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12th May 2020

Subject: Request to EC & INEA for support on SESAR Deployment impacted by COVID-19 crisis.

Dear Sirs,

In our mission to provide safe and orderly air traffic management 24/7, Air Navigation Services Providers (ANSPs) are focused on protecting the health of their staff, as well as on providing necessary and obligatory services during the crisis and maintaining critical infrastructural capabilities **essential for the European economy and competitiveness in the recovery phase**. The current COVID-19 crisis has had an unprecedented damaging effect on the entire ATM environment and consequently on ANSP's activities and revenues, which almost entirely depend on the volume of traffic we control.

ANSPs are already implementing cost-containment measures in response to the severe reduction in revenues we are experiencing. However, we are required to continue maintaining compliance with EU regulations while we are committed to make investments falling under the different phases of the SESAR Programme. With the severe drop in our income and other external factors, such as the interruption of activities of our suppliers, flexibility and financial support become crucial in enabling us to maintain our essential services of Union's critical infrastructure, in the short and in the medium to long term.

In these extraordinary circumstances, as members of the A6 Alliance, we are calling on INEA and DG MOVE to provide the ATM system with maximum flexibility, so as to support European ANSPs in continuing to provide a high level of quality and service and preparing to support the economic and social recovery from COVID-19.

Appropriate prioritisation and revised timeframes need to be explored in order to overcome the financial crisis and to accordingly readjust to a potentially changed air transport system in Europe. This is obviously having an impact on the deployment of SESAR and the delivery of the Pilot Common Project (PCP) and its successor CP1. Hence, we would propose **mitigation measures** in this area that could comprise two main aspects:

1. Analysis and **support to the extension of timeframes** of Implementation Projects being co-funded by INEA and PCP, as well as future CP1 regulatory target dates, **by at least 24 months** to:

- allow more time to finalize the ongoing Implementation Projects by means of extending the associated grant agreements through future amendments, as a starting point based on the Action Status Reports to be submitted in March 2021 and not invoking the Force Majeure clause. Otherwise, it may lead to the termination of the grant agreements by INEA; and,
 - extend the PCP/future CP1 implementing rule target dates, taking into account the need for prioritisation of investments during the recovery period and to facilitate planning activities, with a view of securing Member State's support to the proposed implementing rule. Alternatively, we ask the EC to come forward with a postponement proposal for each ATM-Functionality before the next stakeholder consultation, focusing on those that are deemed to provide the most benefit.
2. **Financial support for ANSPs** to ensure financial viability during these difficult times. A close collaboration with INEA and DG MOVE is essential in order to secure exceptional financial measures in specific support to implementing partners' cash-flow issues:
- increase the level of pre-financing of funded projects;
 - increase the level / frequency of interim payments of funded projects;
 - optimize payments of completed projects;
 - secure and increase the ratio of financing of funded projects under next CEF funding period (2021-2027);
 - put on hold the disincentive options to enforce SESAR deployment that are being considered for inclusion in the future CP1; and,
 - provide adequate financial support to industrialisation activities in order to be able to accelerate and not lose momentum in securing achievements of SESAR results which aim to further the flexibility and scalability of the ATM system.

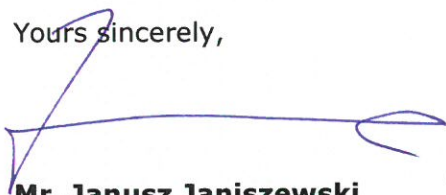
We invite the EC and INEA to consider stakeholders' concerns identified, amongst other channels, through our contribution to the recent SESAR Deployment Manager (SDM) survey and to the mitigations proposed by the SESAR Deployment Manager.

In the remit of the SDM, we are also calling on the EC and INEA to waive the need for financial guarantees of the SESAR Deployment Alliance AISBL under PSA SGAs and INEA Implementing Project SGAs, so as to effectively enable the needed critical access of the SESAR Deployment community to EU financing.

As members of A6, we strongly agree that we should focus on joint approaches using the SDM forum, so that we can keep investing in a coordinated manner to deliver a modern ATM system that supports the European air transport value chain and delivers benefits to Europe's citizens and economy, particularly as we seek to recover from this most challenging of times.

We would like to thank you in anticipation for your support in this vital matter.

Yours sincerely,



Mr. Janusz Janiszewski

Chair of the A6 Alliance Steering Board

President of PANSA

