

**Meeting of the Steering Group
14 March 2006**

Minutes (adopted on 14 September 2006)

Chairperson: Ms Desseaux (employers)

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

2. Adoption of the minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the last steering group meeting (2 March 2005) were adopted. The parties agreed to adopt the minutes of today's meeting at the next plenary. Comments on any future draft minutes should be made within 4 weeks.

3. Information on the DG TREN work programme

Mr Johansson (DG TREN/F.1) gave a presentation on the two main future proposals in the field of civil aviation: the revision of the 3rd liberalisation package and slots. Both initiatives would hopefully be adopted by the College before summer. His colleague Mr Ktenas informed the parties about a planned study on the social benefits and costs of air transport in the European Union.

Regarding the 3rd package and slots, the DG TREN representative confirmed that no further consultation was foreseen. The workers' side recalled their proposal for a definition of the "principal place of business" during the 2003 consultation and expressed their wish to address the issue together with the 3rd liberalisation package during the June plenary session. Despite DG TREN's statement that no further consultation would be planned the social partners expressed their serious interest in closely following-up on the EU Commission's next steps which should be made known to those responsible.

As far as ground handling and airport capacity was concerned, a big stakeholder meeting would take place beginning of April. The social partners strongly requested that they be consulted on new proposals and announced that they would send a joint letter to the Commission.

Generally, the participants welcomed DG TREN's project of a study on the "social/societal impact on aviation". They expressed their very first reactions and proposals to the outline and asked to be strongly involved as social partners, not only in the drafting of the terms of reference of the study, but also as participants in the steering committee which would monitor the study. Mr Ktenas supported in principle the idea of a steering committee involving the social partners and distributing the draft terms of reference for comments. As far as the objective of the study was concerned, the participants said it was not clear whether it was a backward or forward looking study and whether it would look at the role the legislator played (or not) as stimulator of the

industry. Since this study addresses the civil aviation as a whole, CANSO requested that the air traffic management sector be included also.

In his resume Mr Ktenas confirmed that:

- (a) The study should bring about a clear picture on benefits and costs as well as proposals on what could be done with regard to improvements;
- (b) No concrete timeline was set yet but it would be intended to have the study finalised by the end of 2006;
- (c) Subject to consultation within DG TREN, the Social Partners would be given an opportunity to comment on the Study's Terms of Reference and invited to participate in a Steering Committee activity.

4. Contacts with ELFAA and IAHA – state of play

The DG EMPL representative reminded the meeting of the representativeness criteria for European social partner organisations, which were more than stakeholders thanks to their capacity to negotiate social partner agreements¹.

The day before the meeting, ELFAA had sent back the questionnaire. However, the information was not yet complete and the Commission was not yet in a position to say whether the organisation would fulfil the criteria. All organisations present welcomed this first step from ELFAA's side and underlined the importance of getting the missing information as soon as possible. Whilst for AEA and other employers' organisations, it was clear that if the Commission were to find that ELFAA fulfilled the criteria, they would automatically recognise them as social partner at the table, the workers' side was reluctant to such an "automatic reply". AEA repeated its announcement that if the Commission's examination was positive, ELFAA's participation would be a precondition for AEA's further engagement in the European social dialogue. The meeting agreed that if the positive evaluation was ready before the plenary meeting, ELFAA would be invited as observer to the meeting. If not, the issue would be put on the agenda of the plenary meeting again. (Note: an e-mail exchange between DG EMPL and the social partner organisations on the final assessment of ELFAA's status prior to the plenary was agreed.)

As far as IAHA was concerned, it was agreed to invite them to the plenary meeting as an observer, asking the association to present themselves as ELFAA did two years before.

5. Ground handling working group activities

The working group, which lately only had functioned between ACI Europe and ETF (and IAHA as observer) without involving the other partners, had not been very active throughout the last year, mainly due to the awaited ground handling directive revision. The airports were ready to discuss the quality issue outside the working group with ETF. IACA stressed its double role as employer on the one hand but as a buyer of ground handling services on the other hand. AEA repeated its wish to see the ground handling market more open. Discussing liberalisation as such would not be the scope of the

¹ http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/social_dialogue/represent_en.htm

working group, but one priority could be to discuss the consequences of the revision of the directive. The parties decided to agree upon the work programme in writing and then meet and exchange ideas with IAHA; ACI should send a proposal in order to adopt the work programme. Following this adoption, a meeting will be organised.

6. Future of the industry

At the last "Future of the industry" meeting (4 October 2005), involving participants from the air transport sector and air traffic management, AEA had proposed to draft a joint paper as a balanced joint input to the mid-term review of the White Paper on Transport. AEA reported that they had indeed prepared a paper and that they were still committed to this work, however some internal difficulties had held up the process. In principle the draft would be approved internally next week. According to AEA and Canso, it was a paper taking into account the different social partners' views. The other organisations regretted the delay and feared it was too late to impact the Commission's review. However it still could be a valuable input to the study and the future work on the subject.

It was agreed to finalise the paper as soon as possible according to the following agenda and under the leadership of ERA:

- Comments on the first draft of the joint paper on "The Future of Air Transport" within three weeks (by 14 April)
- 28 April – ERA will distribute revised final draft taking all comments into account (noting ECA's request to distribute this in time for meeting on 26 April if possible)
- 5 May – requests to ERA to change any points that are unacceptable
- 10 May – ERA will distribute the final paper
- 31 May – completion of all organisations' approvals
- 14 June – formal adoption at Social Dialogue plenary meeting, if possible

In case some fundamental comments could not be included in the joint paper, ECA referred to the possibility (as an "urgency solution") to attach them as an annex.

7. "Just culture"

CANSO wanted to add the Just culture report of the ATM working group (24 February 2006) to the agenda for discussion at the plenary meeting. Just culture was a broad subject and ETF, ECA and CANSO considered it appropriate to discuss the issue with other components of the aviation sector. CANSO was ready to provide an input to the other aviation sectors.

8. Air crew working group

AEA reported that the results of the last air crew working group had been discussed with the AEA social affairs committee whose initial reaction had been sceptical towards the protection of privacy issue. Clearly, the cabin crew project was AEA's priority and resources were limited. Both ECA and ETF reiterated their respective commitment to this issue and offered to take the lead in the areas of privacy and workplace health promotion, in order to accommodate AEA's concerns about limited resources. AEA thanked ETF and ECA for this offer to take the lead, but stressed again, that even if ETF and ECA would be in the lead, AEA would have to dedicate scarce resources to these issues and highlighted the difficulties in dedicating AEA resources to those issues while the cabin crew project has not been concluded.

9. Preparation of the plenary meeting

The parties agreed on the points for the agenda of the plenary meeting (see annex II). They decided to limit the exchange with DG TREN on the 3rd liberalisation package to a few points agreed in advance, in order to avoid a general political discussion.

10. Review of the European agreement on the organisation of working time of mobile workers in civil aviation

The social partner agreement implemented by Directive 2000/79/EC of 27 November 2000 foresaw, in Clause 10, that "the parties shall review the above provisions two years after the end of the implementation period laid down in the Council Decision putting this Agreement into effect". This would mean a possible review as from December 2005. The parties expressed their wish to get information from DG EMPL at the plenary about the state of play of the transposition into national law by the Member States. This would then allow an initial discussion by the parties on how to organise the review.

Annex I: List of participants

<p>Employers:</p> <p><u>ACI Europe:</u> Stefano Baronci</p> <p><u>AEA:</u> Julia Egerer Manfred Merz</p> <p><u>CANSO:</u> Marie Desseaux</p> <p><u>ERA:</u> Andrew Clarke</p> <p><u>IACA:</u> Koen Vermeir</p>	<p>Workers:</p> <p><u>ECA:</u> Ignacio Plaza Philip von Schöppenthau</p> <p><u>ETF:</u> François Ballesterro</p>
<p>European Commission:</p> <p>Ellen Durst (DG EMPL/D.1) Gian Carlo Federighi (DG TREN/F.1) Mattias Johansson (DG TREN/F.1) Kyriacos Ktenas (DG TREN/F.1)</p>	

Annex II: *First draft of the agenda for the plenary meeting*

- Adoption of the agenda
- Future of the industry – proposal for adoption of a joint position paper (ERA reporting)
- Revision of the 3rd liberalisation package and of the possible revision of the Ground Handling Directive – focused questions and answers to the European Commission (DG TREN, Mr Calleja Crespo, Director Air Transport – *to be confirmed*): 3rd package information focussing on a maximum of three issues amongst which are the "principal place of business" and the "social assessment"
- Study on "The social benefits and costs of air transport in the European Union" – information by the European Commission (DG TREN with DG EMPL assistance) (The title will be changed.)
- Presentation of the International Aviation Handlers' Association (IAHA)
- Participation of the European Low Fares Airline Association (ELFAA) in the European sectoral dialogue (*to be confirmed*)
- Short reports of the working groups
 - Air traffic management (CANSO)
 - Ground handling (ETF)
 - Air crew – including status on Cabin Crew Study (ECA)
- CANSO proposal for further work on Just Culture in civil aviation
- State of implementation and review of the European Agreement on the Organisation of Working Time of Mobile Workers in Civil Aviation (Directive 2000/79/CE of 27 November 2000) – information by the European Commission (DG EMPL) and initial discussion by the parties on how to organise the review
- Update and adoption of the work programme
- Any other business