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# Winter at European airports training for excellence

PRODUCTS & SERVICES



## Winter heavily strikes European airports

In the weeks before Christmas 2010 a great number of European airports have been struck by severe winter conditions causing delays and cancellations, and many travellers were forced to stay overnight at the airport. Seven million travellers were let down. Snow and ice can disrupt social life, having major impact on airport operations and creating significant amount of costs. Reducing costs by returning to normal operations as soon as possible is an important objective for resilient airports, airlines, ground handlers and air traffic control organisations. In January 2011 in response to the winter circumstances in December EU Commissioner Siim Kallas (Transport) called upon European airports to improve their approach in case of snowfall.

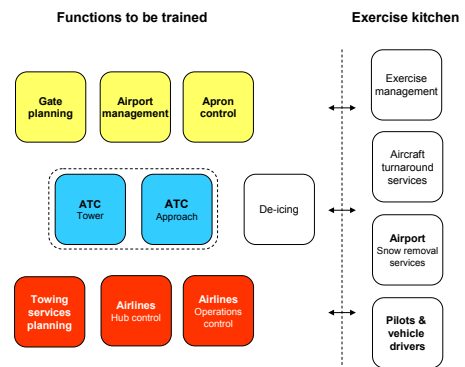


## PRACTISE HELPS TO PREPARE AIRPORTS FOR WINTER CONDITIONS

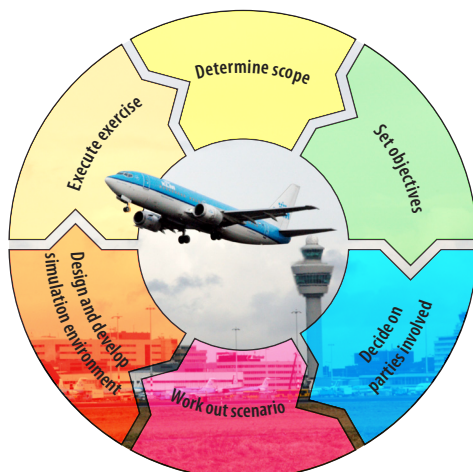
In early spring 2005 Amsterdam Airport Schiphol suffered from unexpected winter conditions. These wintery days revealed a number of weaknesses in current procedures, but most of all they revealed that co-ordination between all operational parties is key to better performance during adverse conditions. Amsterdam Airport Schiphol, Air Traffic Control the Netherlands and Air France-KLM joined forces and decided to practise a wintery day in a real life simulated environment, using NLR's ATC tower simulator. The exercises were organised in 2005, 2006 2007 and 2011. The result was a better performance of Schiphol during the following winters.

## TAILOR THE EXERCISE TO MEET OBJECTIVES

A winter exercise can be deployed for multiple purposes, including the training of personnel and/or the validation of revised operational procedures. The simulation environment can be fitted in such a way that it meets the demands of all parties involved and supports the objectives. Scalability is the magic word allowing NLR to offer maximum flexibility to support the exercise. The figure shows the different airport functions to be involved in the exercise. A distinction has been made between 'functions to be trained' and exercise support staff in the so called 'exercise kitchen'. The exact set up can be altered depending on the scope and objective of the exercise.



The first step in setting up an exercise is to agree upon the need for an exercise amongst all operational parties, including ATC, airport management, ground services and airlines. The subsequent activity is to determine the scope and set objectives. Based on the objectives it can be decided which parties will be directly involved. The next step is to work out the scenario. Now the basis has been laid for the design and development of the simulation environment and the execution of the exercise. The figure below provides an overview of these activities. Going through this cycle helps to tailor a winter exercise to the specific training needs of a specific airport. The creation of a suitable simulation environment lays the foundation for the improvement of the coordination between operational parties involved in daily airport operations. NLR has the knowledge and the capabilities to design and support (inter-)team training. Leveraging training starts with writing a scenario that supports the training objectives and it ends with offering factual feedback during the exercise debriefing based on performance.



Steps in setting up a winter exercise

## PRACTISE MAKES PERFECT: ALSO FOR YOUR AIRPORT?

How did your airport deal with winter conditions in previous years? What were the lessons learned? The coming summer offers the opportunity to evaluate the winter season and take measures to improve the operations. If one of the outcomes of the evaluation is that co-operation needs attention and you would like to offer operational staff the opportunity to collectively train for winter, it may be interesting to discuss the options of organising a winter exercise.

### MORE INFORMATION:

NLR organised training exercises for Amsterdam Airport Schiphol in 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2011. A more detailed brochure of these exercises is available on request.