

Press Release

Brussels, 18 May 2020

Aviation associations call for greater co-operation to ensure safe co-existence of manned and unmanned aircraft

A group of Europe's leading aviation associations call on the European Commission to develop an all-inclusive, co-operative approach to ensure the safe integration of drones into European airspace.

The joint signatories of the 'We are All One in the Sky' initiative – representing airlines, air navigation service providers, airports, business aviation, general aviation, helicopters, aircraft and drone manufacturers and professional staff organisations – have issued an open letter to the European Transport Commissioner, Ms Vălean, on the EASA [proposal for a high-level regulatory framework](#) for unmanned aviation operations and UAS traffic management (UTM/U-Space).

The letter calls on the European Commission to:

- Develop further the latest regulation proposal to secure the support of the aviation industry.
- Launch a new and more comprehensive consultation, involving key representatives from manned and unmanned aviation organisations all together.
- Ensure the transparency and efficiency of the regulatory processes and related decision-making processes.

The signatories encourage and support the ambition of the European Union to lead global efforts to develop a proportionate regulatory framework for U-Space. From a safety, public security, capacity and economic perspective a performance-based and risk-based regulatory framework can provide certainty to all airspace users and the aviation community. Ultimately it can also facilitate the safe integration of drones in Europe's skies, ensuring commercial drone services can grow.

The signatories believe that the upcoming U-Space Regulation represents an important first opportunity to achieve this goal worldwide. The lessons learnt from the implementation of the proposed regulation in Europe should be leveraged to inform ICAO's Global UTM Framework and other regulatory efforts across the world. As such, it is crucial that the regulatory framework achieves a number of key principles, as set out in the joint signatories' [letter of November 2019](#), and ensures the buy-in of the whole industry – manned and unmanned.

While some progress has been made since the first draft Opinion was published in October 2019, the revised draft Regulation still does not fully address the concerns that were raised by the stakeholders in their November letter. The signatories retain concerns on a number of issues, including the implications for the safety of all airspace users; the level of clarity on responsibilities of actors within the system; how to facilitate interoperability and the integration of operations; the potential implications of the

* Founded in 1980, ERA is a non-profit trade association representing 64 airlines and 149 companies involved in European air transport and is the only association representing the entire spectrum of companies involved in European aviation. The association promotes the interests of European airlines by lobbying European regulatory bodies on policy matters, promoting the social and economic importance of air transport and its environmental commitments.

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proposed architecture of the system; and practical aspects as to how such a framework might be implemented.

The signatories call on the European Commission and member states to take these concerns and suggestions into account when considering how to best proceed with this very important piece of regulation.

ENDS

Signatories: Members of the We are ALL ONE in the Sky initiative:

Contact email: wearealloneinthesky@gmail.com

- Airlines for Europe (A4E)
- Airports Council International Europe (ACI EUROPE)
- Airlines International Representation in Europe (AIRE)
- Air Traffic Controllers European Unions Coordination (ATCEUC)
- Civil Air Navigation Services Organisation (CANSO)
- Europe Air Sports (EAS)
- European Business Aviation Association (EBAA)
- European Cockpit Association (ECA)
- European Helicopter Association (EHA)
- European Regions Airline Association (ERA)
- European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF)
- General Aviation Manufacturers Association (GAMA)
- International Council of Aircraft Owner and Pilot Associations (IAOPA)
- International Air Transport Association (IATA)
- International Federation of Air Line Pilots' Associations (IFALPA)
- International Federation of Air Traffic Controllers' Associations (IFATCA)
- International Federation of Air Traffic Safety Electronics Associations (IFATSEA)

