



# Tweede Kamer

DER STATEN-GENERAAL

To the chairmen of the parliamentary committees in  
the European Union who are concerned with Single  
European Sky

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The Standing Committee for Infrastructure and  
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Dear Chair of the Civil Aviation Committee,

It is a pleasure to inform you of our recommendations resulting from our role as parliamentary rapporteurs on the matter of the Single European Sky (SES). We have been appointed by the Dutch House of Representatives' Standing Committee for Infrastructure and the Environment to stimulate the progress towards achieving a Single European Sky. In order to identify the obstacles preventing further implementation of the SES, we have held talks with experts and stakeholders, with the European Commission and with aviation spokespersons from the European Parliament. We also used a questionnaire to find out what the national parliaments in Europe see as the main impediments. All of this has brought us to the following recommendations, which we are pleased to share with you.

- 1) The European Commission is expected to complete an enquiry into the effectiveness of functional airspace blocks (FABs) by the end of this year. This merits serious study. We recommend that you reflect on what has already been achieved within your own FAB, as well as on the question of how and within what time-frame progress will be made within your FAB to make the necessary improvements in order to achieve a Single European Sky.
- 2) We also recommend that you carefully examine the role of the national air traffic control services in bringing about a Single European Sky. This may include exploring the possibility of setting up an independent European supervisory body and of increasing competition in order to break through monopoly positions. Air traffic control services and their trade unions should be challenged to provide



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specific details of how jobs will be lost as a result of the SES. This cannot be allowed to be a continuing argument that results in stagnation.

- 3) We recommend that the European Parliament's Committee on Transport and Tourism (TRAN) ask the European Parliamentary Research Service to have the alleged loss of employment in the various air traffic control services as a result of the implementation of the SES explored in greater detail.
- 4) Some member states are still failing to provide sufficient network capacity. It is recommended that this be improved so that the SES objectives can be achieved. Member states should be called to account on this within a European context. Ultimately, a chain is only as strong as its weakest link. We encourage member states failing in their duties in this area to take further action, and we call on the European Commission to intervene if member states continue to fail on this point.
- 5) There are opportunities for a greater focus on innovation in realising the SES. Perhaps the best example of these is the concept of motorways in the sky, the Free Route Airspace Project. Unlike motorways for road vehicles, this is not possible on a bilateral basis, but must be initiated at European level. It calls for ambitious efforts on the part of the various member states. We recommend that willing neighbouring countries that are prepared to bring about a free route airspace of this kind (or part of it) join forces in an effort to achieve this. This can set an example to other parts of Europe and promote innovation in aviation.
- 6) Focusing on the technological aspect through SESAR should be a top priority. The standardisation and integration of what are in many cases very outdated systems could potentially prove to be the greatest trigger in bringing about the formation of the SES. Modernising and improving the technological foundations can help eradicate administrative and organisational barriers.
- 7) We recommend that support for the SES project be sought among NGOs in the field of nature and the environment. If they were to become advocates of the SES, this could provide policymakers with the motivation needed to take action to eradicate obstacles. We also recommend that policymakers engage in talks with nature and environmental organisations to foster support for the SES project and encourage them to speak out in favour of it.
- 8) Member states must not allow themselves to be held hostage by the issue around Gibraltar and/or to use this for their own political purposes that have nothing to do with the realisation of the SES. Gibraltar is a bilateral issue that cannot be allowed to impede such an important project as the SES. In our actions as member states, we must not shy away from raising this issue.



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- 9) Airlines should also become more involved in the discussion. They, and the passengers they serve, will benefit directly from the SES. Pressure from airlines at national level will be crucial in removing obstacles at European level.

We hope that these recommendations will result in a greater focus on the issue of the Single European Sky within Europe's national parliaments. We therefore trust that these recommendations, which bring our role as parliamentary rapporteurs to an end, will help to trigger a sense of urgency in member states with regard to the need for further development of a Single European Sky.

Yours sincerely,

On behalf of the Standing Committee for Infrastructure and the Environment,

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