



Negotiations between the United States of America and the European Union on a Memorandum of Cooperation in Civil Aviation Research and Development Kick-off

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Press Release

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Joint Press Release of the European Commission and the US Federal Aviation Administration

Today, the European Commission opened negotiations with the US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) on a memorandum of cooperation in civil aviation research and development. The FAA delegation, led by Mr. Stephen Creamer, Director, Africa, Europe, and Middle East Office, FAA, met officially in Brussels with a delegation from the European Union led by Mr. Daniel Calleja, Director Air Transport.

The FAA has launched a modernization programme: NextGen, to replace the Air Traffic Management (ATM) system currently operated in the United States. With a similar timescale, the Single European Sky policy of the European Union includes an equivalent programme known as Single European Sky ATM Research (SESAR). The SESAR programme targets an in-depth modernisation and harmonization of the existing ATM systems in Europe. Considering the comparable nature of these two initiatives, airspace users have been requesting interoperability between SESAR and NextGen to avoid costly duplication of airborne equipment.

The future Memorandum of Cooperation will come as a pragmatic response to airspace users' request. With a view to guarantee interoperability between both future ATM systems and promote the development of international standards through the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), the Memorandum is aimed at establishing a binding framework for fruitful technical cooperation relating to their development. In addition, it should have the potential to cover other related civil aviation research and development issues.

It is foreseen to complete the negotiations by June 2010 and have the Memorandum of Cooperation entering into force early in 2011.

The decision authorising the European Commission to open negotiations with the US Federal Aviation Administration was adopted on 9 October 2009.

Contact persons:

Luc Tytgat, European Commission, Brussels: +32 2 296 84 30
Alison Duquette, FAA, Washington: +1 202 267 3883