

**MINUTES OF THE INAUGURAL MEETING  
OF THE COMMUNITY OBSERVATORY ON AIRPORT CAPACITY**

The inaugural meeting of the newly established Community Observatory on airport capacity took place in Brussels on 4 November 2008, under the chairmanship of Zoltan Kazatsay (Deputy Director-General of DG TREN), Mr Paul Wilson (Eurocontrol representative) being elected Deputy Chairperson. The meeting closed with a speech by Diego Canga Fano on behalf of Vice-President Tajani.

Participants unanimously welcomed the setting up of the Observatory, which is set to play an important role in the implementation of the "action plan for airport capacity, efficiency and safety in Europe" adopted by the Commission in January 2007. Discussions indeed confirmed that there is a need to assess airport capacity in a common agreed manner, to better estimate and take into account potential under-utilized capacity at secondary airports, and to consider European airports as a network rather than a simple juxtaposition of local particularities. Several participants also linked capacity in the air and on the ground and insisted on the need to align airport capacity with ATM capacity in order to preserve the overall efficiency of the air network. The lack of airport data at EU level was also stressed, as well as the necessity of improving the environmental compatibility of airports. The debate also allowed clarifying the mission and the structure of the Observatory, as follows:

***1/ Mission of the Observatory:***

The core competence of the Observatory is to advise the Commission on the implementation of the "Action Plan". The draft terms of reference have been adjusted accordingly. Identically, it was also decided to simplify the draft working procedures in order to take into account the setting up of three permanent working groups and to allow the Observatory to function straightforwardly. The amended terms of reference, which now include the working procedures, are attached.

***2/ Work programme and working groups:***

The 5 years work programme of the Observatory was presented by the Commission, and by ARC as regards the "QLAIR Initiative". It was agreed to set up three working groups, and their rapporteur elected, as follows:

- WG1: "Capacity" (Rapporteur: Eurocontrol) which will deal with, among other, airport capacity assessment methodology and infrastructure planning processes. It will also carry out the report on the airport capacity issue in Europe, the cartography of European airport network, and the inventory and assessment of Community financial grants to the airport sector.
- WG2: "Gate to gate" (Rapporteur: EUACA & ACI) which will deal with slot issues and will give assistance and advice to the ATM Network Manager to be set up by the Commission.
- WG3: "Intermodality" (Rapporteur: ARC) which will deal with, among other, intermodality at, and accessibility to airports, and the integrated air-rail ticketing. It will also assess the ARC "QLAIR Initiative".

Each working group, under its rapporteur, will have to issue draft opinions on the parts of the work programme it takes charge of. The outcome of the works of the working groups will be

discussed (whenever appropriate) by the Observatory as a whole, during "plenary sessions" to be held at least twice a year.

***3/ Next steps:***

- The three working groups will carry out their respective tasks simultaneously, according to priorities and timetables to be decided by the Chairman and the three rapporteurs. These latter will therefore meet rapidly with the Commission to prioritize the implementation of the work programme and decide on the start of the works of the working groups. The members of the Observatory will be informed accordingly.
  
- Observatory's members have been invited to let the Chairman know which working group(s) they will preferably participate in (each member being of course entitled to contribute to the works of all of the working groups). Each working group will prepare opinions according to methods discussed within it.
  
- The Commission will start setting up a dedicated web site.

**Enclosures:**

- Terms of reference of the Observatory, as amended
  
- List of participants on the inaugural meeting of 4 November 2008