



## PRESS RELEASE

*Brussels, 1 December 2006*

### **Aviation Safety – First and Always the Top Priority ! - An Ambitious Agenda for Europe -**

**At its International Civil Aviation Day, on 7<sup>th</sup> Dec. 2006, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) will debate the Organisation's motto for 2007: "Safety and Security – First and always the top priority".**

**This motto should be the guiding principle for the European Union's ongoing work on reshaping the European regulatory architecture for the air transport sector. In particular *aviation safety* needs to be at the centre of this work, stresses the European Cockpit Association, representing 35.000 professional pilots in Europe.<sup>1</sup>**

ECA President, Capt. Martin Chalk says: "**Fragmentation of the aviation regulation system** has been and still remains a problem. We therefore strongly welcome the EU's effort to find ways to transform the current patchwork into an integrated framework that is efficient, coherent and – most of all – provides **high levels of aviation safety**. It is true, the EU has one of the best safety records. But it is equally true that it lags behind, for example the US where fatal accident rates fell much more significantly in the past decade [1995-2004] than in Europe."

To tackle the problem of regulatory fragmentation, on 8<sup>th</sup> Nov., the Commission set up a "**High Level group**" tasked with making recommendations to improve the efficiency and performance of the system, and on how to cover possible gaps in safety.

ECA and its global partner IFALPA welcome this new initiative. Despite the risk of the Group appearing to be ATM focussed, we would very much encourage the Group to look at the wider picture, including how to **make EASA a "one stop shop" for aviation safety**, and how to promote "just culture". The High Level Group has an unique opportunity to give guidance on building a coherent, comprehensive, and strong regulatory safety framework for Europe!

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For further information, please visit [www.eurocockpit.be](http://www.eurocockpit.be), and/or contact:  
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<sup>1</sup> ECA also represents the International Federation of Airline Pilots' Associations (IFALPA) at European level, and thereby the global pilot community's point of view.