of civil and military air navigation.



Membership of the seven founders increased to 45 within the first year, including some colleagues of the german and american air forces as well as of the belgian air navigation services provider RVA; in toto it increased to over a hundred over the following years. Some of its active members worked in ATC operations for thirty years and maintained contact all the time.

Communication and correspondence took place without internet and email and not always without governmental restriction. Fixed-net telephone and mailing by postal service were the only means as shown below.



ANSA usual correspondence

At the beginning all german members worked with the air traffic control centre for the upper airspace of Southgermany on Erbeskopf mountain in the Hunsrück range. Up there, practically nobody cared for a proper solution of the then existing problems of ATC in the upper airspace and its inadequacies in Germany, neither the national professional association GATCA or the trade unions, nor the air navigation services administration itself. It had been delegated to the Allied Forces and therefore did not seem to be a german problem.



The ATC Centre Rhein UAC on Erbeskopf Mountain

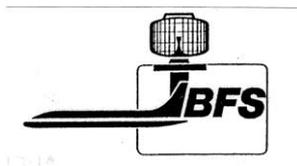
The groups technical demands and operational requirements solely referred to the shortcomings of the german air navigation services system and its insufficient functioning; and not so, however, to trade union matters.

ANSE consisted of different working teams, among them „Exchange of Experience“. This section maintained a visit-, exchange- and study program on mutual basis, which unfurled great international activity. Its professional visits even led to Africa, Japan and North & South America, and enlarged the group’s professional knowledge significantly.



It were the electro-mechanical ATC shortcomings which triggered ANSA

In the first years the contacts of the group related mainly to the appropriate units directly in charge of air navigation matters, such as the former Federal Administration for Air Navigation Services - BFS, the German, US and Canadian Air Forces, the european organisation EUROCONTROL and the International Civil Aviation Organization - ICAO with its regional office in Paris. Especially the US Airforce in Europe and the US Federal Aviation Administration - FAA supported ANSA with free of charge documentation and test flights for verification of its proposals.



Formerly, usable technical information material was not available neither from the german side nor from the one of ICAO or EUROCONTROL. Relief came from the meanwhile very successful contacts to the US FAA and USAF in Europe. For this purpose ANSE became subscriber for air navigation documents with the US government printing office and the ICAO publications unit.



In 1971, three years after the move of the ATC centre to Frankfurt/Main airport, ANSE was dissolved following a hefty dispute between the air navigation administration BFS as well as the controllers association VDF and ANSE. Immediately thereafter the group was re-established as an advisory group on air navigation matters under the same objectives, but now called Advisory Group Air Navigation Services, now ANSA for short; the name it still carries today.



Commission for Airspace Use and Air Traffic Control of the Government of Russian Federation «ROSAERONAVIGAZIA»

With this step a new, successful development took place in the course of time. 34 aviation professionals from over twenty countries joined the group; 13 languages were spoken, with English being the primary language used. Membership meanwhile was comprised of air traffic controllers, air navigation engineers, aviation lawyers, researchers, pilots, dispatchers and system developers. Regional representatives were appointed in Turkey, the USA, Mexico, the Philippines, China (Hong Kong), Kenya and Cyprus.

In 1985 the legal seat was moved to Switzerland with side-offices in Germany and Hungary. Here in Switzerland the group still maintains its status as a professional association with objectives of public benefit.



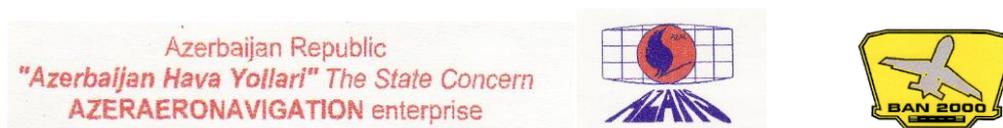
During all these years ANSA followed the gradual development of automated data processing in air navigation and its effects on ATC operations. The group submitted proposals for the solution of various problem areas in ATC to the German BFS, to EUROCONTROL, the EU and the air forces of the FRG and the USA, such as on the reduction of high altitude holding patterns and the subject of air traffic flow control with the result of the later establishment of a German air space management centre in Frankfurt/Main.

Presentations on such subjects were held in Basle, Frankfurt, Brussels, Rome, Bournemouth, Toronto, Athens, Taipei, Munich, Cairo, Geneva, Eskisehir, Düsseldorf, Cologne and London including recommended solutions, which often were ten years ahead of the technical development of the air navigation services systems. The demand on the implementation of area navigation - RNAV procedures and on a computer based aeronautical information and data processing system - CAIDS were only examples.

ANSA participated in various aviation exhibitions as exhibitor on air navigation systems development, such as for example at ILA Hannover, the aviation exposition in Dubai and the Inter Airport exhibitions at Frankfurt/Main airport, whose AirNavCom conferences were arranged and conducted by ANSA.



Over 100 contributions of our members on technical and operational themes were published in the German and international aviation press, the ICAO journal, the Airport Forum magazine, Jane's Airport Review, the German Handelsblatt, Flugrevue, Interavia, Südkurier newspaper, the IFATCA journal The Controller, Euromoney's ATM journal, Civil Aviation Saudi Arabia, Turkish Daily news, and a few others, such as in 1992 the interview with the newly appointed minister of ROSAERONAVIGATSIA, the first Russian air navigation ministry, called into existence by B. Jelzin. In this way ANSA perceived the role of a neutral and completely independent advisor on air navigation matters.



Larger ATC projects of German, British, Dutch or Danish companies were supported in a dozen European countries, the Mediterranean and beyond.

Caused by the collapse of the Eastern Bloc in 1990 the work environment of these countries changed considerably. This resulted in various activities in support of national air navigation services providers and their air traffic services personnel in Russia, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, the Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkmenistan.



ANSA has elaborated numerous ATS training documents for national and international application and trained pilots and air traffic control specialists in Germany, Turkey and the Czech Republic. The operations manuals for the Air Traffic Services of the Czech Republic and Albania were compiled by ANSA and their civil aviation codes evaluated. Documents, system descriptions and laws from various countries across the world served as a basis for these contributions and facilitated extensive system knowledge. It also put the group in a position to assist the EU in its air navigation ATLAS and ESTEEM projects.



Special tasks were performed by ANSA in the judgement of the causes of aircraft accidents like the one of 1980 at Tenerife North and of 2002 at Überlingen, Germany; and in successful mediation between the Cypriot and Turkish air navigation administrations during the crisis over Cyprus in 1973.

After the turn of the century ANSA's activity increased due to the newly implemented regulations of the EU on the Single European Sky - SES and assisted regional airports.



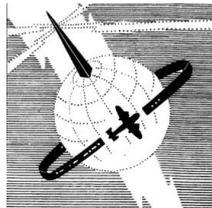
In retrospect, one can say that ANSA has left traces in air navigation over the past decades in following up the development and accompanying effects. But with the new century the number of members has significantly lowered due to age to about one third only. The main objective of the group, therefore, is now oriented on the historic development in air navigation of both German states and the documentation of their organisation, shortcomings and inadequacies.

ANSA's own voluminous archive has been cleared during recent years and the documents been distributed to governmental libraries, such as the universities of Dresden and Hannover with their SLUB and TIB libraries. During the last ten years also various documentations on the development of air navigation in Germany have been written and published for the first time, such as for the time periods of 1919 to 1945, 1945 to 1955 and 1957 to 1977. A fourth one on the development in the former German Democratic Republic is under preparation, covering 1945 to 1990.

Also, as a modern information platform on the air transportation service ATC a digital aviation library is being maintained. The response is encouraging and it will be kept available for the aviation

community in the future. These international platforms (www.luftfahrt-bibliothek.de and www.aviation-library.org) are being regularly enlarged by publications, documents, literature, photos and similar historic material, starting with the year 1900.

Within the scope of ANSA's objectives, the group also maintains membership in the US AACS Association of military air traffic controllers and in the international society of air safety investigators - ISASI.



ANSA never constituted an association in the usual sense of grouping interested individuals, but a tool for all its members who needed an official body in bringing up their recommendations and proposals. Since its foundation ANSA is proud of having kept a completely independent status, never receiving any financial support of whatever kind from anybody. Whatever the effort spent in time and money, it had been carried by its own resources. To the contrary, the group has also supported other international professional associations like IFATCA and IFATSEA to a considerable extent. Between 1980 and 1990 ANSA also maintained corporate membership with IFATCA.

In the daily business of air navigation and air traffic control ANSA, after meanwhile 50 years, is no longer involved. But the group will continue to be available to the aviation community with information and explanation on the basic functioning of the system and its inadequacies, because not all problems have been solved so far. The drones are coming !



My thanks go to all past and present members of the group, who either passively or actively have supported the objectives of ANSA over all those years. Now, let younger people join. It will definitely be a rewarding activity.

Frank W Fischer