

Information

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CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION IN THE AIR – THE FUTURE STARTS HERE AEA applauds German-Dutch initiative to rationalise airspace

The Single European Sky, and the efficiencies and cost savings it will bring, cannot come soon enough for airlines mired in the current economic downturn. Whilst the Single Sky has been a political reality since 2004, the operational benefits have yet to materialize.

So it is with some anticipation that the Association of European Airlines, representing Europe's most important network carriers, welcomes the reorganization of airspace in the German/Dutch border region. This is a tangible outcome of the creation of FABEC (Functional Airspace Block Europe Central), one of the regional control areas which will replace the patchwork of national air traffic control systems in Europe.

The initiative will increase capacity in one of Europe's busiest airspaces, reducing delays and avoiding reroutings on flights to and from Amsterdam, Frankfurt, Dusseldorf, Cologne, Brussels and other airports in the area, as well as flights transiting the region. Shorter flight paths will reduce fuel burn and consequently CO₂ emissions.

Said AEA Secretary General Ulrich Schulte-Strathaus: *"Increased capacity – fewer delays – lower costs – lessened environmental impact – these are the benefits which the Single Sky will unlock. This is an important first step towards fixing the legacy of the patchwork European air traffic management system, and it is encouraging that by this summer the first beneficial effects will be felt. There is much more to be done, across the length and breadth of Europe, but a start has been made and we eagerly await more such developments"*.

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Note to the Editor: The Association of European Airlines (AEA) brings together 36 European established scheduled network carriers. These collectively carry 347 million passengers and 6 million tonnes of cargo each year, operating 2,160 aircraft serving 662 destinations in 162 countries with 11,400 flights a day. They provide around 385,000 jobs directly, and generate a total turnover of €70 billion