

## NATO CAI “Vigilant Skies”

### **CIMACT’s contribution to “Vigilant Skies 2011”**

#### **NATO/ Russia Council Cooperative Airspace Initiative (CAI) Validation Exercise**

From the 5<sup>th</sup> to the 8<sup>th</sup> of June 2011 the CAI validation exercise “Vigilant Skies 2011” took place. The exercise simulated a renegade situation on the border and adjoining FIRs between NATO Countries and the Russian Federation involving live assets and combined operations of NATO and Russian Fighter Aircraft.



Su27 and F16 Escort a KC135 Tanker in the role of a Renegade Aircraft

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The first part of the exercise involved a Polish Military Transport Aircraft playing the role of a commercial airliner bound for Oslo. At some point communication is lost and

the flight changes its route towards the Polish-Russian Border. Polish F16 Aircraft are scrambled to intercept the potential renegade flight. The flight is escorted and is handed over to Russian Federation SU-27 Aircraft at the border. All coordination between NATO and Russian Units is supported by the EUROCONTROL CIMA CT system (Civil-Military ATM Coordination Tool).



Exercise Scenario © 2011 NATO CAI

CIMA CT allows NATO operators to exchange the live traffic situation with their colleagues from the Russian Federation. It offers additional functionality to coordinate non-verbally by filtering and highlighting certain tracks of interest.

A similar exercise was performed in Turkey over the Black Sea, with a KC135 playing the role of the Renegade and Turkish F16 and Russian SU-27 as air defence assets. The final validation exercise in northern Norway was simulated using the CIMA CT Pilot Working Position capable of simulating complex scenarios superimposed onto a live track display.

The exercise served to declare the Cooperative Airspace Initiative (CAI) and the involved systems (CIMA CT) and procedures fit for purpose, i.e. to coordinate effectively airspace security situations between NATO Nations and the Russian Federation. The successful completion of the exercise marks will soon lead to the official start of the operational phase of CAI.

The event received considerable media coverage with press conferences held in both Warsaw and Moscow, leading to hundreds of press releases on the Internet, and television coverage on a few national broadcasting channels. The project was praised by the NATO Secretary-General during the recent meeting of the defence ministers.

During the validation phase the CIMA CT software demonstrated its capability and flexibility for civil-military coordination by supporting exchange ATM Data between involved actors and the Russian Federation. Furthermore the CAI Vigilant Skies 2011 exercise highlighted the EUROCONTROL expertise as a unique civil-military ATM organisation.

### **THE CAI PROJECT**

The CAI project started on 11 June 2002, when the NATO Russia Council (NRC) at Ambassadorial level established the Cooperative Airspace Initiative Working Group (CAI WG) in order to define modalities for reciprocal exchange of data on civil and military air pictures by using international standards in a cooperative regional

framework, thereby enhancing capabilities to combat terrorist threats to civil aviation.

The project was carried out with the following incremental approach:

- Phase I - feasibility study
- Phase II - implementation of data exchange capability and development of the operational concept
- Phase III - exercise programme to validate the system

During the feasibility study, investigations demonstrated that the use of the **CIMACT** (Civil/Military ATM Air defence coordination Tool) software from EUROCONTROL was the best option, both in terms of functionality and cost

NATO therefore requested the support of EUROCONTROL for the implementation phase of the NATO/RUSSIA Cooperative Airspace Initiative and a special agree was set up between both organisations.

NATO produced a video on the exercise available on the NATO YouTube Channel”

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xl14pxcbWA>

For additional information, please do not hesitate to contact us:

François CERVO – CIMACT Project Manager  
[francois.cervo@eurcontrol.int](mailto:francois.cervo@eurcontrol.int)

Jan SCHOLZ – CIMACT Stakeholder Support  
[Jan.scholz@eurocontrol.int](mailto:Jan.scholz@eurocontrol.int)