

Specialised Committee on Air Transport - Minutes of the Meeting
14 October 2021, 9.30-13.00 CEST, Brussels and online

1. Opening statements

Both chairs underlined the start of a new chapter of our relationship in a different context (TCA) at a period where COVID19 was severely affecting aviation. Welcomed participants present in the room and those joining virtually.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

The agenda of the SCAT was adopted, without any changes.

3. Ways of working

The parties will follow the Rules of Procedures as stated in Annex 1 of the TCA. They agreed that in principle the SCAT will be held twice a year with a rotation between the hosts. Hybrid meetings will be organised alongside the physical meetings, in order to allow more colleagues to participate. Agendas will be provided in advance and minutes drawn up as soon as possible.

4. Market developments

The parties exchanged information about traffic data. The UK noted that passenger traffic is slowly recovering, with around 5000 weekly arrivals. Heathrow has witnessed a steady increase since April 2021 and it seems that traffic is only 35% down in comparison to 2019. The EU presented the growing evolution in traffic since 1991, including city pairs and available scheduled seats overview as well as more detailed graphics on the COVID19 related disturbance over the last 3 years. Prospects look more promising. However, it is impossible to determine the real impact of the UK's departure from the EU on passenger demand due to the joint occurrence of the pandemic.

5. Exchange of information on legislative and policy developments

On **ATM**, the EU informed about the SES+ process while the UK presented the work plan towards 2022 and its pilot project on performance review and certification inspection.

On **decarbonisation**, the UK stressed its commitment to CORSIA and informed of the launch of a domestic consultation on rapid developments. It has also unveiled their carbon offset mechanism (FlyZero) dedicated to creating sustainable technologies in aircraft designs. The EU gave a presentation on Fitfor55 and the Green deal and its impact on aviation.

On **passenger rights**, the UK informed that the EU Regulation 261/2004 continues to be applied, but it is currently being assessed and may change in the future. The EU informed about the European Court of Auditors report on air passenger rights in the times of COVID19. Two sides agreed that their experts will exchange info on the passenger complaints.

On **international travel**, parties exchanged information on COVID 19 related travel arrangement, where MOVE elaborated on the EU Digital Covid Certificate and the guidelines given to the airlines and airports.

6. Issues regarding the implementation of the Title on Air Transport

6.1. Bilateral arrangements between the United Kingdom and Member States (Art. 419)

In the context of the **bilateral arrangements** negotiated between the UK and the EU Member States, the EU confirmed that out of 16 notifications received so far, 11 were already approved (7 already signed by the parties), two approvals are expected to follow in late October and two in November.

Concerning **ad-hoc services non-scheduled services**, the UK indicated that the need to seek individual permissions could affect the balance of implementation of the TCA and that the granting of block permits was an efficient way to deal with this.

Both sides expressed satisfaction on the way the process was advancing.

6.2. Ownership and control of air carriers (Art. 425)

The UK reiterated its position that regulatory control and not the nationality of an owner should be the relevant factor in this area. It questioned the EU about its position in other international negotiations. The EU informed that while it is ready to discuss this matter, it is not in a position to change its policy at this stage. Whether it could do so in the future will depend on the result of the revision of its basic aviation regulation in the months to come.

6.3. Aviation Security

The UK proposed to develop the cooperation provided for in the TCA in this area. EU confirmed the EU interest to do so and proposed to use the EU-US security cooperation as the model for the future EU-UK cooperation. It was agreed that experts on both sides will discuss in more detail with a view to prepare concrete proposals about how to take this forward.

7. Any other business

The parties agreed that the next meeting would take place in the UK, probably in April or May. The exact date to be agreed later.

8. Closing session

Courteous closing remarks were exchanged.

*Approved by the Joint Secretariat of
the Specialised Committee on Air Transport*

Annex - Participants of the First Meeting of the Specialised Committee on Air Transport

EU delegation (36)

- EU Co-chairs of the Specialised Committee on Air Transport
- European Commission Officials
- Delegation of the European Union to the UK Official
- Representatives of EU Member States

UK delegation (26)

- UK Co-chair of the Specialised Committee on Air Transport
- UK Civil Aviation Authority Officials
- UK Department of Transport Officials
- UK Mission to the European Union Official
- UK State Liaison Officer to EUROCONTROL
- Cabinet Office Officials
- Scottish Government Officials
- Northern Ireland Executive Officials
- Welsh Government Official