



## EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities DG

Social Dialogue, Social Rights, Working Conditions, Adaptation to Change  
**Social Dialogue, Industrial Relations**

### SECTORAL DIALOGUE COMMITTEE CIVIL AVIATION

#### **Meeting of the Ground Handling Working Group 11 October 2006 Concise minutes (adopted on 7 February 2007)**

The meeting was chaired by Ms Durst (DG EMPL/F.1). Participants presented themselves. Apologies had been received by ERA. ETF said they would appreciate if the employers' side was not only represented by the secretariats, but also by national members.

#### **1. Adoption of the agenda and the minutes of the last meeting (30 June 2006)**

The agenda and the minutes were adopted.

#### **2. Information by DG TREN on progress with regard to Council Directive 96/67/EC and its revision**

Mr van Voorst (DG TREN/F.4) referred to the information given the day before to the workers' side (at ETF's invitation) and to the hearing in April which confirmed Vice-President Barrot's approach towards extensive stakeholder consultation. The Commission was obliged to present a report on the application of Council Directive 96/67/EC, which possibly would be done together with a draft revision. The Commission was considering the launch of a proposal to modify the Directive. This proposal would aim at a gradual increase of competition in the ground handling market while taking into account appropriate social protection of ground handling staff, and at a clarification and simplification of a number of provisions where necessary<sup>1</sup>. However, the Commission would only go ahead with a proposal for a revision if stakeholders would express their initial support to a draft text.

IAHA presented some fundamental questions with regard to the application of the directive (tendering procedure, maximum period of a licence, consultation of airport users committees). ETF also referred to difficulties related to Article 18 (protection of the rights of workers). ETF stressed they wanted to improve the social conditions and the consultation with them would not serve as an "alibi". IACA regretted that the Commission's draft text had never been tested with experts such as the social partners.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/transport/air\\_portal/airports/ground\\_handling\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/transport/air_portal/airports/ground_handling_en.htm)

The parties explored the idea to find a joint expression, for instance to discuss a definition on quality of service and training.

Mr van Voorst further informed the meeting that the Commission had the intention to include four measures which would ensure an appropriate social protection: the employers' obligation to provide continuous training; the airports' possibility to define certain quality standards; the prohibition of subcontracting '*en cascade*' (only to the first degree); and that all staff members should receive a certificate. The Commission services would wait another two weeks, so that the social partners could send a joint input.

### **3. Identification of points on which the social dialogue could make a joint input**

The participants went through the "Draft proposal for a discussion paper on quality, safety and training in the ground handling sector" (dated 10 October 2006, presented by ACI Europe) in order to identify the parts on which all the parties could agree. In addition, Mr Schmitz (EU counsel for IAHA) had prepared working documents on "EU Ground handling tender process and selection criteria" and "Staff transfer in case of transfer of handling licence/contracts".

Under point A "Quality of service", there was agreement about penalties but not about the level of quality to be defined by airports. Whilst IACA reiterated that minimum standards should relate to safety only, IAHA thought that the freedom of the client to negotiate with the handler should not affect the proper functioning of the airport. ETF pointed out that there was a link between quality of service, lack of staff and safety. The parties did not substantially advance on this point.

Under point D "Training and qualification of staff", ETF stressed the need for a control that training was actually carried out, which was not always the case. In AEA's view, the airlines were best placed to make this control. The parties could not agree on this point.

Call for tenders: AEA supported IAHA's proposal to put facts related to tender processes together. Mr Schmitz referred to his paper in which he had made some proposals and invited the other parties to make comments. There was no common ground to try to come to a joint text to be put in the revision of the directive.

### **4. Next steps**

The parties agreed to focus on the following three points:

- (1) In the framework of the possible revision of the ground handling Directive, training and qualification of ground handling staff (proposal by ETF)
- (2) Analysis of the EU ground handling tender process and selection criteria, with a focus on the social dimension (based on the paper presented by Mr Schmitz and the ETF text)
- (3) Analysis of the effects on safety of sub-contracting '*en cascade*' (proposal by AEA to ask AEA membership to provide input)

These points would be discussed at the next meeting, foreseen for Wednesday 7 February 2007 from 10:00 till 16:00.

## Participants

<p><u>Employers</u></p> <p>Julia Egerer (AEA) Vanessa Holve (ACI Europe) Koen Vermeir (IACA)</p> <p><i>Apologies received: ERA</i></p> <p><u>Observer</u> Bob Schmitz (IAHA)</p>	<p><u>Workers</u></p> <p>François Ballestero (ETF) Enrique Carmona (CC.OO.) Jonny Fransson (SVTRP) Francesco Garzia (ETF) Serge Gentili (ETF) Bérenghère Henry-Tourain (FNST-CGT) Luigi Mansi (FIT-CISL) Christelle Martin (FO) Jean Ramel (CFDT) Fernando Sanchez Cano (UGT) Olivier Sekaï (FNST-CGT) Reka Szaro (ETF)</p> <p><u>Observer</u></p> <p>Pinar Erol (HAVA-IS)</p>
<p><u>European Commission</u></p> <p>Ellen Durst (DG EMPL.F.1) Roderic van Voorst (DG TREN/F.4)</p>	