



DIGITAL EUROPEAN SKY

High Level Conference on the Future of the Single European Sky



Future of the Single European Sky (SES)

A Joint Stakeholder Declaration

We, representatives of the ATM stakeholders, are aware that, as a result of how the ATM network in Europe is currently operated, it has reached serious capacity problems and that there is a pressing need to prepare for its longer-term future. Recent growth in air traffic is causing delays of a magnitude not seen for more than a decade, creating inconvenience for passengers, and at the same time, posing a growing challenge to the improvement of the sustainable environmental performance of the sector. Against this background, we recognise that:

- > safety will continue to be industry's priority and has to be underpinned by Just Culture;
- > security of ATM remains paramount;
- > civil-military collaboration is key;
- > the environmental performance of aviation remains one of the key objectives of SES;
- > the implementation of the SES vision can only be achieved through coordinated efforts by all ATM stakeholders, States and European institutions. This approach should be the foundation for the future of the SES;
- > all stakeholders need to consider the effect of their actions on the entire network, recognising that the Network Manager has a key role in optimising the functioning of the network through enhanced and effective Collaborative Decision Making (CDM) processes with all the operational stakeholders;
- > the future ATM network in Europe needs to be inclusive on a fair and equitable basis, and able to accommodate all types of airspace users, civil and military, as well as new entrants, ranging from drones at both high and low flight level, and other new types of aircraft and space vehicles;
- > greater flexibility and resilience of the ATM network are needed in combination with improved predictability so that the capacity of the system can be better scaled to demand, while respecting the environmental implications of a growing aviation sector;
- > continued acceleration of the uptake of new interoperable technology, including those building on SESAR validated solutions, and increased digitalisation and automation supported by appropriate regulation are the key elements to increasing the scalability of the ATM system in Europe, while considering the increasing importance of security, especially cybersecurity. A smooth and efficient change management process, at all levels, is key for success;
- > the human and collective dimensions are key elements in the implementation of new technology. This should be achieved in full cooperation with and inclusion of staff representatives and unions;
- > ATM needs to become a more customer-focused system, ensuring that all stakeholder needs are balanced;
- > the simplification and a clear distinction of roles and responsibilities are required in the institutional set-up at European level. Whatever institutional arrangements are decided they should ensure that there are no duplications and overlaps, that sufficient expertise is available and that functions are performed in a cost-effective, environmentally- and socially-aware and safe manner.

We hereby agree to the following:

- > The ATM network must function as a fully integrated system in which every node acts under a systemic approach where the Network Manager plays the central role to overcome traffic challenges while maintaining safety levels. The idea is that optimising the ATM network and its interfaces is decided upon collaboratively (CDM) and takes precedence over any individual requirements and preferences by executing effectively the network functions and respecting the needs and the responsibilities of the military. This applies both in the air and on the ground because operations in the airspace and at the airport cannot be addressed separately. The Network Manager will duly take into account the legal obligations of the concerned stakeholders.
- > Digitalisation is a driving force for providing flexible capacity and making the ATM system more scalable. SESAR technology, including an open system architecture, represents the key enabler for the future ATM system to be safe, cyber-secure, interoperable and supportive of environment-friendly operations.
- > As the ATM system evolves, so too will the role of the workforce. It is therefore essential to reinforce the dialogue on future developments between the social partners.
- > When a full understanding of ATM technological evolution is achieved, training for ATM staff and, where relevant, licensing requirements, need to be re-assessed with the full involvement of social partners (staff representatives, employers, etc.) and EU institutions in coordination with EASA.
- > The effectiveness of the economic regulation of European ATM requires targets to be set where market forces do not exist and incentives to be put in place for the modernisation of the ATM system, considering the interdependency between different key performance indicators.
- > Public funds, including for SESAR research, industrialisation and deployment, are important support to the modernisation of ATM, specifically in situations of negative business cases.

Next steps:

The stakeholders commit to:

- > All actors in the aviation value chain to intensify efforts to realise the full environmental benefit of the Single European Sky.
- > Operational ATM stakeholders to engage in the implementation of an airspace architecture transition plan as an integral part of the ATM Master Plan and to play a proactive role in the implementation of measures to improve the ATM network as a whole.
- > Staff organisations in cooperation and in negotiation with their employers, with the support of the European Commission, EASA and the Member States, to develop a roadmap on the human role in facilitating the transition to the new digital ATM environment while addressing the future requirements for pilots, air traffic controllers, ATSEP and other relevant ATM staff training and licencing.
- > The Network Manager to continue to work closely with operational stakeholders on developing and applying measures to address short-term capacity bottlenecks and to mitigate delays in the network while continuously optimising the functioning of the network, including large and small nodes, when necessary.
- > All ATM stakeholders to ensure timely industrialisation and implementation of interoperable technological solutions, where appropriate on the basis of common standards, in collaboration with the relevant institutions.

The stakeholders call upon:

- > The European institutions on one hand and the Member States individually on the other hand to consider the steps necessary to achieve the goals of the SES, assessing their potential impact, costs and benefits.
- > The European institutions to simplify the regulatory framework and the institutional set-up to make the European ATM fit for purpose, allowing it to respond to present and future needs.

In Brussels, 11 September 2019.