

Air Traffic Management's first international poll of the great and the good of the business highlighted both the quality of many of the firms doing business today — and also the great variety of companies that service the industry.

And the winners are ...

One of the extraordinary results of conducting a poll is also the most banal and predictable. Within moments of the first results coming in, what starts off as a level playing field suddenly becomes a field of winners, almost winners and the rest.

So too with *Air Traffic Management's* first survey carried out by an independent research company — for methodology details and the all-important rankings please turn to next page.

And as the results of the survey grew it started to become clear that certain trends were clearly in place and moreover certain companies had a special place in the hearts of air traffic management specialists.

Many of the results clearly showed the dominance of certain industry brands and the presence of the major players would, it would be fair to say, mostly predictable. Though not always so especially when the brands compete.

So, for example, Thales' Eurocat system has proved immensely popular in recent years but the interviewees' selection of Raytheon as front runner in the category of best radar provider was by an overwhelming majority. (Its rival technology providers will, however, have been comforted by their positions in the best technology provider category.)

Clearly on occasion parts of the survey produced slightly misleading results. There was confusion, for example, from some respondents that the best screen product was in fact, Sony (which have long stopped manufacturing them) and others who mistakenly thought that the provider of the radar system also made the screen.

For the sake of a faithful record of the results, we have left these in. In the event, the actuality of the underlying situation was that Barco was clearly front runner with eg-electronic snapping at its heels; something that analysts in the industry would also



Enter the next generation of high tech controllers

agree with.

The award of best communications provider goes to Frequentis which has long been an industry favourite but here its top ranking was neck and neck with Schmidt, Park Air, Harris, ITT and General Dynamics coming frustratingly close.

There were two particular categories where voting was, perhaps predictably, low — that was where interviewees were asked to nominate a best preferred consultancy or best weather information provider or product.

Here, like the other categories we have given an outright winner and a highly commended but in all fairness we have to admit that voting was low and the difference between the two rankings is marginal. Moreover in the best consultancy section there were almost 20 different names mentioned.

Only in the category of top air navigation service provider have we broken down the results to a first to fifth ranking.

Here we felt that the position of outright winners was statistically valid in that the separation of the votes was sufficiently pronounced as to be worth breaking the information out.

The selection of top air navigation

service provider will, we know, cause a furore among those — undoubtedly excellent — ANSPs that are not mentioned. We think here that other factors came into play in interviewees' minds. Size, to an extent, must clearly be a factor weighing on many people's thoughts, most particularly because a certain degree of critical mass is expected to provide a comprehensive service.

That said, we were surprised by the number of votes for Denmark's Naviair which was just a little outside our top five and came in as a highly commended. (Not that we were surprised about the excellence of Naviair but that it was so widely known.)

Another factor that seems, looking through the votes for best air navigation service provider, is the presence of the ANSP on a global stage. It is no coincidence perhaps that the CEOs of our top five are all regarded as highly influential within Canso or have a reputation in international circles as well as being clearly a leading ANSP.

Next year we intend to double the range of our survey and double the number of responses. If you'd like to hear what the industry feels are the latest trends in place, don't forget to cast your vote too. ■

COVER STORY

AIR TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SURVEY 2007 — RESULTS

BEST RADAR PROVIDER

Winner: Raytheon

Honourable mention: Lockheed Martin
Honourable mention: Northrop Grumman
Honourable mention: Thales

BEST SCREEN PROVIDER

Winner: Barco

Honourable mention: Aydin
Honourable mention: eg-electronic
Honourable mention: Raytheon
Honourable mention: Sony

BEST COMMUNICATIONS PROVIDER

Winner: Frequentis

Honourable mention: General Dynamics
Honourable mention: Harris Corporation
Honourable mention: ITT
Honourable mention: Park Air
Honourable mention: Schmidt

BEST TECHNOLOGY PROVIDER

Winner: Lockheed Martin

Honourable mention: Sensis
Honourable mention: Thales

MOST EXCITING PRODUCT

ADS-B

BEST SIMULATOR PROVIDER

Winner: Adacel

Honourable mention: MicroNav
Honourable mention: Raytheon

BEST WEATHER INFORMATION PROVIDER/PRODUCT

Winner: Vaisalla

Honourable mention: Harris
Honourable mention: Deutscher Wetterdienst
Honourable mention: WSI

BEST CONSULTANCY ADVISER

Winner: Booz Allen Hamilton

Honourable mention: Eurocontrol
Honourable mention: Helios
Honourable mention: Lincoln Laboratories
Honourable mention: Mitre Corporation

BEST AIR NAVIGATION SERVICE PROVIDER

Top ranked: UK NATS

Second ranked: NavCanada
Third ranked: US FAA
Fourth ranked: Air Services Australia
Fifth ranked: Germany's DFS

Honourable mention: Naviar Denmark

THE METHODOLOGY

Who are the best in today's highly competitive air traffic management? That was the challenge that *Air Traffic Management* set out to find for this issue. To do so proved a Herculean task.

Asking over 400 air traffic professionals proved difficult on many fronts. Four telephone interviewers were hired specifically for the project. They were chosen for two qualities — their tactful persistence in obtaining responses from the most recalcitrant interviewees and, equally importantly, for the fact that they had little to no knowledge of air traffic management.

The last skill perhaps sounds the oddest. As the team leader explained in their briefing, we don't want the slightest preconceived notions.

The results were all generated in four weeks of telephone calls between early August and September. Because of the sensitive nature of the poll, the total anonymity of the respondents was guaranteed. No staff from *Air Traffic Management* — including the editor and publisher — were allowed to see anything other than a final breakdown of the results. Only the team leader Tim Moxon, could match how individual votes corresponded with their votes.

One of the things to remember, however, is the fact that our interviewers were asking people for their impressions. On a couple of occasions companies that have stopped producing a product — for example, Sony which manufactures controllers' screens — were named. We

debated whether to clean up the data on the basis that these are misinformation but on balance decided to let them stay as they would inevitably rebias other parts of the data.

Two organizations that will remain nameless — but we know who you are! — made efforts to rig the voting by briefing their clients. Once we had discovered this, this is a standard remit of the interviewers' jobs, we inevitably had to make adjustments.

On balance we decided that efforts to rig the answers can range from the deadly serious to the light-hearted. And for that reason we thought it improper to act as judge, jury and more over this. Instead we decided to rebalance the answers in the affected categories in a way that seemed both reasonable and fair. ■