



For immediate release

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## **European Commission report confirms the need for public funding of security**

**Brussels, 07 August 2006:** The Association of European Airlines and the Airports Council International Europe are satisfied to see that the European Commission has once again acknowledged the part to be played by Member States in the financing of aviation security.

In a long-awaited report published yesterday, the Commission stated that “The protection of European citizens against terrorist attacks is essentially a State responsibility” and that public financing of aviation security measures does not constitute state aid.

Ever since the attacks of September 2001 the aviation industry, supported by the European Parliament, has called on the Commission to assess the financial impact of additional post-9/11 security measures. Despite the huge impact of security costs on the European aviation industry, to this day, no legislative action has been taken at European level.

“It is a fine thing to see that our position is shared by the European Commission, and that more transparency is being advocated – but where do we go from here?” said AEA Secretary General Ulrich Schulte-Strathaus. He added: “It is the role of any given government to protect the general public – at railway stations, football stadiums, on the streets and at airports. That is how governments around the world and in particular the US see their role.”

Roy Griffins, ACI EUROPE Director General commented: “The ever increasing cost of aviation security represents up to 25% of operating costs at European airports. We all want Europe to be competitive. To ensure this both government and business must assume their respective responsibilities. Otherwise no level playing field will ever be achieved for Europe’s aviation industry.”

Europe’s airports and airlines are keen to see endorsement of this report by the 25 EU Member States and call for a speedy harmonization of the funding of security systems. ACI EUROPE and the AEA contend this would clarify the role of aviation and avoid distortions of competition within Europe and with foreign competitors.

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