

## Press release

### ACI EUROPE

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### Urgent need for airport security funding in Europe

Brussels, 26 February 2004: The US Transportation Security Administration (TSA) has further enhanced its assistance to US airports by increasing funding for anti-terrorist security measures. Since July 2003, the US government (via the TSA and the Federal Aviation Administration) has granted some 1.5 billion dollars to give US airports the resources they need to meet the additional security challenges faced post 9/11.

Similarly, the European airport industry has been faced with hundreds of millions of euro in costs for additional security measures, and it is expected that such costs will continue to grow. In contrast to the USA, most European governments have so far refused to bear the costs for these measures, which aim at the protection of society in general. Indeed, within Europe there are major differences between countries as to how aviation security is financed. This creates the danger of severe distortion of competition: between European states, between Europe and the United States and between different modes of transport. The situation is likely to get even worse because additional anti-terrorist security measures and new security technologies will continue to be introduced.

John Hume, Director of Policy, ACI EUROPE: "Government assistance with the funding of anti-terrorist security measures is essential for Europe's airports. US airports are clearly enjoying a significant competitive advantage compared with their European counterparts. Detailed research into the inequality of airport security funding will soon be finalised by the European Commission. Europe's airports demand that this research be addressed by the upcoming European Council of Transport Ministers in March so that governments may focus on this critical issue."

The European airport industry has been confronted with many millions of euro in costs for additional security measures which entail the purchase of sophisticated technology, implementing major infrastructural changes, employing additional resources and further staff training.

John Hume, Director of Policy, ACI EUROPE: "These costs must not be passed directly onto airports and air passengers. The security of air travellers must be guaranteed by European governments, so that we may all continue to have confidence in European aviation. The European airport industry does not seek state aid, but merely the reimbursement of expenses it incurs while carrying out government responsibilities for protecting society as a whole."

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Airports Council International (ACI) is the only worldwide professional association of airport operators. ACI EUROPE represents over 450 airports in 45 European countries. Member airports handle 90% of commercial air traffic in Europe, welcoming over a billion passengers each year.