



Brussels, 6<sup>th</sup> October 2020

To  
European Commission  
Mrs Christine Berg

Dear Mrs Berg,

As the trade associations representing Europe's Airspace Users (AUs), we welcome the draft Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda, as well as HLPP, paving the way for the SESAR 3 program.

Overall, it supports AUs' priorities linked to the European Green Deal and Europe's wider digitalisation goals.

We do, however, require clarification on two key areas regarding the Partnership, as proposed.

#### The scope and form of the Partnership

AUs request clarity on the Commission's plan regarding the scope of the Partnership. Following the presentation made by the Commission on 8<sup>th</sup> October at the CMSC workshop and the discussions at this virtual meeting, we understand that the SDM and the SJU could be combined into one body, i.e. the Network Manager. Clarity on the Commission's plans and thoughts on this point is essential for the AUs as it touches on the requirements for the partners in the partnership.

The AU community also seeks further clarification on the Commission's plan regarding the shape of the future Partnership for Integrated ATM. It was our understanding from deliberations at the CMSC meeting that all stakeholders would be invited to be founding members -- and become 'partners', as such, in the form of cash or in-kind contributions. If we consider existing similar models, this kind of partnership "repays" partners by providing them with desired workshares and influence. Despite the deep crisis that affects particularly the air transport business, the AU community confirms our strong willingness to have a role to play in SESAR 3, however, further discussions are required between the different parties before deciding how to contribute. A decision cannot be made at this stage.

To be clear, we would welcome the possibility to be involved in SESAR 3 but without becoming a founding member in the Partnership for Integrated ATM. This would enable us to play a key role in steering and injecting additional, unique AU expertise into the SESAR 3 work

programme and subsequent projects. We call for the setting of a framework which would enable our experts to contribute to the projects, in the similar way it is done today, through contracts and funding dedicated to the delivery of our expertise.

#### The governance of the Partnership

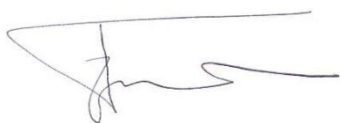
AUs are the end user, or final customer and therefore the ultimate financier of the technology developed in SESAR 3. Therefore, it goes without saying that AUs should have a fundamental role in the decisions taken to shape the future ATM which shall serve our needs. Such a role is not reflected in the current structure and consultation processes available to us.

We therefore request a governance structure to be defined and regulated in ensuring that the operational/technical requirements and business needs of AUs are reflected in the R&D and deployment activities. Within that governance structure, checks and balances must be implemented to ensure the best results for the entire aviation ecosystem – with agreed costs and milestones jointly- developed and deployed.

We look forward to your feedback and remain at your disposal for further discussions, including at the next consultation forum.

Yours sincerely,

**Thomas REYNAERT**



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