Centralised Services Workshop

Annex 1: Address by the European Commission

Matthew Baldwin, Director Air Transport Directorate,

European Commission, 4 March 2013

Ladies and gentlemen, it's a pleasure to be invited to this EUROCONTROL Workshop with Member States and to give you our view.

As you know, improving performance is at the heart of the Single European Sky. All the elements of the SES, such as the creation of the Network Manager, the deployment of SESAR and the establishment of Functional Airspace Blocks are there to enable this – to help European ATM dramatically improve its performance.

These elements should not be allowed to develop in isolation – we must coordinate efforts and make sure that they offer mutual support; driving improved performance across the board. Vice-President Kallas of the European Commission wrote to EUROCONTROL in December 2012 and asked for its views on the evolving role of the Agency, specifically with regard to its contribution to SES.

In that letter, he also invited the Agency to clarify its approach to the development of the concept of centralised services. We have in the meantime received additional information from you, Frank – and I would like today to be able to present you our position on this last issue.

Firstly, I would like to thank Frank for his efforts to date. This is a very helpful initiative, which we see as very much in line with our

ideas for developing the Single European Sky, and we see this as a very practical way of addressing the underlying issue of fragmentation in service provision. Furthermore the implementation of such a concept would help in clarifying the evolving role of EUROCONTROL for the future, including its pan-European role, of course.

With the ramping up of EASA activity in acting as the European regulatory body in new aviation fields, we at the European Commission see EUROCONTROL's future more and more based around the work of the Network Manager. That function has the very real potential to become a decisive European player. Linking the concept of centralised services with the work of the Network Manager is not only a way to place it under a consistent legal framework within the SES initiative, but also to ensure that the industry is adequately represented in this initiative. So this aspect alone is very welcome.

There is also a need to link the concept of centralised services to the SESAR project in order to ensure that the deployment of centralised technologies and services significantly contributes to achieving the targets of the Performance Scheme.

As you know we are about to define the governance mechanisms for SESAR deployment, and are working on the definition of the first set of deployment activities under the so called Pilot Common Project. We intend to prepare for the selection of the deployment manager in the second half of this year.

Whilst the process of validating new technologies and the early deployment phase is in progress, we also have to look very hard at

what elements of SESAR could be implemented at a regional level, at the level of the Functional Airspace Blocks, and at the central level.

We at the European Commission are very much aware of our obligation to make the passage towards the Single European Sky as smooth as possible; so it is incumbent on us to encourage anything that helps to make sure that worthwhile projects are identified and implemented in an efficient manner, all with the highest level of synchronicity that we clearly need. That in turn means we are very supportive of your objectives with this initiative.

We recognise it is possible that not each and every one of the SESAR developments will necessarily make financial sense for every ANSP to deploy at a local or national level, even if there are very clear benefits at the FAB or network level. To this end, we should clearly demonstrate that the cost of deploying and providing centralised services is offset by corresponding cuts in budgets at local and national level.

This demonstration should take place in the context of SESAR deployment, notably the implementation of Common Projects. By doing this, Centralised Services will be fully integrated into SESAR projects and could benefit from EU financial support.

The technical enablers needed for the operation of the centralised services initiative should therefore logically become part of the SESAR deployment activities.

This concept of providing a centralised technology and service to a number of countries and users also has another benefit, that is – the extension of that service beyond Europe, further bridging the

gap to non-EU Eurocontrol States, and indeed more widely to 3rd Countries. If we can achieve harmonised technological solutions and services on a pan European basis, then we see this as a valuable addition to our External Aviation Policy overall as well as to what we are trying to achieve with the Single European Sky.

It's also worth recalling that the European Commission did make proposals to open the market for ancillary services as part of SES I. It was clear that some Member States were not ready for this step at that time. Perhaps with hindsight, that was no bad thing – I think that we have come a long way since then in terms of refining and revisiting this concept. We are further reflecting on these proposals in view of our SES2+ initiative.

So to summarise, the concept of centralised services is a very valuable option in working towards the opening of the market for ancillary services.

In brief, that is why I am here today, to encourage you in this process, and to express our confidence in our partnership with EUROCONTROL, notably the Network Manager, which we see as very well placed to organise the centralised services idea in full consistency with the SES legal framework. Of course, all contributions to this principle will need to be supported by positive business cases, and a real demonstrated need, but let's now get down to that detailed work in full agreement with the core concept.

Thank you very much.