



MEDIA RELEASE

Aviation radio spectrum – guaranteed protection for safety and future technologies

4 July 2003 (Geneva) – The Air Transport Action Group has expressed its satisfaction with the outcome of the ITU World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC) held in Geneva from 9 June – 4 July 2003 which resulted in the protection of interference-free radio spectrum for aviation.

Speaking after the Conference, Philippe Rochat, Executive Director of ATAG, said: "WRC 2003 has been a success for aviation: not only have present spectrum allocations been retained, but the conference also acknowledged the need to review aeronautical spectrum requirements at the next WRC in 2007. This will ensure that aviation has the spectrum required to support safe and secure operations and suitable air traffic systems – and also underlines aviation's importance to the world's social, cultural and economic well-being".

States participating in the WRCs decide on spectrum allocations for all users from transportation, maritime, communications and other industries. Aviation relies upon specifically allocated radio spectrum in order to operate safely, to sustain its air traffic capacity and to implement the new technologies it requires to meet future growth. Between 10 and 22 systems on an aircraft use dedicated spectrum, for example, to land during adverse weather conditions or low visibility or to maintain safe separation between aircraft. The provision of adequate radio spectrum is a precondition for aviation to realise a return on investment in its radio equipment and to ensure a safe and efficient increase in air traffic capacity.

The basis for the WRC's success was a culmination, leading up to the Conference, of first-rate coordination between the industry's representative organisations – ICAO, Eurocontrol, IATA and ATAG – and cooperation with aviation representatives in national delegations.

During the WRC, the following aviation priorities were specifically supported:

- The preservation of current allocations for microwave landing systems (MLS) that guarantee aircraft precision approach in low visibility, which is especially essential at highly congested airports.
- The assurance of non-interference to airborne weather radar carried onboard aircraft and used to prevent flying in adverse weather conditions and to detect windshear. A reduction in performance could endanger an aircraft in flight.
- The protection of radio navigation aid (DME) from satellites using the band.
- The protection of long-range primary radar, including en-route air traffic control (ATC) radar, and those used for airport surveillance in certain States.

Additional information can be found in a joint ATAG/Eurocontrol/ ICAO/IATA flyer covering "Aviation's Radio Spectrum": see ATAG's website www.atag.org

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The Air Transport Action Group (ATAG) is an independent coalition of organisations throughout the air transport industry that have united to support aviation infrastructure development and capacity improvements in an environmentally-responsible manner. Its members include airports, airlines, manufacturers, air navigation services, airline pilot and air traffic controller unions, chambers of commerce, travel and tourism organisations, ground transportation and communications providers. Its funding members are ACI, Airbus, Boeing, CFM, IATA and Rolls-Royce.