THE ICELANDIC AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS' ASSOCIATION (ICEATCA) REPORT

NORDIC MEETING

OSLO, 24-25 September 2004

1. *ATS - ATFM Environment*

1.1. Air traffic statistics
More flights have passed through the Icelandic air traffic control area the first eight months of this year than same time last year; the traffic has however still not reached the same levels as before 9/11 2001. Refer to pages 5 and 6 for statistics.

1.2. Procedures and airspace structure
Nothing to report.

1.3. Technical aspects
The FDPS is in continuous development, ATCO's are deeply involved in FDPS work and controllers generally seem to be content with the system.

1.4. ATFM aspects
Nothing to report.

1.5 Staffing aspects
Overall, staffing aspects are good. Keflavik tower and approach have experienced some understaffing last years and beginning of this year due to the Kosovo project, three controllers are now working abroad, two in Kosovo and one in Kabul. This understaffing has entailed a lot overtime for controllers in Keflavik, on the average about 50-60 hours per month this last year. The staffing situation in Keflavik is expected to change in the near future. At the moment Reykjavik TWR and Reykjavík center are overstaffed. Average overtime in Reykjavik center 2003 was 17 hours per month, compared to the average of 29 hours per month for the year 2000.

2. *Social environment*

2.1. Employment
Our present agreement is valid until April 2005; preparations are ongoing for the coming negotiations. The situation for government employees is tense at the moment, teachers started a strike this Monday (Sept. 20), a strike some say will be a long one. Other big unions are starting negotiations these next weeks and months.

2.2. Privatization

The Minister of Transport generated a workgroup last year which task is to evaluate the "future of aviation" in Iceland. Presently, ICAA (the Icelandic Aviation Administration) is both the service provider and the regulator. One of the workgroup's tasks is to assess if all or part of the ICAA is suitable for corporisation, privatization has not been mentioned but one can anticipate that that possibility will also be considered. ICEATCA requested to be part of the workgroup, that request was never responded to. ICEATCA has now been called to present its views to the workgroup. ICEATCA's views are fundamentally that privatization is not an option and if the ICAA is to be split up in units, the service provision should be separated from the regulator (the preferred course by some seems to be to retain the service provision within ICAA but split the Flight safety department into a separate unit). Regarding the question whether the service provision should be a company (state enterprise) or an establishment (government agency), it seems that most states have selected to set up companies to serve as service providers. Update will be provided at the meeting in Oslo.

2.3. Friction/improvements in working environment

Reykjavik center: the chief controller is set on creating a new shift roster. His main objection with the present roster is that the roster does not "fit" the traffic flow. His demand is also to fit in the monthly roster, a 4 hour shift that would be used for briefing/training. Controllers generally seem to be pleased with the present schedule (3/3 or 2/2/3) and are not eager to change; a first proposal of a new roster was put forward last spring, the majority of controllers objected to the proposed roster and as the chief controller had stated that a new roster would not be implemented without the approval of the staff, the roster was not changed. The chief controller has however made it clear that a change will be implemented, how much patience he has with the different views of ATCOs about the roster remains to be seen!

Changes in the roster are also being proposed in Keflavik, the first proposal submitted by the chief controller in Keflavik was not accepted by the majority of the controllers, work is ongoing. For Reykjavik (BIRK) TWR, no changes are being planned at the moment in terms of working hours (roster); controllers generally seem content with the roster. On and off for the last few years, there have been talks of changing the service hours at BIRK TWR (i.e. closing during night), according to our latest information the airports division of the ICAA is assessing whether any change in the service level at BIRK and BIAR is feasible.

Summer vacation schedules created quite a friction. A vacation schedule, planned a few years ahead, displays the time period when each controller is planned for summer vacation. Traditionally, if a controller requests to delay his vacation (not use the planned period) he has been able to postpone his vacation to a time more suitable for him, provided the ICAA is able to grant his vacation at the requested time. This year there was a change. The ICAA required several controllers to use their vacation at the previously planned dates; an, perhaps, understandable management decision, had management not at the same time asked the same controllers to work overtime on the same dates they had specifically asked not to be on vacation but were required to by management! We have spoken to upper management about this and we have received their reassurance that this will be looked into before next summer.

2.4. Other identified deficiencies

- Controllers at BIAR and BIVM (towers that do not provide 24h services) answer emergency calls and serve as on stand-by duty when no agreement has been made with the controllers in terms of payments etc. for stand-by duties
- No simple solution (no easy way out) for older controllers that (for whatever reason) are not as confident doing the job as they once were

3. *Conclusions*

3.1. Summary of identified problems/improvements

- New rosters in Reykjavik center and Keflavik tower
- The safety management system (safety occurrence reporting) seems to be working well in Reykjavik center and Keflavik tower/app but not at all in the other towers (BIRK, BIVM, BIAR)
- Lack of information regarding ICAA's plans in important matters, such as SES, EASSRs adaptation
- Yearly re-training planned again for the second year in a row

3.2. Future Aspects

- Change in structure of the ICAA, possible corporisation of the air traffic services
- EASSR 5: apparently work is being done regarding EASSR 5, no information is however being circulated to the masses.

4. *Any other comments*

4.1. Kosovo

Icelandic controllers are still working in Kosovo; two controllers are presently stationed there (in all four controllers take turns working in Kosovo). The ATS school will be running an OJTI course in Kosovo in October, several other employees from the ICAA are still stationed there.

4.2. Incidents and accidents

Incidents/occurrences with direct or indirect ATM involvement for the first 6 months of this year: No major incident/accident has occurred in BIRD; eight significant incidents (class C) in Reykjavik center were reported and subsequently investigated. The incidents were found to have several contributing factors such as FDPS (lack of knowledge of users, insufficient design), unclear procedures and "company culture".

A safety management system has been implemented (2003), however, the reporting scheme of the SMS is efficient only in Reykjavik center and Keflavik twr/app. Hardly any reports have yet been received from Reykjavik, Akureyri and Vestmannaeyjar towers. The ICAA does not openly advocate "just culture", nevertheless the stated purpose (according to the SMP) of any occurrence/incident investigation is to discover any underlying causes and

error traps, not to look for someone to blame. Controllers in Reykjavik center seem content with the reporting system.

4.3. Medical matters

One controller is presently on sick leave, according to ICEATCA's information the controllers stands the risk of losing his licence due medical problems.

For information: at least two controllers have had eye laser treatment so far, the treatment had no effect on their medical licence.

4.4. Sector capacity

Regarding ATM capacity, sector capacity has not yet been assessed for Reykjavik center. ICEATCA has emphasized the need to measure sector capacity.

4.5. Critical incident stress management

CISM has not been implemented into ICAA safety management system. ICEATCA has stressed the need of such knowledge within the ICAA and requested to be a part of CISM implementation.
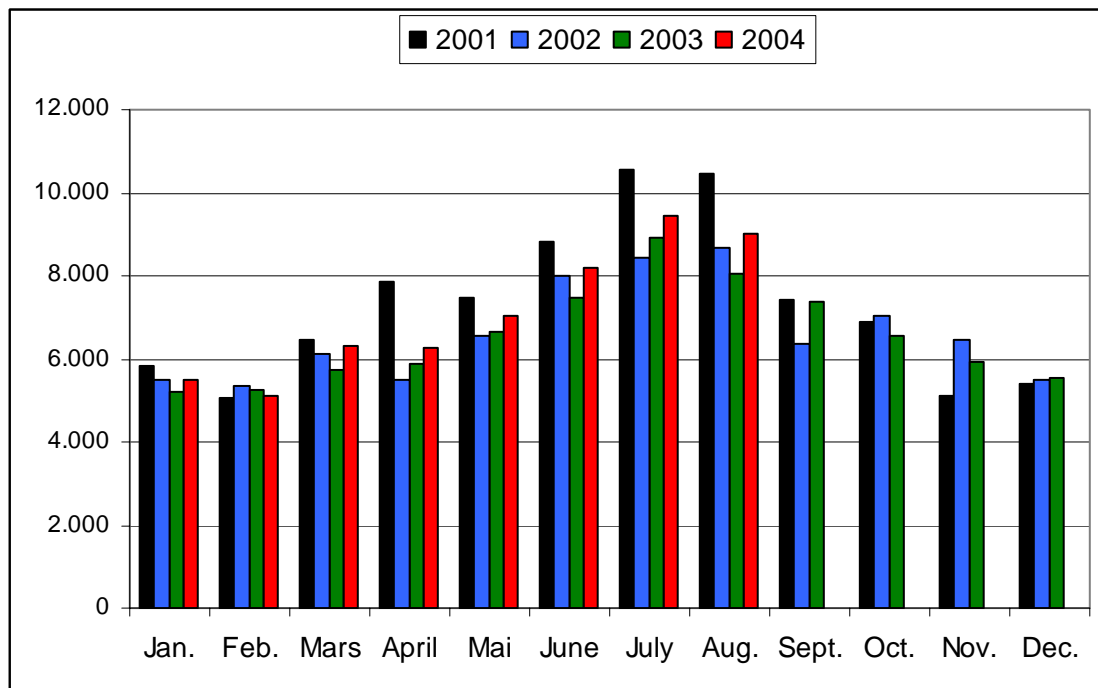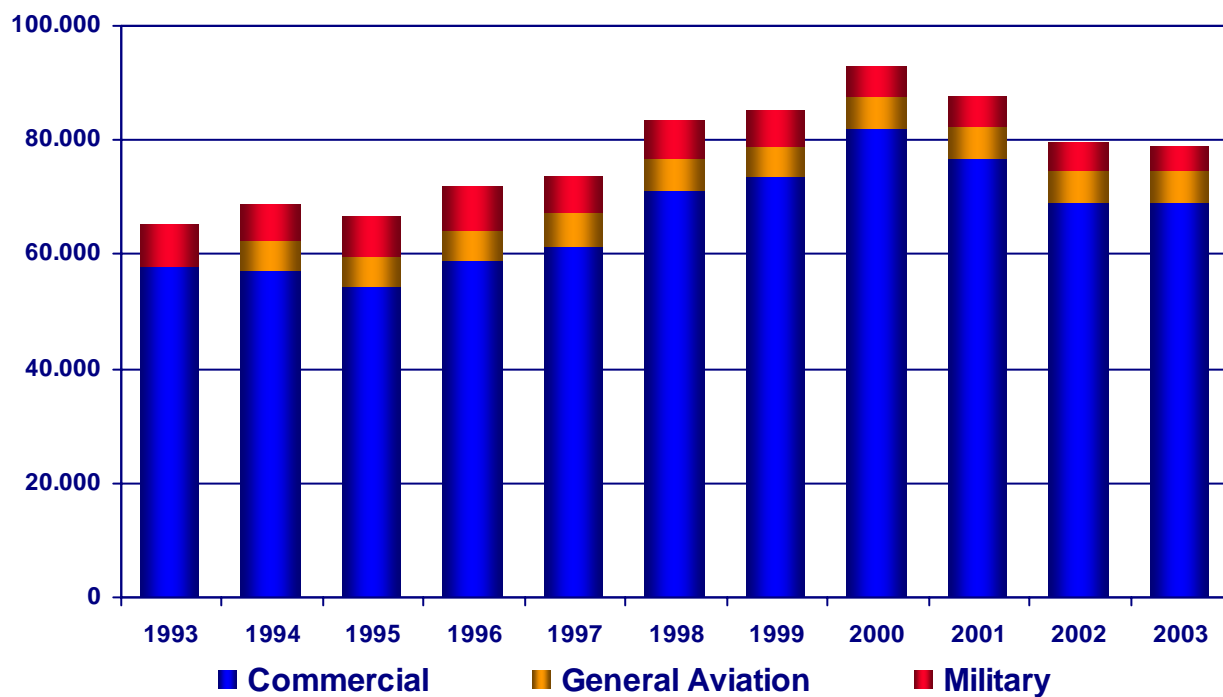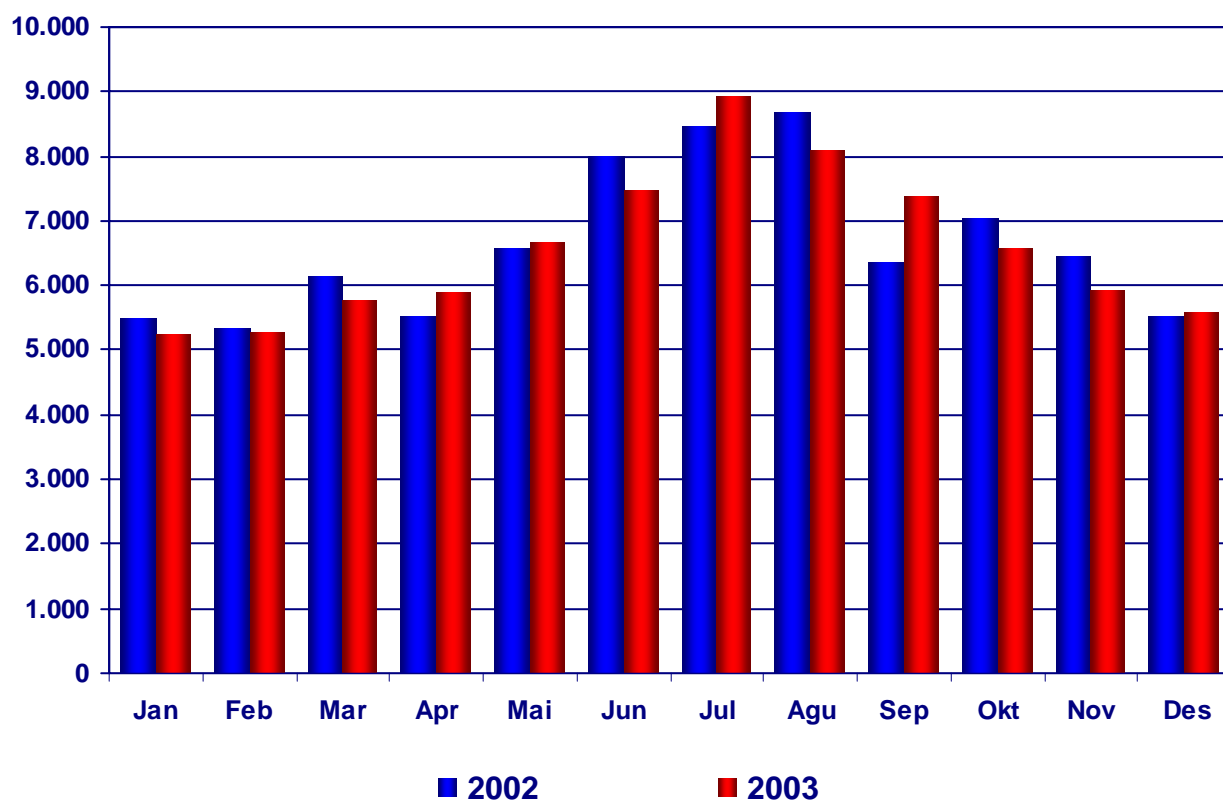
Fig. 1. Number of flights in BIRD area 2001-2004. This year we have seen an overall increse in traffic of 6,8% compared to last year; however, traffic has not reached the level of 2001.
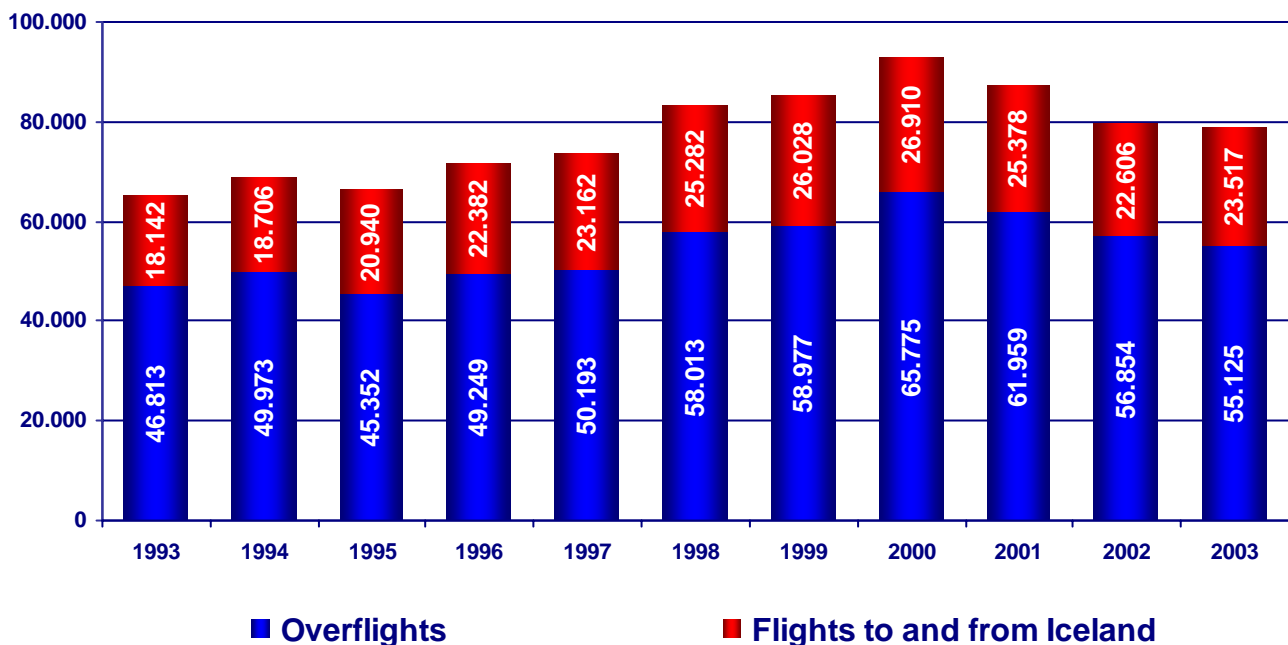
Fig. 2. Overflights vs. inbound/outbound in BIRD area 1993-2003

Fig. 3. Number of commercial flights compared to the number of GA and military flights

Fig. 4 Monthly distribution of traffic in BIRD 2003