

Good Neighbours

Italian air navigation service provider **Enav** has a strategic interest in supporting the reconstruction of Libya's aviation infrastructure as Ian Thompson discovered

Italy's **Enav** earlier this year was awarded the contract to build and set up the control tower and technical building at Mitiga International Airport in Libya.

The Libyan CAA contract is worth €5 million and is expected to be completed by next summer.

Mitiga Airport, located 8 km from the Libyan capital Tripoli, is currently used to operate both domestic and international flights landing and taking off in the Libyan territory, due to the inaccessibility of Tripoli Airport.

During the construction of the new facilities, **Enav** is supplying on a temporary basis an advanced mobile control tower equipped with state-of-the-art technology and workstations.

Enav is also providing training to 60 Libyan air traffic controllers under a contract signed last October. The project covers the training of operational staff who are required to maintain their qualifications in order to operate, after a long period of inactivity caused by the no-fly zone over Libyan airspace.

Operating in Libya has strategic importance for **Enav**, which goes beyond the economic value of the contract signed. The southern zone of Italian airspace borders on that of Libyan airspace, which is currently a no-fly zone.

Enav hopes that encouraging the development of air transport and flights between Libya and Europe will allow the

Italian air navigation service provider, in future, to increase in-bound traffic flows as well as increase revenue from regulated activities, thanks to the reinstatement of the routes that used to cross the Italian airspace before the no-fly zone over Libya was put in place.

Ian Thompson interviews Mauro Iannucci (pictured), Enav's business development director, to find out more about the collaboration.

ATM What was the imperative for the Libyan Civil Aviation Authority (LCAA) to construct a new control tower at Mitiga Airport? Could you also give an overview of the operations conducted from the airport (e.g., number of movements, range of aircraft operations, main purpose of the airport, civil and military use)?

Iannucci During the 2014 clashes, Tripoli International Airport terminals were destroyed. From that moment, all operations were diverted to Mitiga Airport, which, however, did not have adequate infrastructure for proper traffic management.

This deficiency was also critical given the reopening of direct connections to and from Europe.

In the last two years, great efforts have been made by the Libyan Civil Aviation Authority to align Mitiga Airport to international standards.

Currently, the airport manages around 60 movements per day both civil and military aircraft up to Class C.

ATM Could you describe the new control tower - height of building, number of operational positions, other activities conducted in the building such as technical workshops or training facilities - and the technological solution?

Iannucci The new control tower will be around 15 metres high with three control working positions and a supervisor position.

The equipment will be first class including VHF/UHF communication and recording systems, Voice Communication Switching Systems and the AWOS and ATIS manufactured by our subsidiary Techno Sky.

In addition, we'll construct around 500

sq m technical block that will include an equipment room, a laboratory, a warehouse, offices and relief rooms.

ATM What is the interim control tower solution and why was it provided?

Iannucci To guarantee business continuity during the construction of the new tower and to increase the safety of ATC operations we have shipped one of our mobile control towers to Tripoli.

This tower is fully equipped to allow Libyan air traffic controllers to operate safely until the construction works are complete.

ATM Could you provide an overview of the project - its duration, value and the major challenges it presented?

Iannucci The project has an overall value of around €5 million. Construction works should start in October 2017 and should be completed by July 2018.

So far we haven't faced particular challenges other than the ones normally encountered when executing a contract like this one.

On the other hand, we must admit that we have been strongly supported by the Libyan Civil Aviation Authority that is endeavoring its best efforts to guarantee the success of the project

ATM Can you outline the number of staff involved and the activities undertaken by **Enav or Techno Sky personnel?**

Iannucci We are very proud to underline that most of the added-value activity will be performed by Techno Sky engineers.

Of course, we are going to subcontract the civil works execution but the design, equipment installation, integration, setting up and commissioning of all the systems will be done internally by **ENAV** Group professionals.

ATM Why does Libya have a strategic importance to both the Italian government and **Enav (e.g., southern zone of Italian airspace bordering Libyan airspace, impact of political sanctions and non-fly zone)?**

Iannucci Historically, Libya and Italy have always had a strong relationship. For our government and all Europe, a peaceful and stable Libya has major repercussions on various levels, energy, and immigration to name just two.





VISTA 1



VISTA 2



VISTA 3



VISTA ZENITALE

As for [Enav](#), with the Libyan Civil Aviation Authority, we share a common interest: an efficient and safe Libyan airspace will reopen direct routes to/from Africa generating a sensitive traffic increase for both of us and will also generate savings for the airlines.

ATM The control tower project is a joint initiative between [Enav](#) and the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. What is the role of the ministry and the areas where both organisations are cooperating? In which other countries have the ministry and [Enav](#) jointly undertaken projects? Is Italian aid funding used to help pay for [Enav](#) expertise on projects in Libya and elsewhere?

Iannucci This question helps me clear the scenario from any possible misunderstandings. The Mitiga new control tower project was entirely born in the frame of the co-operation between [Enav](#) and the Libyan Civil Aviation Authority and is totally funded by the latter.

On the other hand, Italian and Libyan authorities have supported this programme as they immediately perceived its importance both politically and operationally.

In Libya, our Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation is playing a fundamental role in supporting all the national economic operators who are interested in returning to operate in the country.

The fact that the Italian is the only European embassy currently operating is a clear indication of this commitment.

ATM The control tower project is the latest to be undertaken in Libya by [Enav](#). Could you outline the air traffic controller training programme that was undertaken and its importance? Have there been any other projects that you have undertaken in Libya? What were the key challenges faced and lessons learned?

Iannucci From 2012 [Enav](#) Academy in Forlì has been the Libyan Civil Aviation Authority's main training partner. Just after the revolution, we performed refresher training for 120 air traffic controllers to get them back on track after two years of inactivity.

Since then we have undertaken multiple training programmes, both at managerial and at the technical level.

This year we have performed 45 tower and area refresher courses and 15 basic ACS/APS RAD courses, and currently, we are negotiating with the Libyan Civil Aviation Authority on next year's training needs that will also focus on qualification training for their technicians.

ATM Could you describe the international commercial aspirations of [Enav](#) - consulting assignments, its investment in Aireon and in ATM systems?

Iannucci The air traffic control business does not offer great opportunities to invent growth paths. It is regulated at European level, and efficiency is also aimed at reducing costs for carriers.

Commercial activities in foreign regions like Asia Pacific, Middle East, and North

Africa, are increasing every year and can support the growth our investors are looking for.

From 2018, the Aireon consortium, of which [Enav](#) is a member with its Canadian, American and European counterparts, and which will control global air traffic by satellite, will be operational allowing surveillance over oceans, mountainous and deserted areas.

It will be a game-changer and, if the business takes off, it will generate new revenues for [Enav](#).

ATM Can you explain more about [Enav](#)'s own in-house engineering company Techno Sky?

Iannucci As [Enav](#)'s mission critical systems integrator, Techno Sky operates along the full value chain of CNS/ATM infrastructures such as research and development, system engineering, design, ATM software development, weather system development, installation, integration, training, logistics, maintenance, spare-part management and repair management.

Techno Sky has a rich background of knowledge, technologies, and expertise gained in more than 40 years of activity as a market leader in ATM systems at [Enav](#)'s service.

All these competencies allow us to address, as main contractor, complex system integration projects and the recent successes somehow suggest us we are going in the right direction.

We are well aware that it won't be easy, but it's a challenge we've accepted and that we are committed to winning. **ATM**