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Directorate E - Aviation
Single European Sky

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Mr Olaf DLUGI
Chairman of ICB
Kaigasse 32
A - 5020 SALZBURG

Subject: Your letter of 15 August 2017 on the ICB Position Paper on short-term steps for the Network Manager (NM)

Dear Mr *Olaf,* Dlugi,

Thank you for your letter in reference and the accompanying ICB Position Paper on short-term steps for the Network Manager, in preparation for the designation of the Network Manager for the next reference period (RP3). I also would like to thank you and the ICB's Quick Response Team for finalising the paper in due time for further consideration by the Commission, which was clearly a challenge, taking into account the differing views of the operational stakeholders and the professional staff organisations as regards certain recommendations. The Commission values the advice and recommendations of all stakeholder groups and therefore also welcomes a position paper that highlights these differences.

After having read this particular position paper carefully, I note that it strongly reaffirms the principles of a Network Manager (NM) presented in the ICB position on the long-term evolution of network management, delivered to the Commission in November 2016. Further to this, it makes several recommendations for RP3. I note the invitation to pay attention to supporting the requirement for the NM to be a single legal entity with full control and final decision-making ability. Even though the two stakeholder groups (operational and PSOs) do not have a full consensus on the issue, both recommendations will be noted and taken into account to the extent possible.

As for the other recommendations concerning the terms of the designation of the NM, including documentation of the designation and tendering processes, funding mechanism, designation term, and governance and oversight, I note in particular that:

- regarding the designation of the NM, the scope of the designation decision should be more detailed in the NF IR;
- a tendering process would be welcome to give the opportunity to any bidding party to demonstrate its ability to achieve the financial and regulatory requirements;
- regarding the NM funding, a single dedicated mechanism setting a clear and transparent funding basis would be preferable;
- the term of the designation should be based on reference periods of the performance scheme and not remain automatic;
- the governance of the execution of the NF IR should be more detailed while the oversight should rely on a realistic plan by the Commission.


You correctly highlight the challenge of demonstrating the benefits of the NM being designated as a separate legal entity to Member States, so I appreciate the presentation of the benefits of this arrangement.

As per usual practice, distribution of this position paper in advance of SSC/66 at the end of October will be ensured as it will contribute to the reflection of the Commission and Member States. I look forward to discussing next steps with you following the ICB's Institutional Sub-Group meeting on 28 September 2016.

As I mentioned in my previous response to the ICB position paper on the long-term evolution of Network functions, I would appreciate that any advice on the transition to a new NM could be shared with the Commission.

Thank you once again for your valuable contribution and we will keep the ICB informed of further developments on this topic.

Yours sincerely,



Maurizio CASTELLETTI
Head of Unit