

**Minutes of the Sixth meeting Expert Group on the Social Dimension of the  
Single European Sky**

**Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> October 2012**

- The European Commission, Directorate E2
- PRB Chairman
- CANSO
- ECA
- ATCEUC
- ETF
- IFAIMA
- IFATCA
- IFATSEA

## **1. Welcome**

The meeting was chaired by the European Commission (EC); all participants were welcomed, highlighting the importance of the performance scheme for RP2 and the future working procedures of this expert group.

The Minutes of the 5<sup>th</sup> meeting were adopted with minor corrections.

## **2. Update and discussion on preparations for the second Reference Period of the Performance Scheme**

The EC opened by stating that it wants this group to be a strong expert group (EG), giving clear views on SES in general, and on certain issues specifically (Performance scheme, SESAR etc), and in tracking the activities of the SSC (EG to receive papers for the SSC in the same timeframe as its members (except at D + 1) and generate inputs to topics of interest before the following SSC, where decisions on those issues would take place. Meetings for the EG should then be scheduled to allow EG comment on SSC issues to be discussed, and possible positions agreed.

The PRB Chairman presented his view on performance, looking both at RP1 to date, and the outlook for RP2.

- RP2 would have a much broader engagement than RP1
- More openness and transparency with stronger integration for the social dimension required in the process.

The main opinion expressed by the group when considering RP1 was that it was on track but facing difficulties that can't be solved through a central solution (national based: economic situation, weather, etc.).

Members questioned how ambitious we have to be in RP2 (citing differences in position and opinion between politicians and airlines) and stressed the importance of openness and transparency in everything that we do.

Members noted that service providers have no influence on flight planning, but that the failure of targets will be attributed to them. The PRB Chairman reminded all that as part of the development of RP2, they will talk to the airlines and pilots.

The EC reacted by noting that there is a real problem with the system if route extensions are due to variations in unit rates, particularly when weighed against aviation fuel at such a high price. Attendees raised an issue highlighting the gap between what was foreseen in target setting (forecasting) and the actual situation – this would be a problem for RP2, which would span 5 years, if a mid-term review were not considered.

Members highlighted a lack of consultation for RP1, and that this should not be allowed to be repeated for RP2 – they opined that in many states, the national authorities do not even know how to address the unions. The EC stressed that the rules are clear, that consultation processes should be installed and effective, and any difficulties noted with this process should be addressed directly to the commission. Members agreed that this is the right body (the Expert Group) and want to be consulted in drafts and not only the final document. It hurts that stakeholder's obligation for consultation does not include social partners.

### **Safety Targets**

Some Members supported the approach being suggested for data monitoring and would like to discuss further, with cost benefit analysis made on what indicators would be feasible in RP2; they stressed that the Safety KPA should be placed on the same level as the other 3 KPAs. PRB stated that they are rapidly developing the metrics and will have it by February 2013; you will see it in the next meeting. Members reminded the PRB that they preferred a qualitative approach to safety than a quantitative one.

### **Extension of the cost targets to terminal service**

Members noted that there is a divergence between national targets and EU-wide targets taking account of the national differences. To prevent a new layer of fragmentation between en-route and terminal services they are opposed to a top-down approach and that there was currently no tool for European target-setting in the terminal area.

The EC reminded all that EU-wide target in the Terminal Area was obliged from existing legislation and was meant to put pressure on in a less complex way than en-route, taking into account points that were made – more time for reflection was needed.

### **Uncontrollable costs**

Members opposed deleting this text in the regulation without proposing an alternative, highlighting that these are real issues (tax changes, etc.). The EC Highlighted the need for a new concept and definition on what is uncontrollable cost, cutting of several items on the list. PRB Chairman reminded all that the drive was for openness and transparency as to what states want to use uncontrollable costs for; at the moment there was no transparency whatsoever.

## **Total Economic Value (TEV)**

Members opined that, in their view, TEV is a good enabler for negotiating for the performance plan (EU/Local level) and should be taken into consideration in the new regulation. They stressed the need for the involvement of airlines into the implementation of this approach to help them to better understand its added value. PRB likes the approach, but thinks it is not yet sufficiently mature to implement in the ATM industry; however, it is committed to its use as soon as possible, but recognizes that it is disliked by the airlines (who see it as a smokescreen to hide lower performance).

## **3. Discussion on the future functioning of the Expert Group**

The attendees discussed the EC paper offered at this meeting and noted that it is a good starting point for discussion; the EG is there for the 5<sup>th</sup> pillar and now it is not fit for purpose; there has to be out-of-the-box thinking, there can't be first class and second class players if we are to draw the maximum effect from the group. They reminded all that the Creation of this group was enshrined in legislation (549/2004 Art. 10 (2)) and that we cannot reduce the scope, its more than solely human factor but the implementation of SES regulation with social impacts.

The EC noted that the legislation doesn't mention a distinction of observers and members, that distinction comes in the ROPs only. The EC asked what would be the practical consequences if all members where on the same foot? What was the reason to think otherwise? Members added that the observers have major experience in social partner sector so they should be on the same foot as all the members and that we have lost 1 year by arguing about rules of the procedure, and we do not want it to happen again, we do not have the time with SES2+ coming up.

The EC stated that the rules of procedure are more of a guideline and a safeguard to prevent interlopers into your work; they are not there to stop relevant experts submitting papers, or even to comment on other people's papers. It was agreed that the EC has to take a decision as to where they get their advice, and that they would write to all colleagues; a Letter offering thanks for valuable input to date, and lay out the *modus operandi* it would like to see for this group.

## **Date of Next Meeting**

The Single Sky Committee will meet for the first time in 2013 on the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> of March and it was felt this group should meet in advance of that in accordance with the discussions on process recorded above; therefore, dates in early February would be canvassed. All group members were asked to advise of their availability in that period.