



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Council Conclusions on the Commission communication on an agenda for sustainable future in general and business aviation

*2861st TRANSPORT, TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND ENERGY Council meeting
Luxembourg, 7 April 2008*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"THE COUNCIL:

1. WELCOMES the Commission Communication on a sustainable future for general and business aviation, which provides a clear overview of the sector and presents a coherent position as regards its future development¹.
2. RECOGNISES the specific social and economic benefits provided by European general and business aviation, in particular by:
 - increasing the mobility of people, productivity of businesses, promoting the regional cohesion and development of peripheral regions of the Community,
 - developing and promoting aeronautical skills and supplying qualified staff for private, business and commercial flying activities as well as for supporting services,
 - providing specialised, high value services in the public interest, such as public and emergency service air operations,
 - contributing to aeronautical research and development, and

¹ Doc. 5334/08

P R E S S

- contributing to the development of aerial sports and non-profit activities.
3. RECALLS that European general and business aviation, along with support services, are important for the EU and world aeronautical manufacturing industry, and that these activities are growing fast.
 4. RECOGNISES that general and business aviation in Europe comprises mainly privately owned aircraft, small and medium-sized enterprises or not-for-profit organisations having limited resources to keep up with the ongoing regulatory changes. In this respect stresses the need for regulations to be proportionate and ensure that safety is not compromised, by involving users and organisations in safety management as appropriate and by taking into account the specific circumstances of this sector, the diversity of its activities and the different kinds of aircraft involved, as well as national, local and regional characteristics.
 5. WELCOMES the intention of the Commission to facilitate access for European manufacturers and operators of general and business aviation aircraft to the world markets, in coordination with Member States.
 6. TAKES NOTE OF the Commission's clarification of certain air transport definitions with respect to state and civil aircraft, commercial air transport operation and fractional ownership.
 7. RECALLS that the implementing rules adopted in the framework of Regulation 216/2008¹ will take due account of applicable ICAO rules and standards and will take full account of the flexibility and proportionality provided for in that Regulation with regards to different kinds of operations and of the aircraft involved whereby, on the one hand, the possibility of specific criteria and certification is envisaged for fractional ownership operations, and on the other hand, the possibility of exemption from certification is envisaged for certain specific commercial operations where there are no safety or public interest reasons to justify such a procedure.
 8. STRESSES the need to take into account the needs of general and business aviation in the airport and airspace capacity optimisation initiatives in order to reflect the needs of all airport and airspace users, while ensuring the highest efficiency of the whole air transportation system for the benefit of the general public. In this respect underlines that two tracks can significantly contribute to tackling the capacity challenges facing the sector:
 - better planning of infrastructure to optimise the use of existing capacity,
 - wider utilisation of modern technologies.
 9. HIGHLIGHTS that general and business aviation needs to ensure environmental sustainability and, like the wider airline industry, or any other transport means, reduce the impact of noise and emissions. In this respect notes the importance of ensuring that European legislation takes into account the specific characteristics of the general and business aviation sector.

¹ Regulation 216/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 February 2008 on common rules in the field of civil aviation and establishing a European Aviation Safety Agency, and repealing Council Directive 91/670/EEC, Regulation (EC) No 1592/2002 and Directive 2004/36/EC (OJ L 79, 19.03.2008, p. 1 - 49).

10. WELCOMES the actions already under way, in particular in the field of research, to develop new, more environmentally friendly equipment, and requests that these actions be pursued in cooperation with all the stakeholders.
 11. RECOGNISES the need to develop, in a cost-efficient manner, a common set of essential data in close cooperation with the interested parties, in particular data that would contribute to safety improvements, and a better understanding of the social and economic value of the sector.
 12. CALLS for the effective implementation of the actions identified herein and in the conclusions of the Communication.
-