

Civil Aviation Social Dialogue

Air Traffic Management Working group meeting – Minutes

Tuesday, 18 April 2023

1. Welcome – introduction by the chair, adoption of draft agenda

The plenary meeting was co-chaired by ETF and CANSO. The draft agenda was adopted. The minutes of the last meeting were approved.

2. CANSO presentation on gender equality in ATM

CANSO gave a presentation on its questionnaire to its members. This originated in the CASD plenary in 2022, which raised the issue of staff shortages. ATM too is facing the issue of staff shortages. To address this issue and to make the ATM sector more diverse female participation is needed in ATM workforce.

CANSO had presented its members a questionnaire with seven questions. The purpose was to retrieve information about women's participation in the ATCO and ATSEP workforce and whether ANSPs have a gender equality policy in place. 28 ANSPs responded to the questionnaire. Key findings are as follows:

- On average, 25% of ATCO workforce is female – in only three ANSPs participation is above 30%
- On average, 16% of ATSEP workforce is female – however few ANSPs notably have more female ATSEPs than other ANSPs
- 14 ANSPs have a gender equality policy, 14 do not

CANSO offered to share the survey results in full with other WG members. In response to questions, CANSO added that it did not ask its members about applicants to be ATCOs, child care policies.

The other social partners thanked CANSO for conducting the survey and agreed on the importance of this issue. ATCEUC pointed out that in the coming years there will be a wave of retirements of ATCOs, so the ATM industry needs to look at the attractiveness of the job.

The meeting discussed a possible social dialogue project on the subject of gender diversity and inclusion. Requested by the social partners DG EMPL informed that the deadline for the submission of project applications under the call for proposal SOC-DIALOG 2023 is 28 June 2023. The social partners agreed that this topic is important but required further consideration, including with organisations not represented in CASD to clarify the objectives to be pursued. It would be important to have a clear understanding of the scope and what they want to achieve.

DG MOVE (Hermann Nijhuis) suggested that the questionnaire could be inserted into the update of ATM Master Plan.

3. Status update on ATM files from DG MOVE

a. SES2+

DG MOVE informed the meeting that there had been progress during the Czech Presidency of the Council (H2 2022) but no formal trilogue. The main focus of the talks is the Network Management

chapter. The current Swedish Presidency will hold a technical meeting on 27 April with the European Parliament Rapporteur, which could be followed by formal trilogue.

ATCEUC questioned whether the SES2+ proposal could achieve some of its stated objectives, including scalability, environmental benefits. ATCEUC also criticized the Performance and Charging Scheme's emphasis on cost savings, which affects staffing. DG MOVE responded that ATM staffing is important, but this is also about giving more emphasis to the network approach.

b. RP4

DG MOVE informed that the European Commission sees RP4 as connected to the SES2+ negotiations. Therefore, the Commission continues to operate under the current legal framework until a new SES2+ framework is in place.

The timetable for RP4 is as follows:

- The Member States will deliver forecasts for costs and traffic by 1 June
- The Commission EC will publish target ranges by 1 October
- From October, the Commission will hold consultations with the Member States on the target ranges
- Based on recommendations by the PRB, the Commission will propose targets for adoption by the Single Sky Committee in spring 2024

Changes to RP4 will only be possible for monitoring indicators. A study for the Commission will start in June, whose main focus will be to study possible new indicators. It will also work on interdependencies. In H2 2023, there will be a stakeholder workshop. New monitoring indicators may be adopted at any point before the start of RP4, i.e. up to 31 December 2024.

Regarding duration, the current Implementing Regulation (2019/317) states that the next Reference Period shall be five years. The Commission may favour a shorter reference period of three years, but will not propose new Implementing Regulation while SES2+ negotiations are ongoing. It may propose a Decision at a later stage in this regard, but it has not decided.

c. SESAR

DG MOVE provided a general summary of the work and main activities SESAR3 JU activities.

He also reminded the participants of the upcoming ATM Master Plan update, which will be officially launched in October.

It was said that some Exploratory Research projects did not receive funding in the last allocation round but that it will be possible for these projects to be considered again in the autumn. CANSO noted that ER projects in Trajectory-Based Operations (TBO) should be funded because this concept is crucial in enabling CP1's AF6. DG MOVE said there will be another chance for funding under the CEF transport call, but due to oversubscription, the quality of proposals will have to be excellent.

DG MOVE provided an update on the main activities of the SESAR Deployment Manager, including its move to EUROCONTROL's premises. EASA is working on the maturity gate concept to lead to the deployment of AF6.

There was some discussion on involvement by the social partners in SESAR projects: ETF and ATCEUC voiced their concerns that they were not given the opportunity to participate properly in their development because the contracts with PSOs have not been renewed yet. DG MOVE advised them to raise this issue in the SESAR Governing Board, where they are represented.

Regarding the role of SDM, CANSO recalled that the social partners, the ATM industry and other aviation stakeholders support an independent SDM. Even though SDM has a partnership with the Network Manager, it should remain outside its institutional umbrella.

4. Cost Efficiency KPA – Is there a common position amongst social partners?

ETF and CANSO informed the meeting that they have exchanged ideas and have some common concerns, but do not have a common position. They will continue exchange views, and invited ATCEUC to join them. They will inform the European Commission if they reach any outcome.

5. AOB

DG MOVE updated the meeting on EASA's work on ATCO Training and licensing under RMT.668. The first part of this exercise has been concluded, namely the conversion of military ATCOs to civilian ATCOs – the Commission will adopt the Regulation on 21 April. The second part on Competency-Based Training & Assessment (CBTA) principles will be addressed in new NPA. This will include conversion of ICAO licenses to EU licenses. The Commission noted that this will allow Ukrainian ATCOs to use their licenses in the EU.