It was reported on 28th November that CANSO, the Civil Air Navigation Services Organisation, has called on European Member States to provide political leadership and address the key issues delaying progress towards achieving a Single European Sky (SES).

CANSO’s member European Air Navigation Service Providers (ANSPs) have reaffirmed their commitment to the SES, and their support for the performance scheme as a mechanism for driving progress.

Members of the European CANSO CEO Committee (EC3), which includes all the leading ANSPs, are calling on the European Commission and Member States to play their part in order that ANSPs can move ahead with the modernisation of the European ATM system.

EC3 Chairman, Massimo Garbini said, “We are fully committed to deliver the changes necessary to further improve ATM performance, but currently we are still waiting for the Commission to set a timeframe which is then to be endorsed by the Member States relating to a number of crucial decisions.”

These include:

- System definition and implementation arrangements for the Single European Sky that will enable further progress.
- The establishment of a new deployment model which will include the appointment of a Deployment Manager working with the ANSPs and the other industry partners in the driving seat, committed to implement the new advanced ATM technologies and operational procedures in a timely, synchronised and cost-effective way.
- In the interim phase, the activation of the transitional working arrangements under the guidance of the Single Sky Committee, responsible for the implementation of ongoing projects. This will ensure that immediate progress is made and also provide essential learnings for the Deployment Manager.
- Ensuring adequate funding to meet both the immediate financial needs of the TEN-T (Trans-European Transport Network) to support the transitional working arrangements, and the financial commitments going forward through an integrated process established within the new deployment model.
• Committing to the continuation of a Public-Private-Partnership model after 2016, providing governance for research and development, similar to the one established for the SESAR Joint Undertaking.
• Instigating the institutional reform of EUROCONTROL that will be required if a true Single European Sky is to be achieved.
• Reinforcing the importance of the Network Manager, the organisation established to co-ordinate European ATM operations.

In spite of these impediments, significant progress has already been made by European ANSPs, in co-ordinating, harmonising and consolidating efficiency plans that will deliver real savings, and agreeing on mechanisms for their delivery, measurement and assessment. The ANSPs have also made significant improvements in service delivery which is not reflected in the latest communications from the Commission.

CANSO Director General Graham Lake commented, “The challenges facing ANSPs in Europe are extremely complex. The uncertainty of the air traffic forecast and hence revenues, also has a huge impact on their ability to achieve their targets within their legal obligations, while at the same time, it has become an accepted reality that ANSPs must be prepared to make trade-offs between different KPAs (Key Performance Areas) and/or KPIs (Key Performance Indicators), such as cost and delay.” He added, “ANSPs are fully committed to working with their respective States and other aviation stakeholders to address the current shortfalls, but they need to be empowered to take full and complete responsibility for meeting the targets. We encourage all stakeholders including both airlines and airports to work with us in order that we can speak with a single voice with the European Commission.”