

Information

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UNLOCKING THE BENEFITS OF THE SINGLE EUROPEAN SKY Way ahead is clear, no reason to delay implementation, says AEA

The Association of European Airlines, which represents Europe's most important network airlines, has strongly endorsed the need to pursue progress towards the rationalisation of European airspace under the Single European Sky (SES) programme.

The European air traffic management (ATM) system suffers from fragmentation and inefficiencies which inflate the €9.5 billion annual cost to the airlines by one-third. If the system were operated more efficiently, safety would be enhanced, delays would be avoided and CO2 emissions per flight would be substantially decreased.

The AEA vision for the Single Sky was set out at an EU High Level Conference in Madrid on 26th February by Antonio Vazquez, CEO of Iberia and a member of the AEA supervisory board. Mr Vazquez told his audience that the current crisis in the aviation industry had reaffirmed that airlines simply could not afford to carry unnecessary costs, and inefficiencies needed to be rooted out of the aviation value chain.

Said Mr Vazquez: *"the Single Sky means higher performance at lower cost – the airlines benefit, their customers benefit, the environment benefits and a key element for European competitiveness runs more smoothly – how can it be other than a great deal? And yet there is a downside: the length of time it is taking to realise the project"*.

Mr Vazquez told his audience that the SES Performance Scheme – based on ambitious targets for safety, flight and cost efficiency, capacity and delays – was one of the most important features of the Single Sky. The reorganisation of a multitude of individual national and regional control areas into just nine 'functional airspace blocks' would finally demonstrate that sovereign airspaces could be combined into more manageable entities with greatly enhanced efficiencies. And finally, said Mr Vazquez, the SESAR technical programme which complements the Single Sky should be recognised as a key element of European transport infrastructure, eligible for public funding.

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- Olympic Air
- SAS Scandinavian Airlines
- SWISS
- TAP Portugal
- TAROM
- TNT Airways
- Turkish Airlines
- Ukraine International Airlines
- Virgin Atlantic Airways

“We are positioned for take-off towards a truly 21st-century solution for air traffic management”, said Mr Vazquez. “There should no longer be any reasons to delay the departure”.

Note: The AEA vision for the implementation of the Single European Sky II Package can be downloaded [here](#) from the AEA website www.aea.be

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Note to the Editor: The Association of European Airlines (AEA) brings together 36 European established scheduled network carriers. These collectively carry 374 million passengers and 7 million tonnes of cargo each year, operating 2,689 aircraft serving 662 destinations in 162 countries with 11,934 flights a day. They provide around 394,200 jobs directly, and generate a total turnover of €80 billion