

ERA head office, UK, 13 March 2017

ERA calls for greater use of Public Service Obligations

- The European Regions Airline Association* (ERA) has released a new publication advising members on the current EU rules governing Public Service Obligation (PSO) routes.
- Following its extensive work and campaigning on PSOs, ERA is now calling for states to make greater use of PSOs to increase air connectivity across Europe.
- ERA's publication is released ahead of the European Commission issuing new interpretative guidelines on PSO legislation, expected later this year.

Many of the European Regions Airline Association's member airlines serve remote regions, islands and dispersed areas of Europe where air transport is both vital and often the only mode of transport available to residents. EU member states may award Public Service Obligations (PSOs) to carriers in order to maintain appropriate scheduled air services on routes that are vital for the economic development of the region they serve.

The new ERA publication advises on the current EU rules governing PSO routes. The European Commission is due to issue interpretative guidelines on PSO legislation later this year. In its August 2016 response to the European Commission's formal consultation on PSOs, ERA called for new policies to promote and encourage European connectivity through the greater use of PSOs. Ahead of the release of the EC's new interpretative guidelines, ERA is again calling for states to make greater use of PSOs to increase air connectivity across Europe.

Stein Nilsen, CEO of ERA's Norwegian member airline Widerøe, comments: "Without PSO routes in Norway, a large part of the country would not have been inhabitable. These flights are the only means of public transport available. Hospital appointments, vet checks, freight and post: for people living in these remote areas, PSO routes are the only option. The use of PSO routes can be an excellent way over time to enable airlines and governments to build sufficient passenger streams through tourism and business travel, eventually making initial PSO routes commercially viable."

The publication is available to download from www.eraa.org/policy/financial-regulation/public-service-obligations-psy

For more information, please contact Satu Dahl, ERA Manager Corporate Communications, on +44 (0)1276 485582, +44 (0)7713 984792 or by email at satu.dahl@eraa.org.

* Founded in 1980, ERA is a non-profit trade association representing 53 airlines and 141 companies involved in European air transport and is the only association representing the entire spectrum of companies involved in European aviation. The association promotes the interests of European airlines by lobbying the European Commission and other European regulatory bodies on policy matters, promoting the social and economic importance of air transport and its environmental commitments.