

COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

COM(83) 290 final

Brussels, 27 May 1983

Communication from the Commission to the Council

concerning Community involvement in certain aspects of the work of
the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)

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I

The Community's powers in the sphere of noise nuisance generated by aircraft

The Community has shown considerable interest in the ICAO's work in recent years, since it draws up recommendations in several fields, many of which affect Community powers. The Community has in fact based some of its own work on ICAO recommendations.

On 20 December 1979, the Council adopted a Directive (80/51/EEC, published in OJ L 18 of 24 January 1980, p. 26) on the limitation of noise emissions from propeller-driven aircraft and subsonic jet aircraft. This makes the noise standards adopted by the ICAO binding, prohibits new registrations of propeller-driven and jet aircraft without a noise certificate and obliges operators to withdraw from use any jet aircraft without a noise certificate which does not meet the standards applying, as from 31 December 1986.

The Commission has sent to the Council two proposals for Directives, the first (COM (81) 512 published in OJ C 276 of 28 October 1981, p. 5) amending Directive 80/51/EEC with a view to adapting it to the most recent measures taken at international level, without affecting its basic principles. This proposal also obliges Member States not to authorize, after 31 December 1987, movements at their airports of jet aircraft not registered in the Community and not satisfying the minimum noise standards in force. It was agreed to in principle by the Council on 10 June 1982 and should be adopted shortly.

The second is a proposal for a Directive (COM (81) 554, published in OJ C 275 of 27 October 1981) making mandatory the technical specifications relating to helicopters in Chapter 3 of Annex 16 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation.

II

The ICAO

The ICAO, (which comprises some 150 States, including the Member States of the European Community) prepares noise-certification standards for the various existing or proposed types of aircraft. To be binding, ICAO recommendations or standards have to be incorporated into national law. A State that is signatory to the Convention on International Civil Aviation may derogate from the measures adopted if it notifies the ICAO of the differences between its national rules and those embodied in the ICAO recommendation concerned.

The standards, which are of a technical nature, lay down the methods of measuring and evaluating noise levels and the maximum levels for each type of aircraft. Generally speaking, they affect the aircraft industry as a whole and have a significant economic impact on the air transport industry in the Member States which apply them.

This is why, since 1976, the Commission has endeavoured to see that ICAO standards are applied uniformly throughout the Community.

Within the ICAO, the Committee on Aircraft Noise (CAN) updates existing standards (adapting them to technical progress) and draws up new ones. Experts from five Member States (France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom) are members of the Committee. The agenda for the CAN-7 meeting in May this year includes several subjects covered by the Directives adopted or proposed or by the sections on aircraft noise in the European Communities Action Programmes on the Environment.

III

Conclusions

The Commission obviously takes great interest in this Committee's work and believes it is appropriate and important for the Community to have observer status at the CAN-7 meeting, so as to be fully informed of the Committee's work.

Accordingly, the Commission has approached the ICAO, asking to be included on the list of international organisations which can be invited to attend ICAO meetings.

The letter from the President of the Commission to the Secretary General of the ICAO and the list of the international organisations in question are attached.

The Commission hopes that the Member States and their representatives in the ICAO will support its inclusion on the list and its request to be invited to the CAN-7 meeting in May.