



PRESS RELEASE

European Air Traffic Management Must Cut Emissions and Be Judged by an Independent Referee

2 December 2022: Geneva/Brussels - The International Air Transport Association (IATA) and Airlines for Europe (A4E) urged EU Transport Ministers to agree to recommendations for European air traffic management (ATM) at their meeting on December 5th which will deliver specific environmental improvements and submit its performance to review from an independent regulatory authority.

EU Transport Ministers meet on December 5th to agree their position on ATM for negotiations with the European Parliament. The discussions focus on a 2020 proposal from the European Commission which calls for a fully independent regulator to assess the performance of the various European Air Navigation Service Providers (ANSPs). Regrettably, European member states have rejected this. The Parliament, in line with the Commission proposal, has pushed for tougher regulation, but airlines fear a last-minute unsatisfactory compromise that will enable states to be judge and jury on the targets for their own ANSPs, how they should be monitored, and what their success will look like.

“Teams at the World Cup expect independent referees. Air Traffic Management should be no different. The 2020 Commission proposals were clear that countries shouldn’t be marking the homework of their own air navigation service providers – they should submit their performance to be judged by an independent body, setting transparent and efficient targets to help cut emissions and delays,” said Rafael Schwartzman, IATA’s Regional Vice President for Europe.

EU member states, fearful of the political consequences of upsetting powerful air traffic controller unions, have continually frustrated progress towards the safety, efficiency and environmental improvements that would be generated by the Single European Sky. But the imperative to find carbon emissions savings has generated new momentum for reform. Airlines support the 2020 Commission proposals which includes a new and welcome opportunity to optimize flight trajectories.

“At a time when politicians lecture aviation on a regular basis for its climate impact, it is outrageous that they refuse to push for reforms that could deliver up to 10% emissions reductions in European airspace. The upcoming meeting of EU Transport Ministers represents a chance to push for meaningful improvements. Europe’s airlines urge ministers to seize the opportunity and implement the European Commission’s proposals to achieve a good deal for member states, airlines and the environment. We cannot accept compromise for compromise’s sake,” said Thomas Reynaert, Managing Director, Airlines for Europe.

Media Contact

A4E

Kevin Hiney, Communications Director

Email: Kevin.hiney@a4e.eu

Tel: +32 499 82 82 94

IATA

Corporate Communications

Email: corpcomms@iata.org

Tel: +41 22 770 2967

Notes for Editors

IATA (International Air Transport Association) represents some 290 airlines comprising 83% of global air traffic. You can follow us at twitter.com/iata for announcements, policy positions, and other useful industry information.

Airlines for Europe (A4E) is Europe's largest airline association, based in Brussels. A4E works with policymakers to ensure aviation policy continues to connect Europeans with the world in a safe, competitive and sustainable manner. As a key initiator of aviation's [Destination 2050](#) roadmap, A4E and its members committed to achieve Net Zero carbon emissions for their own operations by 2050.

With a modern fleet of over 3,200 aircraft, A4E airlines carried over 270 million passengers in 2021 -- down from 700 million in 2019 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Each year, A4E members with air cargo and mail activities transport more than 3.7 million tonnes of goods, life-saving vaccines and essential medical equipment to more than 360 destinations either by freighters or passenger aircraft.