

BIRD STRIKE COMMITTEE EUROPE

BSCE23/WP39

London, 13 - 17 May 1996

**PROPOSAL FOR AN ASSOCIATION OF
AIRFIELD BIRD CONTROLLERS**

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Summary

The paper details a proposal for an association of airfield bird controllers, as distinct from the members of BSCE. This could provide a number of advantages for BSCE and other organisations involved in reduction of bird strikes, including two-way dissemination of information between BSCE (and similar organisations) and the personnel actively involved in bird control, a large number of dispersed information gatherers for the scientists and early warning of trends which may not be apparent from bird strike statistics alone. The paper is divided into three sections - possible advantages, possible disadvantages, and suggested organisation and costs.

Key Words: Hazard Management, Organisation, Public Relations

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Personal Introduction

I have been involved in airfield bird control since 1974, initially working on USAF airfields in the east of England, and subsequently at the Defence Research Agency airfield at Bedford and other research and general aviation airfields. A couple of years ago I was speaking to somebody from the CAA, who, in turn, put me on to the BSCE Chairman, and I subsequently attended the 1994 meeting in Vienna.

1.2 Problems encountered in contacting BSCE

This was my first contact with BSCE in twenty years of active bird control - until that point, BSCE had been something which I had heard of but had never really known anything about. Neither had I been able to find anything out about BSCE, despite occasional attempts, and avid reading of all literature which I could find on the subject. From conversations with other bird controllers from the Ministry of Defence (Procurement Executive), the Royal Air Force and Civilian airports, I know that this is a widespread problem.

The above is in no way intended as a criticism of BSCE - the problems of trying to notify every bird controller in the country (let alone in Europe) about BSCE meetings directly would be immense, and for notices in magazines to be effective, one would need to be sure that the people it is aimed at read every issue of that particular magazine from cover to cover.

1.3 Proposal for an Association of Airfield Bird Controllers

To avoid this situation, I would like to propose an association for airfield bird controllers, with links to organisations such as BSCE. It would comprise those individuals working in airfield bird control (but who may not necessarily be present at BSCE conferences for reasons other than money or geographic awkwardness), those delegates to BSCE who have a professional interest in airfield bird strike reduction and others who are directly involved in airfield bird control, whether as suppliers or users of labour, equipment or other services.

BSCE and other similar organisations play a fundamental role in reduction of birdstrikes. However, the emphasis is, quite rightly, on scientific methods and presentations. The vast majority of airfield bird controllers would be completely lost if they were to read about Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient, the chi squared test for association etc. when applied to statistics. Accordingly, I believe that a separate, but linked, organisation for these people would serve many purposes.

Given that most airfields or airports of any size have at least one person working to reduce the bird strike risk (whether or not it is a full - time occupation), the potential membership of such an association is vast, particularly if it covers all geographic regions. There can be few occupations with such a potential membership who do not already have a professional body acting for them and, where necessary, working to maintain standards.

2. ADVANTAGES

2.1 Dissemination of information from BSCE and similar organisations.

The cutting edge of bird strike reduction is at this sort of meeting. How does the man or woman on an airfield get to know of latest advances or current policy? This would be a primary function of an association - the dissemination of findings made by scientists and others and presented at these meetings. The information need not include the methodology or statistics which the information is based upon, simply the bare facts and guidance as to whether or not a particular method of bird clearance works.

2.2 Dissemination of information between members

This aspect is probably not of direct concern to BSCE, but could include such things as information about suppliers of equipment, recently published literature of interest, competitive insurance brokers etc.

2.3 Dissemination of information from members to BSCE

It is not beyond the realms of possibility that somebody working on an airfield will come up with an idea for bird dispersal or deterrence which may be worth trying on a wider basis. The existence of a contact between the people

3. Disadvantages

3.1 Funding

Probably the greatest drawback is that of funding. This could be achieved either through sponsorship or by subscription or by a mixture of the two.

Prior to its inception, potential members would need to be notified of the association's existence (or the possibility of it). This could be achieved either by advertising, by direct mail shot or by notices in relevant journals. Delegates to this meeting could probably assist greatly by providing known addresses. A link with an organisation such as the Airport Operators' Association could also be helpful in this respect. In any event, the initial notification to potential members is likely to cost money.

Once in existence, costs are likely to involve administration (printing, postage, telephone etc.). This could be covered, at no great cost, by a small subscription, payable by each member.

3.2 Information

In order to function as envisaged, there will need to be input not only from members but also from the scientific and aviation community. There needs to be a willingness to contribute articles and expertise both from members and from others. The success or otherwise of such an association will depend entirely upon the willingness of interested persons to contribute to its success.

3.3 Administration

A central administration will need to be formed, perhaps consisting initially of just one person. If and when required, further 'officers' can be elected or chosen.

I would be happy to attempt to set up such an association should it be deemed beneficial.

4. Conclusion

The concept of a professional body for airfield bird controllers is not in any way envisaged as a rival to BSCE or other similar organisations, but as complimentary to their work and, hopefully, of assistance.

Finally, the fact that airfield bird controllers would have the opportunity of belonging to an organisation with set (high) standards, consisting of like-minded individuals with a common aim would produce a more cohesive and professional approach to what is occasionally regarded as a totally unskilled job.

At this point, I believe that there simply needs to be a discussion on the advisability of setting up such an organisation. Should the consensus indicate that this would be a worthwhile project, finer details can be worked out henceforth, although suggestions for any aspect would be useful.

Acknowledgement

I would like to thank John Thorpe, Chairman BSCE, for his constructive comments on this paper.