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Agenda Item 7: Promotion and Implementation of Regional Actions for Environmental Protection

EASA ACTIVITIES IN THE FIELD OF SUSTAINABLE AVIATION FUELS (SAF)

(Presented by EASA)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper aims to inform the Civil Aviation Authorities of the North American, Central American and Caribbean Region on several activities in the field of Sustainable Aviation Fuels (SAF) that the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) is undertaking.

Since October 2020 EASA has a Sustainable Aviation Programme in line with environmental protection regulations in the European Union (EU) to incentivise the aviation sector to continuously improve its environmental performance with a clear aim to decarbonise it.

Strategic Objectives:

- Strategic Objective 5 – Environmental Protection

References:

- <https://www.easa.europa.eu/en/light/topics/sustainability>

1. Introduction

1.1 EASA has among its principal objectives (Regulation (EU) 2018/1139) to establish and maintain a high uniform level of civil aviation safety in the Union, but also to contribute to a high, uniform level of environmental protection.

1.2 In line with its main regulation, since October 2020, EASA has a Sustainable Aviation Programme that aims at protecting European citizens, the climate, the environment and human health from the harmful effects of the aviation sector. Its main objectives are (1) to facilitate the decarbonisation of the aviation system through Agency initiatives, (2) to act towards sustainable aviation through environmental certification and standards, and (3) to act towards sustainable aviation through effective transversal actions at the European level.

1.3 Sustainable Aviation Fuels (SAF) are considered to play a key role in the reduction of CO₂eq-emissions, while creating co-lateral positive outcomes in the fields of technological development, employment and energy independence. In that regard, EASA is involved with the SAF approval process ensuring the associated airworthiness standards are met. It will also have an active role in the EU future legislation aiming at increasing both supply and demand for SAF in the Union. These and other activities that EASA is undertaking in the field of SAF are outlined on this paper.

2. EASA's Environmental Report (EAER) 2022

2.1 Every three years, EASA in collaboration with the European Environment Agency (EEA) and Eurocontrol develops an European Aviation Environmental Report¹. The core aim of the report is to provide an objective, clear and accurate source of information on the environmental performance of the aviation sector at the European level. It also reports on actions being put in place to drive forward sustainability ambitions, and contains recommendations on how the level of environmental protection could be improved.

2.2 Chapter 4 of the report is dedicated to SAF and provides definitions, an overview of the SAF proposed rules that are being developed at the moment in the Union, as well as a current and future landscape of the SAF industry in the region. Several recommendations for scaling up the supply and use of SAF are provided as well.

3. EASA's role in the future EU Regulation regarding SAF

3.1 On 14 July 2021, the European Commission presented a package of proposals to make the EU's climate, energy, land use, transport and taxation policies fit for reducing net greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55 % by 2030, compared with 1990 levels – the 'fit for 55' package. The package includes a proposal to ensure a level playing field for sustainable air transport, also known as the ReFuelEU Aviation initiative. In the draft Regulation, the Commission proposes obligations on fuel suppliers to distribute SAF, with an increasing share of it (including synthetic aviation fuels) over time, in order to increase its uptake by airlines and thereby reduce emissions from aviation.

3.2 The proposal for a Regulation (the ReFuelEU Aviation Initiative) would require that EASA become responsible for new tasks related to SAF. Notably, as of 2025, EASA would need to (1) collect various data related to the production and usage of SAF, (2) subsequently publish a yearly report covering the collected data as well as additional information concerning aviation fuels and SAF, and (3) support the implementation of a voluntary environmental labelling scheme.

¹ 2022 European Aviation Environmental Report: [EAER | EASA Eco \(europa.eu\)](#)

4. EU Clearing House for SAF

4.1 The 2019 EASA study on a Sustainable Aviation Fuels ‘Facilitation Initiative’² recommended the creation of an EU Clearing House, that would provide advice and support on the approval process of new SAF pathways or feedstocks for the ASTM standards, carry out and/or coordinate the necessary tests required and fund Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) to review the research report produced based on the tests done (as required by the D4054 standard).

4.2 At this moment, EASA is defining the Clearing House structure including roles and responsibilities necessary for the demonstrator phase and during the current year, it intends to set-up the conditions for the evaluation of candidate fuels which could qualify for tier testing.

5. EASA International Technical Cooperation Projects and participation in relevant international organizations

5.1 As globalisation advances, environmental protection is increasingly a cooperative, global effort. EASA partners with civil aviation authorities, regional and international organisations alike.

5.2 To this end, EASA designs and implements major civil aviation cooperation projects³, such as the EU-Latin America and Caribbean Aviation Partnership Project (EU-LAC APP) that aims to enhance the political, economic and environmental partnership between the EU and Latin America and the Caribbean in the field of civil aviation.

5.3 In addition, EASA has international offices in Washington (USA), Beijing (China), Montréal (Canada), Singapore and Panama City (Panama) to further strengthen the cooperation with the local authorities and industry and promote the implementation of agreements. The Panama office in particular is intended to serve the Latin American and Caribbean region.

5.4 Moreover, in the field of SAF, EASA is actively involved in some of the most relevant working groups at an international level, namely the Fuel Task Group of the Committee on Aviation Environmental Protection (CAEP) of ICAO or the ECAC/EU Sustainable Aviation Fuels Task Group (SAF-TG) formed by experts from different European States and organizations.

² [Sustainable Aviation Fuel ‘Facilitation Initiative’ | EASA \(europa.eu\)](#)

³ More information in the Appendix

6. Conclusion

6.1 EASA is actively contributing to support increasing both supply and demand for SAF in the European Union and other regions of the world, as part of its Sustainable Aviation Programme. Several activities in the field have been outlined in the IP.

6.2 EASA is partnering with national, regional and international civil aviation organisations to support the development of SAF.

Technical Cooperation – EU/EASA

