



PRESS RELEASE

EUROPEAN TRANSPORT WORKERS' FEDERATION

FEDERATION EUROPEENNE DES TRAVAILLEURS DES TRANSPORTS

Brussels, 14 January 2008

THE COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION ON THE SINGLE SKY LEGISLATION IS NOT A SUCCESS STORY FOR WORKERS!

The ETF has read with astonishment the Commission Communication on the Single European Sky (SES)* stating that the "Community policy in aviation is a success story". The loss of thousands of jobs and the general precariousness of the industry following liberalisation should have led the Commission to a more humble claim. It has not been a success story for the workers! This approach indicates that the European Commission assesses social aspects as negligible and that trade unions cannot expect it to take social issues into account.

ETF Joint Air Traffic Management Working Group (JATMWG) President **Laurence King** said: "Instead of prioritising safety and capacity issues, the Commission puts forward consolidation as a major objective, thus ignoring the consequences of defragmenting the sector. The quoted reduction to 10 area control centers (ACC) out of the current 50 and the many hundreds of job losses that will follow will enable the Commission to boast a success story in the European ATM. ETF rejects this approach."

ETF Political Secretary **François Ballestero** added that "the ETF and its unions remain committed to the concept of the SES and to bringing enhanced capacity to the sector. Reductions in the number of ACC and the restructuring of airspace has already been undertaken in a number of member states. The crucial difference is that workers have been consulted."

"The EC is fully aware that there has been insufficient progress in the area of 'Safety Reporting'. It is regrettable that this issue is absent in the communication because extensive and correct safety data is needed to properly assess ATM performance", he continued.

The ETF notes that the Commission rightly underlines the lack of commitment of member states regarding the removal of difficulties in the establishment of Functional Airspace Blocks (FABs). "However there has also been a complete lack of support from the European Union on the sovereignty and liability issues which have been identified", **Laurence King** stressed.

The ETF agrees that the environment has to be brought forward as a new and major challenge that had not been highlighted in the first package. ATM has a role to play but this should be put in the context of a general policy framework concerning air transport and all the other transport modes.

The EC communication acknowledges that traffic delays have reduced considerably since 1999 and continue to remain at a very low level despite a significant traffic increase in the last years. For the ETF, the work of European ATM personnel and the efficiency of the European ATM system should be recognised at this stage and this positive result should influence the context of the SES second package.

The ETF notes the nomination of a network manager, but would like the Commission to give a clear definition of this new position. The ETF would also like to see more commitment from the Commission to involve ATM personnel as key players in the future development of ATM.

The ETF represents more than 2.5 million transport workers from 223 transport unions and 40 European countries, in the following sectors: railways, road transport, maritime transport, inland navigation, civil aviation, ports & docks, tourism and fisheries.

Once again, the EC ignores the positive role played by Social Partners (CANSO and ETF) and barely mentions the importance of social partners for the future. This role should be underlined as crucial for the FABs establishment.

Ballestero concluded: "The Commissioner refused to involve Staff Representatives in the work of the High Level Group (HLG) on the Future of the European Aviation Regulatory Framework. This last Communication demonstrates that the Commission is not committed to taking account the views of ATM staff".

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() ETF regrets that this Communication is mainly based on the recommendations put forward by the HLG report since this report was issued without proper consultation of the ATM staff. (We recall the ETF response to this report – http://www.iatmwg.org/cgi-bin/20070802_ETFresponseHLGReport.pdf)*