



# Geneva

## soars to new heights with ISO 55001

Following a long and intensive effort to improve the performance of its infrastructure, Geneva's international airport achieved ISO 55001 certification, thereby enabling it to streamline its expenditure, strengthen its credentials and future-proof its facilities. We spoke to the Geneva airport team to find out more.

Genève Aéroport is a major piece of infrastructure linking the Geneva region to the rest of the world.

Asset management can be a powerful weapon in a company's arsenal for saving time, money and lots of executive headaches. Using ISO 55001, Geneva's international airport rolled out a model for asset management and, today, is soaring to new heights. It is the first airport in continental Europe and the second Swiss company to become certified to ISO 55001.

Nearly every organization needs or wants to achieve more with its assets, not only how to minimize downtime or lost production, but also how to spend money well to deliver added value. Tangible results of an asset management system include improved control of day-to-day activities and business efficiencies, reduction of risk-related costs, compliance in regulatory activities and reduced failure rates.

The airport, which operates under the name of Genève Aéroport, reinforced its credentials among airlines that see ISO 55001 as solid evidence of an airport's reliability to handle increased passenger throughput while staying profitable and maintaining safety – giving the hub a competitive advantage when opening new air routes. In an interview with *ISOfocus*, the Geneva airport team<sup>1)</sup> in charge of the ISO 55001 project shares its main findings on the journey to certification and the airport's readiness to meet the air traffic demands of tomorrow.

***ISOfocus*: Genève Aéroport was awarded the ISO 55001 certification for the high-quality management of its technical assets and infrastructure. What does this mean?**

Achieving certification was not the ultimate purpose for implementing the asset management requirements according to ISO 55001. The approach taken by Genève Aéroport was to focus on improving our asset management practices, methods and processes. The airport sought certification once its eligibility had been fully acknowledged on the basis of the maturity level that had been reached. Certification came as a reward for the progress made, confirming the relevance of the initiatives and projects we had undertaken since initiating the process. It is also a credit to the efforts made day in and day out by all players across the airport to provide adequate and sound management of the airport's assets in accordance with the Genève Aéroport Charter, its stakeholders' expectations and the regulations governing airport activities.

**What attracted you to ISO 55001?**

We became interested in asset management long before ISO 55001 came into being. Our early forays in this area began with PAS 55, which offered generically applicable good practices in the optimized management of physical assets through a structural framework and a continual improvement model. Established in 2004 by BSI, ISO's member for the United Kingdom, this publicly available specification was one of the base documents that served as the foundation for the ISO 55000 series of International Standards, developed under the auspices of ISO.

1) Ilham Hikmi, Industrial Asset Manager; Nicolas Gaspoz, Infrastructure and Planning Manager; Guy Marguet, Head of Projects and Methods Coordination.



The advent of ISO 55001 in 2014 captured our attention as it promised broader applicability of the standard to all types of physical and non-physical assets and the international seal of the ISO label. The transition to the new standard was a logical continuation and well warranted by the consistency that existed between the two standards (PAS 55 was one of the base documents used in the development of ISO 55001, with many of its concepts informing the set of requirements of the ISO standard) and the ease with which we were able to switch from one to the other.

**What are, in your opinion, the benefits of the standard?**

The primary goal of our asset management initiative in Genève Aéroport was to improve existing practices within a structuring and structured framework that would guarantee the sustainability of our facilities for decades to come. ISO 55001 lets us achieve this objective while meeting the needs and constraints in terms of cost, operation

and regulatory requirements. Airport and aviation activities possess their own specific challenges, in particular as regards the complexity and prevalence of the notion of risk as it pertains to security and safety.

Traditionally, decisions are a trade-off between cost and performance, but integrating risk in order to achieve a more balanced scorecard is more appropriate to our context and activities. In addition to the cross-functional aspect and other requirements of the standard, the above-mentioned elements will allow us to strengthen the legitimacy of our actions from top management right through to their execution at ground level and vice versa.

**Can you explain what the management of your technical assets and infrastructure involves?**

Genève Aéroport is a major piece of infrastructure linking the Geneva region to the rest of the world and it must contribute to the economic, social and cultural development of its catchment area.

The region's growth is a real opportunity for the airport, whose proximity to the city of Geneva has greatly contributed to the area's international profile. At the same time, it offers a range of services, through its infrastructure and assets, in a highly specialized context fraught with space and regulatory constraints that can limit its operational flexibility.

These challenges will be even greater in the future due to the increased demand (25 million passengers are expected by 2030), more stringent quality standards and requirements, and the developments in risk mitigation. In this context, airport managers – in particular, asset managers – must always be on the look-out for clever, innovative and optimal solutions that meet both our short- and long-term needs for infrastructure and assets in compliance with applicable standards, while ensuring sound financial management.

**Can you give some concrete examples of achievements or improvements made possible by the standard?**

ISO 55001 is relatively recent. So, although our work in this field began in 2012, we didn't make the transition to the new standard until 2014. That said, we are already seeing notable improvements. As regards asset knowledge, first of all, we now have a structured asset register identifying all the assets under our management. This first step will be followed by the creation of an integrated asset reference plan.

Our asset management implementation strategy based on ISO 55001 focuses on processes and methodologies. This enables us to improve our decision-making process by introducing trade-offs at each life-cycle stage. Criticality analysis has enabled us to identify our most critical asset systems and we are now in a position to create an appropriate management plan. By way of example, our baggage handling system has been examined in terms of operational and financial performance.

As part of a major project, life-cycle costing (LCC) has enabled us to identify the impact of infrastructure costs on aviation charges and constitutes a more advanced basis for a financial profitability analysis. As regards the operational aspect, a programme is underway to improve measures for system performance monitoring. Similarly, an operational availability analysis of our retractable boarding bridges and de-icing system helps improve the way our associated level of service is perceived and enables us to adapt and optimize our maintenance plans with greater accuracy.

## Genève Aéroport expects 25 million passengers by 2030.





The aforementioned benefits were obtained thanks to the involvement of players with various functions and areas of expertise, both internal and external. Synergies and shared interests are identified and working groups are formed on specific subjects. Future work will undoubtedly strengthen interdepartmental collaboration.

**What are the important areas you will be working on in the near future?**

Our efforts to improve our asset management system paid off around mid-2016 when we were awarded the “initial” certification to ISO 55001. This is the first step, which recognizes company competence backed by an implementation and development plan. For Genève Aéroport, accessing the next steps on the maturity scale means, firstly, implementing an improvement plan based on the audit results and, secondly, adapting and implementing the 2017-2018 asset management plan.

At the same time, we will continue to fine-tune our methods and processes to further integrate the asset management system into the company’s overall operation. Key areas for development, now and in the future, include expanding our asset register in line with asset costing, creating an asset reference plan, improving performance indicators, optimizing maintenance costs and integrating airport planning, and prioritizing investments.

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**In what way do airports benefit from using ISO 55001? What advice would you give to those that are not using it yet?**

Airports are enterprises with a high asset value that operate in a complex environment comprising diverse business activities and systems, and subject to strict requirements in terms of risk mitigation. They have to meet exacting, sometimes restrictive, international regulation as well as the increasing need to optimize costs while maintaining the highest levels required by quality standards.

Because an airport’s activity is highly dependent on the state of its infrastructure and assets, any malfunction or deterioration, especially of its most critical assets, is a potential risk to the fluidity and continuity of operations. This could even lead to operations coming to a halt, with the negative or disastrous repercussions this would have for the “passenger

experience” and the airport’s image as a whole.

Having an asset management system in place according to ISO 55001 reduces uncertainties and contingencies because the standard requires the implementation and monitoring of an asset management plan. This must be aligned with the enterprise’s activities and strategic objectives based on a good knowledge of its assets – and their current and future condition – and the integration of a risk/cost/performance balance. Some airports have already adopted similar approaches in response to targeted problems. Others are thinking of using ISO 55001 but have not yet taken the plunge. Having said that, there is no denying the interest of European airports in certification and Genève Aéroport has already received the visit of several specialists from airports wanting to find out how we went about implementing the standard. ■