

SACBO - Position paper on prospects for development and sustainability of the airport

INTRODUCTION

The obligations of SACBO as concessionary and the Airport Development Programme

SACBO S.p.A., a private company, a concessionary of the Italian Ministry for Infrastructures and Transport through ENAC (agreement signed on 1 March 2002 and in force until 7 January 2042) for the management of Bergamo Orio al Serio airport, has the responsibility, under the supervision and control of ENAC, and in respect for the principles of impartiality, transparency and non-discrimination, to administer and manage the airport infrastructures and to coordinate and control the activities of the various operators present within the airport itself.

According to that provided for by the Navigation Code, SACBO has the task of “organising airport activity in order to guarantee the efficient and optimal use of resources for the provision of services of a suitable level of quality, also through the planning of interventions in relation to the type of traffic”.

In said context, the updating of the current Airport Development Programme (hereafter referred to as “PSA”), drawn up in 2001 and approved in 2003, in light of the growth achieved and the new requirements which have emerged, is an obligation for the airport management company.

Therefore, due to the obligations that a management company has to comply with, and the requirements of air traffic estimated up to 2030, the first of the general objectives that SACBO is obliged to pursue, via the Airport Development Programme, is the satisfying of forecast demand according to elevated quality standards, and thus adapt the various components of the layout of the airport to the levels of air traffic forecast.

In line with European and national requirements regarding air transport, and with short, mid- and long-term traffic forecasts, in the context of market dynamics, SACBO has drawn up a programme which provides for a redefinition of the operational areas of the “airport system”, capable of increasing efficiency and capacity, and capable of satisfying the growing demand for transportation, in accordance with the indications provided by ENAC.

The new PSA, as well as responding to the infrastructure requirements deriving from forecast traffic up to 2030, is aimed at optimising the functionality of the airport. The forecast investments to be made by the Management company for the fifteen-year period amount to an overall figure of approximately 435 million euros, of which 27 million regard interventions of environmental mitigation and compensation, to be carried out over the next few years, in order to respond to traffic forecast up to 2030 of approximately 13.8 million passengers for approximately 94,000 movements per year, managed according to law over a daily period of 24 hours. These are large-scale investments which SACBO is obliged to finance, preserving objectives of financial stability and economic sustainability.

One of the strategic choices that SACBO has decided to adopt in its long-term airport programming is that of identifying, beyond a configuration of the infrastructure which is suited to

the forecast traffic demands, aeronautical operativity which is compatible with environmental limits and cohabitation with the surrounding area.

In this light, also taking into consideration the strategies adopted by the main courier companies and the other airports in Northern Italy, it has been decided to define a scenario of traffic which forecasts a gradual reduction of courier traffic, principally operational during the night, while at the same time respecting the programmed objectives of economic-financial sustainability and the commitments undertaken through the concession.

The airport infrastructure and environmental sustainability

The relationship with the territory, aimed at guaranteeing the sustainability and the compatibility of the airport infrastructure, also in terms of the environmental limits and those of cohabitation with the surrounding territory, represents a fundamental element for SACBO, both for the initiative of updating the PSA, and for the elaboration of the Acoustic Zoning Programme (explained in detail below), in accordance with the strategic guidelines identified by national and regional regulations.

As well as programming specific environmental activities and developing the relative programmes of execution and control, SACBO also intends to maintain open and constructive relations with the various Bodies and Administrations in the area in which the company operates, in coordination with, and under the supervision of, ENAC.

The phase of definition of the development guidelines of the PSA has therefore been characterised by a process of participation, a fundamental method for the making of decisions relating to modifications of the territory induced by the expansion of an existing airport, strongly promoted by ENAC and with the full support of SACBO. The result of constructive discussions with the Territory has thus allowed for the identification of a series of objectives regarding sustainability. In this light, SACBO has interpreted the airport as an infrastructure capable of generating positive effects in terms of environmental value, while maintaining the operativity of the structure with a view to efficiency.

Thus, the PSA created by SACBO has undergone technical examination by ENAC, which concluded positively, with its approval. By the end of 2017, with the support of SACBO, the same Italian Civil Aviation Authority will subject the PSA, accompanied by the relative Study on Environmental Impact, to the "VIA" (Assessment of Environmental Impact) procedure.

SACBO underlines how the activation of the VIA provides one of two natural situations (together with the procedure for Strategic Environmental Assessment regarding the Acoustic Zoning Programme) in which to promote further discussions with all of the parties interested in voicing an opinion on the environmental sustainability of the Development of the Airport, and in which SACBO guarantees its full attention.

The Airport Acoustic Zoning Programme and Strategic Environmental Assessment

The necessity for a Strategic Environmental Assessment (VAS) for the definition and adoption of the Airport Acoustic Zoning Programme has contributed to placing the act of zoning in the context

of a much wider and complex range of competence than was perhaps understood in the past, leading the process to become the elaboration of a true programme. The process of definition of the objectives, the methods used for selecting the possible scenarios and criteria for assessment and comparison of the same is a particularly challenging and complex task. As of today, Bergamo airport is the first and only case of a process of this kind ever defined or followed, and the hope is that it be adopted by all the other Italian airport infrastructures. To this end, SACBO intends to call for the highest levels of participation and collaboration in the definition of this process, guaranteeing all the necessary support in order for the Airport Commission - presided over by ENAC and made up of the Ministry for the Environment, The Lombardy Region, the Province of Bergamo, ARPA Lombardy, and the Municipalities of Bergamo, Orio al Serio, Grassobbio, Seriate, Azzano San Paolo, Bagnatica, Brusaporto, Costa di Mezzate, Bolgare, ENAV, SACBO, and the Airport Users' Committee and identified as the party proposing the Acoustic Zoning Programme - to be able to define and carry out all of the activities necessary for the rapid and successful elaboration of the Acoustic Zoning Programme and the conclusion of the VAS procedure.

Therefore, in light of the definition of the objectives related to the Airport Acoustic Zoning Programme, SACBO underlines how the satisfying of the expected demand for mobility must be taken into consideration, if not as the foundation of the Programme, at least as an objective to optimise as soon as possible, duly balancing it with requirements for environmental sustainability. The activation of the VAS procedure is therefore the second natural field in which SACBO intends to open discussions with the Territory, with regards to the environmental sustainability of the airport, a subject for which SACBO guarantees its full attention.

SACBO underlines how the VAS procedures, regarding the Airport Acoustic Zoning Programme, and those of VIA, regarding the PSA, provide ideal ground for a proactive discussion on the theme of the environment in relation to the airport, guaranteeing its complete and positive treatment, and how said procedures will serve as a source of agreed and coordinated actions for the monitoring, control and mitigation of impact where considered necessary.

Relations with the Territory

SACBO has always interpreted the meaning of "Relations with the Territory" in the full sense of the term, in which the aspect of environmental compatibility is only a part, in complete harmony with the principles expressed by European, national and regional regulations.

SACBO and the Territory are not two separate or contrasting entities. Reciprocal economic relations connected to development result in a singular and unified entity. The presence of the airport currently guarantees more than 8,000 direct job positions, in other words, jobs in which the relative activities are connected directly to the airport (management, handlers, airlines, air traffic controllers, government agencies, gate security, cleaning, retail, catering, restaurants and businesses), contributing approximately 464 million euros/year to the Italian GDP (*source: ACI Europe*). Taking into consideration both indirect impact and correlated activities, the presence of the airport generates approximately 20,000 job positions and an economic value of approximately 985 million euros/year on a national level, contributing to 8% of the GDP for the Bergamo area.

SACBO underlines how the positive and symbolic synergy created between the territory and the airport, which has developed over the last few years at competitive rates that are comparable to, if not higher than , other similar systems, should not only be consolidated, but maintained and

guaranteed over time. The loss of competitiveness for the airport or the territory with regards to the Northern-Italian macro-system would lead to a progressive impoverishment of the economic fabric of the territory, as well as a loss of connectivity, which would risk resulting in a veritable collapse of the system. It is logical and natural to consider that the territory should play an active role in decisions regarding developments oriented towards the minimisation of environmental impact via the use of innovative operational and technological aeronautical tools.

To this end, SACBO stresses how it considers the external environmental effects of the airport to be of the utmost importance, an aspect never ignored at any time over the years and during the development of the same; a consideration which is confirmed in a concrete manner through the continuous promotion of interventions aimed at reducing the impact of its activities. It should also be said that these interventions have been carried out despite the complexity of regulations faced over the years and in the absence of actual mandatory obligations.

In recent years, SACBO has promoted interventions for environmental mitigation (the soundproofing and air-conditioning of public and private buildings) in the surrounding area for a value of 10 million euros, in the wake of which it was possible to verify the positive usefulness and effectiveness of said interventions. In this light, in assemblies for discussion of environmental matters for the identified objectives (VAS and VIA) SACBO maintains its openness to their employment, when suitably motivated, as an integral part of the procedures aimed at the development of the Airport-Territory system.

The development of other industrial assets

The proposed scenario of infrastructural growth evolves in an organic and harmonious manner with the development of the entire national, macro-regional and European system, and pursues the idea of a “hub airport” capable of coordinating decisions with neighbouring airports and through initiatives of integrated transport, leading to wide-spread benefits throughout the territory.

SACBO lastly confirms its commitment to the search for strategies of convergence with neighbouring entities in the air transportation sector, underlining that all proposals for the uniting of company forces must in any case allow us to play a part in the large-scale development of airports within the Northern Italy territory.

Conclusions

SACBO, a private company, in line with the obligations set out by the airport concession, looks to its future with a view to the sustainable development of the airport and the continuity of its activities, in a framework of complete legality and in the interests of the social and economic growth of the territory.

The vision regarding the prospects for the airport are included in the Airport Development Programme, which allows for the continuing guaranteeing of a balanced blend of traffic segments, the result of an attentive compromise between industrial requirements, the demands of the traffic catchment area served, and environmental compatibility.

The PSA has already been presented and illustrated to the mayors of the Municipalities forming part of the Airport Commission, and technically approved by ENAC in the last few months; a fundamentally important step which has been acquired in the period, and under the terms, desired. It is forecast that by the end of 2017, the authorisation process for the PSA will continue with the Assessment of Environmental Impact (VIA).

The procedures for VAS, regarding Airport Acoustic Zoning, and VIA, regarding the Airport Development Programme, provide a suitable opportunity for proactive discussions with the territory and institutions involved on environmental themes concerning the airport, and a potential opportunity for the emergence of shared and coordinated actions of control and mitigation of impact where necessary. To this end, SACBO confirms its willingness to support the process for the definition of the Acoustic Zoning Programme by the Airport Commission and for the completion of the relative procedure for Strategic Environmental Assessment, with regards to which the forecast demand for mobility must be considered and brought into line with the indications provided by the Airport Development Programme, examining it in light of the objective of satisfying environmental sustainability. Further evidence of the commitment assumed in terms of the environmental compatibility of aeronautical activities can be seen in recalling that SACBO, as the only example in Italy, contributed to the area surrounding the airport lands by setting aside the sum of 10 million euros for the creation of a series of interventions on public buildings (schools) and private homes, with the technical and scientific contribution of the CNR (National Research Council) in guaranteeing and safeguarding the efficiency of said interventions.

Furthermore, SACBO, together with ENAC and ENAV, is collaborating in the identification of improvements in recently-experimented flight procedures, aimed at providing a reduction of noise in the Municipalities surrounding the airport in the short-term.

It is worth recalling, in general, the contribution of the airport's activities to employment levels and the GDP (approximately 20,000 jobs between direct and indirect employment and related activities, and approximately € 985 million in economic value, corresponding to 8% of the GDP for the province). In this context, SACBO maintains its willingness for future interventions for mitigation, provided that they are suitably motivated and form an integral part of the procedures (of VAS and VIA) which focus on the development of the Airport-Territory system.

In the meantime, SACBO confirms its own commitment to the search for strategies of convergence with other organisations, both nearby and further afield, operating in the air transportation sector, underlining that all proposals for company cooperation must in any case allow us to play a role in the large-scale development of airports within the Northern Italy territory, and guarantee the conservation of values in terms of positioning and revenue, in the interests of the Bergamo area.

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