

Minutes of the Ninth meeting of the Expert Group

on the Social Dimension of SES

Friday 13th September 2013

The European Commission, Directorate E2

- CANSO
- ATCEUC
- ETF
- IFATCA
- IFATSEA
- ECA

Apologies

- IFAIMA

Welcome

The meeting was chaired by the European Commission who welcomed all and thanked the members of the group for attending.

The agenda was accepted and no further AOB topics were requested by the members.

The Chairman gave a verbal overview of the current status of key topics in the SES arena: RP2 Target Setting; SES 2+; SESAR PCP, the Airport Package; SJU Extension and Centralised Services (CS).

Responding to a question from the floor, the Chairman stated that feedback had been generally positive from workshop attendees, although greater detail was required to make informed decisions; the issue of financing was 'ongoing', and Member States were keen to see comprehensive and robust Business Cases to each individual CS. Members added that they had spoken with Eurocontrol, and that they expected answers to technical questions. The general opinion was that such a programme needed significant management associated with it, that it needed to be cognisant of actual traffic growth, and that cyber-security was a pivotal concern.

Adoption of the minutes of 07 May 2013

Minutes accepted with no further amendments.

SES 2+ Q and A session

E2 offered the opportunity to answer any questions or concerns that remained regarding SES 2+.

Members reminded all of their position on SES2+, and of the 'day of action' that had been held on June 12th, which would be followed by a demonstration at the European Parliament on October 14th.

The European Commission acknowledged this announcement and reminded attendees that SES 2+ was now an inter-institutional issue and that this would be an open debate to

which the staff organisations were encouraged to contribute; it would also form the core of debate at the informal Transport Ministers conference in Vilnius on September 16th/17th. It was also noted that the Commission proposal on this topic could be reviewed as a result of both Council and Parliament views. They noted that the European Parliament was looking for a 1st reading completion by Spring 2014.

Others noted that their views too were well known, and that another 'day of action' had been called for October 10th. The European Commission opined that such a confrontational manner helped no-one and felt that dialogue was the key. They reminded attendees that the public looked to apportion blame in such cases and pointed to the industry, not the Commission

One group member introduced their draft paper on this topic, stressing the need for acknowledgement of the current economic and traffic climate; their core observation was of a lack of collective vision on the future of ATM in Europe, and that in addition, a strategy was needed to get us to it.

Members voiced their disappointment at a lack of consultation in the process before the proposal was submitted for co-decision and that it focused on the term 'support or ancillary services, which they felt were ANSP core business, not supporting in nature. They went on to note their dissatisfaction with the lack of 5th pillar assessment of the proposal, as had happened for Safety and other areas.

The Commission drew comparisons with the other pillars, reminding attendees that EASA facilitates the safety pillar, the airport observatory does so for the airport pillar, the PRB does for the performance pillar and the SJU does for new technology; they acknowledged that this Expert Group was expected to do the same for the 5th pillar but lacked administrative and technical support – much as the ICB enjoyed – he noted that the Commission was currently looking at this issue and hoped, in the future, to facilitate such support. They furthermore reminded attendees that the Commission was looking for a proactive, rather than reactive, stance on SES issues.

Some noted their willingness to help, but felt constrained by the lack of long term SES vision, noting that they had supported SES for 10 years but now felt unable to do so as all reference to failure pointed at the controllers and this was neither fair nor acceptable; they felt that their energy was being spent fighting the Commission rather than supporting it. They also opined that they felt that SES had taken a wrong turn at the FABs issue, and that a different approach was now required; a clear high-level vision would help.

The Commission thanked all for their inputs and concluded by saying that they were not forcing the privatization or liberalization models, more that it was trying to find 'the right way'; success would be found as a combination of all SES threads and by open dialogue. They noted that the Commissioner will listen to the debate at Vilnius (Informal Transport Council) and would draw conclusions and that the opportunity to refine the proposal would be taken between Council and Parliament.

Updates from the Chair – other issues.

The Chairman gave a resumé of the current position on 3 SES related studies and invited attendees to contribute to such work. Members noted that it had been involved in some work but felt that the consortia involved were consulting inadequately, and too late in the process. They were particularly worried by an apparent lack of useable data relating to the ANSPs, which could then be used to draw inappropriate conclusions.

Attendees went on to add that different data was used for the studies to that considered by the PRB for RP2 target setting; and, supported by others, noted again the lack of safety emphasis in the next period.

The Chairman gave a brief update on the current position with respect to Centralised Services; members felt that this work was too immature, although some felt that the principle of centralizing certain services was not a bad thing – but more work was required to better understand the detail.

The Chairman then reminded attendees of the raison d'être of this group and suggested the opportunity existed for a joint position on one or two key SES issues.

Debate amongst group members resulted in an offer to lead drafting on a paper for RP2 target setting, and a second member would do the same for SES 2+. Coordination amongst members was important for this work, as any resulting output would need to be supported by all. It was agreed that papers transmitted to the Commission on October 14th by named individuals would signify comprehensive agreement on the position, and the Chairman would then submit such papers to those most able to react to the content.

AOB

There was no further business.

Date of Next Meeting

On the understanding that the group would wish to discuss RP2 issues prior to its adoption at the December SSC, the next meeting would be held in Brussels on Wednesday November 20th at 1400.