

PRB Work Programme for 2021

January 2021

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1. Introduction

- 1 The European Commission has designated an independent group of experts as the Performance Review Body (PRB) to assist it in the implementation of the SES performance and charging scheme.¹
- 2 The PRB consists of nine members, including a Chairperson, appointed by the Commission for a term of office of two years. The PRB develops impartial, evidence-based recommendations on the performance of air navigation services at Union and local levels as well as of network functions, on the basis of pre-analysed data from Eurocontrol and European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA).
- 3 The PRB addresses the key topics related to ANS performance in the following areas:
 - Safety;
 - Cost-efficiency;
 - Capacity;
 - Environment.

The PRB coordinates with EASA on activities relating to the safety KPA.

- 4 The Commission Decision establishing the PRB requires the PRB to adopt an Annual Work Programme, which sets out the priorities for the PRB for the following year and ensures that the tasks set out in Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/317 ('Performance and Charging Regulation') are addressed.² It reflects the PRB's objective to provide independent advice to the Commission on all issues affecting the implementation of the Single European Sky (SES) performance and charging scheme.
- 5 This Annual Work Programme focuses on the challenges the PRB is facing in 2021: it is expected to be another difficult year as the aviation industry adapts to the ongoing challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The planning air navigation service providers (ANSPs) and airspace users had done for the third reference period (RP3) is no longer realistic: targets and performance plans require a revision and monitoring will include analysing the data collected in December 2020 on the measures Member States have taken to respond to the historic downturn in traffic (in line with Article 6 of the Commission Implementing Regulation on exceptional measures for RP3 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.³

2. PRB Work Programme for 2021

2.1 Priorities for 2021

- 6 In 2021, the priorities of the PRB are to advise the Commission on how to revise the targets for RP3 as the aviation industry adapts to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. This will include a new round of performance plan assessment. The revision of the targets commenced in late 2020 and will be concluded in the first quarter of 2021.
- 7 Monitoring activities remain a high priority in 2021. The monitoring of the performance of air navigation services in 2020 will be enhanced by the collection of interim monitoring data, which

¹ Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2016/2296 of 16 December 2016 setting up the independent group of experts designated as Performance Review Body of the single European sky.

² Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/317 of 11 February 2019 laying down a performance and charging scheme in the single European sky and repealing Implementing Regulations (EU) No 390/2013 and (EU) No 391/2013.

³ Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2020/1627 of 3 November 2020 on exceptional measures for the third reference period (2020-2024) of the single European sky performance and charging scheme due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

will allow the PRB to analyse how ANSPs have adapted their businesses to cope with the impact of the pandemic.

- 8 The PRB will reassess how to improve the monitoring for RP3. In the past, the PRB has published large documents to demonstrate and analyse the performance of Member States. The PRB will aim to make the reports more concise, more user-friendly and allow for earlier publication of some of the findings in order for Member States to respond to the recommendations made by the PRB.
- 9 A final priority for the PRB is to provide input to the Commission regarding the future development of the Single European Sky in line with the Commission's proposal to update the legislative framework (SES II+).
- 10 The PRB activities can be divided into two main categories: standing items and ad hoc items.

2.2 *Standing items*

- 11 The standing items include two groups: the PRB monitoring activities that are carried out on an annual basis, and the Union-wide target setting and subsequent assessment of Member States' performance plans.

2.2.1 *Annual monitoring activities*

- 12 Implementing Regulation (EU) 2020/1627 on exceptional measures for RP3 requires Member States to provide interim monitoring data to the Commission by 15th December 2020. Upon receipt, the PRB will review the measures taken by ANSPs to adapt to the downturn in traffic experienced in 2020. The PRB will analyse the data submitted and will publish an interim monitoring report in February 2021. The analysis will also contribute to the evidence gathered to support the revised Union-wide targets for RP3.
- 13 Once the full data set for the year 2020 is available in mid-2021, the following activities are planned:
 - The monitoring of the performance of air navigation services, including investment and capital expenditure, at Union level, at national level and at the level of functional airspace blocks (FABs).
 - The monitoring of the performance of the network functions.

2.2.2 *Revision of performance targets for RP3*

- 14 The PRB will provide advice to the European Commission on the revision of Union-wide targets for 2020-2024. The PRB recognises the uncertainty of forecasting traffic demand and the difficulties this may pose. The PRB will assess the ongoing situation and identify how the changes in demand should be considered within the assessment of the performance plans.

2.2.3 *Assessment of performance plans for 2020-2024*

- 15 The PRB will conduct the following activities in 2021:
 - Assess the consistency of the national and/or FAB performance targets contained in the draft performance plans with the revised Union-wide performance targets using the assessment criteria defined in Annex IV of the Performance and Charging Regulation. This activity is expected to be completed in 2022.
- 16 The following activities are likely to commence only in 2022, and are noted here for completeness:

- Assess revised draft performance plans. This will be required where national and/or FAB performance targets have not been found consistent with the Union-wide targets and the Member State concerned has submitted a revised draft performance plan.
- Where performance plans are not deemed to be consistent with the Union-wide targets the PRB will undertake a detailed examination of the proposed targets and local circumstances. The PRB will recommend to the Commission corrective measures to be taken by Member States, if necessary.

2.2.4 Other activities

- 17 The PRB assists national supervisory authorities (NSAs), in particular by providing an independent view of performance issues, in accordance with Article 2 of Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2016/2296.¹
- 18 The PRB supports competent authorities on their request in assessing the noise situation at airports for which they are responsible, in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 598/2014.⁴ The PRB will review such requests and propose actions to support these activities if they arise.
- 19 For the purpose of monitoring of the overall performance of the European air traffic management (ATM) network, the PRB continues to implement working arrangements with the air navigation service providers, airport operators, airport coordinators, and airspace users as laid out in the PRB stakeholder engagement plan.⁵

2.3 Ad hoc items

- 20 Ad hoc items represent activities where the PRB develops and establishes an independent view to assist the Commission in the implementation of the performance and charging scheme.
- 21 Ad hoc activities include:
 - Contributing to stakeholder meetings and workshops.
 - Participating and presenting specific topics in the Single Sky Committee.
 - Participating in meetings of the NSA Coordination Platform (NCP) performance working group.
 - Providing ad hoc support to policy development and in the provision of advice regarding the performance scheme upon request of the Commission.
- 22 In 2021, the PRB will undertake two specific ad hoc activities in view of the assessment of the performance plans:
 - Analyse the way costs are allocated by ANSPs between en route and terminal air navigation services. The allocation of costs is the basis on which en route and terminal charges are defined. Allocating the costs correctly ensures the ‘user pays’ principle is properly implemented and avoids the potential for cross subsidisation between en route and terminal services, which is forbidden under the SES legislation.

⁴ Regulation (EU) No 598/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 April 2014 on the establishment of rules and procedures with regard to the introduction of noise-related operating restrictions at Union airports within a Balanced Approach and repealing Directive 2002/30/EC.

⁵ [National Supervisory Authorities and Stakeholders Engagement Plan](#), Performance Review Body, March 2019.

- Update on the existing PRB cost of capital study. In 2019, the PRB prepared a report on the cost of capital.⁶ Following the changes in the industry in 2020, it is prudent to update this study in 2021.

23 In addition, the PRB will continue:

- The development of a methodology to quantify how the SESAR-related investments impact performance, with the aim of evaluating the benefits with respect to the key performance areas of the performance and charging scheme. This will conclude in the first quarter of 2021.
- The work to support options for the future of economic regulation of air traffic management. The PRB will also continue to review how other key outputs from across the industry interface with the Performance and Charging Regulation and may influence the planning for the fourth reference period (RP4).⁷

3. PRB activities and meetings

3.1 PRB meetings

24 PRB meetings are held approximately six times a year. These can be complemented by additional ad hoc meetings, as required. Activities of the PRB are governed by the PRB's Rules of Procedure.

25 The indicative dates of the PRB meetings for 2021 are as follows:

PRB meeting 26	18 th – 19 th January 2021
PRB meeting 27	16 th - 17 th March 2021
PRB meeting 28	11 th - 12 th May 2021
PRB meeting 29	13 th - 14 th July 2021
PRB meeting 30	14 th - 15 th September 2021
PRB meeting 31	16 th - 17 th November 2021

26 In the course of 2021 and as appropriate, the PRB plans to organise workshops to support its activities.

3.2 Sub-group meetings

27 The PRB meetings are supported by three sub-groups. Sub-group meetings are held when required according to the PRB's activities, and to assist in the development of deliverables of either the standing or ad hoc activities.

28 The sub-group meetings are indicatively taking place in accordance with the timeline of the standing activities deliverables (Annex A).

3.3 Stakeholder engagement

29 The PRB will engage with the industry-wide stakeholders to gain the necessary insight for its activities including national supervisory authorities, air navigation service providers, airspace users, airport representatives and professional staff associations.

⁶ https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/eusinglesky/news/useful-materials-rp3_en.

⁷ The ATM Master Plan, the work on ATM Data Service Providers and the ongoing initiative around providing a consistent approach to assessing the costs and performance benefits of new technology and procedures are examples of such outputs.

30 The details of the stakeholder engagement are specified in the PRB's Stakeholders Engagement Plan.

3.4 *Communications*

31 Regular updates on PRB activities can be found at: <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/eusinglesky>.

32 The purpose of this webpage is:

- For Member States and NSAs to submit information required by the SES performance and charging scheme through the European Single Sky (ESSKY) platform.
- For the PRB to publish its reports, recommendations and communications as well as to handle the stakeholder consultation calendar concerning performance plans and the consultation requirements referred to in Article 24(2) and (3) and in Article 30 of the Performance and Charging Regulation.
- For the wider aviation community to be informed on the SES performance and charging schemes' objectives and achievements.

Annex A – Indicative timeline of the PRB deliverables

	2021											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	August	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Monitoring Activities												
Interim monitoring of data provided under the new Regulation regarding exceptional measures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.												
Monitoring, benchmarking and review of the performance of air navigation services including investments realised and capital expenditure at Union-wide and local levels.												
Advice on revised targets for RP3												
Developing advice to the Commission on revised targets for all years of RP3.												
Assessment of performance plans												
Consistency assessment of the draft performance plans for EU Member States, Norway and Switzerland.												
Consistency assessment of the Network Performance Plan.												
Other activities												
Assistance to NSAs by providing guidance and advice relevant to the performance scheme.												
Ad hoc support to policy development and in the provision of advice regarding the performance and charging scheme upon request of the Commission.												
Assessment of the allocation of costs between terminal and en route.												
Update of the PRB's previous cost of capital report.												
Development of a methodology to quantify how the SESAR-related investments impact performance												