

## Steering Board Meeting with EU Commissioner Vălean

13h30-14h30

Thursday, 25 March 2021

Webex

Phone number: [REDACTED]

Conference ID: [REDACTED]

### 1. CONFIRMED PARTICIPANTS

#### A4E



#### EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Adina-Ioana Vălean, EU Transport  
Commissioner

Gaëlle Michelier, Member of Cabinet (Vălean)

### 2. MEETING SCENARIO (60 min.)

Welcome & introduction (5 mins.): [REDACTED] (A4E).

Discussion topics (7 mins/topic): A4E Individual Steering Board Members will cover agenda items in below order. For each of the topics, [REDACTED] will take the lead; [REDACTED] are asked to contribute to the discussion with specific/relevant/company-specific examples. [REDACTED] will moderate the discussion.

Response from Commissioner Vălean (EC) following each [REDACTED] introduction (7 mins.).



AIRLINES FOR EUROPE

Closure (5 mins.): Commissioner Vălean (EC), [REDACTED] (A4E).

## URGENT EC ACTION REQUIRED

### UNCOORDINATED TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS, TESTING PROTOCOLS AND VACCINATION CERTIFICATES

Lead: [REDACTED] – interventions by [REDACTED].

#### Key Asks

- We ask the Commissioner for the European Commission to increase its efforts in light of the start of the summer season which is crucial for the survival of the sector.
- We ask the Commissioner for continued support and leadership from the EC for a coordinated approach between Member States to border reopening, ensuring an improved and effective European coordination of travel restrictions and requirements.
- We ask the EC to put pressure on Member States to tone down the politics and to follow their agreed, evidence-based approach towards lifting the EU travel ban for countries where the epidemiological situation allows (“White List”).
- We ask the Commissioner to support the expansion of the White List as appropriate to other non-EU countries to support air transport and tourism’s recovery.
- We ask the EC and Member States to provide timely and official information to airlines regarding key operational changes (5 working days), thereby providing enough time for airlines to adapt to those changes.
- We ask the EC to support a single European digital solution for travellers to submit public health passenger locator information, with governments bearing the costs.
- We ask the EC to propose the **establishment of a harmonised EU framework for travel-related testing**. This framework should encompass the following:
  - mutual recognition of tests between Member States;
  - general use of antigen or other rapid tests (see below);
  - verification of test results by national authorities;
  - indication as to when the tests need to be performed (preferably before departure though there could be an option to do it immediately upon arrival in case of insufficient local capacity);
  - exemptions for young children and passengers with disabilities.
- We ask the EC to more systematically challenge unilateral and disproportional travel restrictions and bans, and to support calls for:
  - **Any travel restrictions (testing and /or quarantine) against vaccinated travellers to be lifted**, once it is established that vaccinated persons do not transmit the virus

or in a reduced manner. In parallel, vaccination certificates should **not** be imposed as a prerequisite for travel due to the discriminatory nature of such an initiative;

- Any digital EU verification system for test & vaccination to be aligned with international standards;
- Ineffective and unenforceable travel restrictions such as quarantines to be traded for a more scientific approach based on pre-departure or upon-arrival testing, including with antigen tests.
- Air crews to be clearly exempted from unilateral travel restrictions by EU member states, including when traveling to their workplace or returning home after operating a flight.

## **AVIATION DECARBONISATION**

Lead: [REDACTED] – intervention by [REDACTED] (SAF, ETS)

### Key Asks

- We ask the EC to actively embrace and drive our proposed EU Pact for Sustainable Aviation forward. The planned understanding, or ‘Pact’, between industry and government would allow the formalisation and enactment of our required partnership, ensuring agreement on joint sustainability targets and alignment between the related industry contribution and roadmap on the one hand and the enabling regulatory and financial framework on the other.
- We ask the EC to ensure that this enabling regulatory and financial environment facilitates a path towards a sustainable growth of air transport, with no social or societal compromises.
- The elements of the upcoming “Fit for 55” package of legislation (see below) which will align relevant EU legislations to the new EU climate goals under the EU Green Deal need to incentivise efficiency, drive decarbonisation through innovation, avoid carbon leakage and thereby ensure a competitive level playing field for European airlines within the EU and globally.
- The upcoming EC proposals for the review of the ETS/CORSIA, on Sustainable Aviation Fuels, on energy taxation need to guarantee the competitiveness of the European airlines. This also means exploring measures that can alleviate the risks of loss of competitiveness such as a carbon border adjustment mechanism.

Specifically:

- ‘ReFuel EU’ (Sustainable Aviation Fuels - SAFs):
  - (1) we need truly sustainable SAFs without any compromise;
  - (2) we need a coherent, long-term and stable policy framework;
  - (3) we don’t want carbon leakage and distortions to a level playing field;

- (4) we need support for production and availability of feedstock for SAF production;
- (5) we need financial support to bridge the price gap between SAF's and fossil fuels;
- (6) mature market conditions must be in place before a blending mandate enters into force.
- ETS/CORSIA:
  - (1) we cannot allow double regulation of CO2 emissions;
  - (2) we support CORSIA implementation in the EU with minimum deviation from the scheme;
  - (3) we must avoid market distortion between EU/EEA and third countries;
  - (4) ETS/CORSIA allows for the highest CO2 mitigation efficiency in the current COVID-19 context;
  - (5) it enables long-term regulatory stability and 6/ limited administrative burden.
- Energy Taxation Directive:
  - The ETS is the most appropriate economic measure to limit and reduce CO2 emissions and price CO2. To ensure cost-effectiveness, economic measures must be market-based. Climate policies through national taxes, levies or bans are ecologically and economically counterproductive and distort competition. Imposing taxes without reinvesting their revenues in de-carbonization does not help effectively lower emissions from flying: it hampers connectivity without effectively contributing to aviation's sustainable transformation. It also deprives airlines from financial resources that could better be used for green investments.

### **Air Traffic Management – ATC charges (Economic Regulation of Reference Period 3)**

Lead:

#### Key Asks

- We ask the Commissioner to review the suggested targets and ensure that ambitious (cost-efficiency) targets are set (for the remainder of Reference Period 3), which clearly link en-route costs to the expected development of traffic levels. These targets should be set in close coordination with airlines and in the end support the recovery of the sector.
- We ask the Commissioner to ensure that the suggested targets are suitable to secure efficiency of ANSPs and a sustainable European airspace.
- We urge the Commissioner to re-assess all possible financing alternatives as well as the most effective use of available EU recovery funds to address the ANSP revenue gap and urge Member States to do what owners of companies always do – cover losses. In line with the EUROCONTROL Performance Review Commission (PRC) recommendation.
- We ask the Commissioner to – in the long term– seize the opportunity in the discussion and finalisation of the updated proposal for the Single European Sky framework regulation (SES 2+) and define a more equitable performance and charging scheme in which the risk sharing mechanisms are fair and airspace users are not expected to pay for the availability of the



service but for the actual use of the service. Thus, ensuring that the next reference period (RP4), starting in 2025, will have more effective and equitable economic regulation.

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