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**Chairman,
Honourable Members of the Society,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is - as always - a pleasure and an honour to be invited to speak to the Royal Aeronautical Society. Over the last four years or so, the Society and the European Aviation Safety Agency have built an increasingly constructive and cordial relationship. One could even speak of a kind of entente cordiale - and I say this not only because I am a Frenchman in Britain, but because the Royal Aeronautical Society has been a perfect platform to present and discuss new developments in European aviation. I would therefore like to take this opportunity to extend a warm 'thank you' to all of the Society's members for their support and co-operation.

Your invitation today is very important to me. We chose your conference as the first forum to publicly present the new extension of the Agency's responsibilities, as it was recently

decided by the European Member States and the European Parliament.

Given the short time available today, I will only outline the main principles of this complex extension of remit. But I want to emphasize that this is just the beginning of the dialogue between the Agency and its stakeholders. What has been agreed by the EU is the basic framework of our new responsibilities. These will be detailed in the so-called Implementing Rules, which must now be defined; defined together with our stakeholders through full public consultation.

This new EU Regulation, our “Basic Regulation” was adopted by the Council, that is to say all EU Member States, and the European Parliament. It is the result of a long negotiation between the European Commission, the Council and the Parliament.

The regulation entered into force on the 8th of April, just two weeks ago. Its provisions will be detailed in the Implementing Rules. These were drafted by dedicated working groups, with the participation of technical experts and stakeholders. Following public consultation, they will be adopted by the Commission and the Member States. Their date of applicability will be specified in

the rules themselves, but it cannot be later than 8 April 2012. This date is written in the Basic Regulation.

So what is the content of this new Regulation? It contains new responsibilities as well as modifications to our current ones. In this presentation I will focus on what is new.

The Agency will draft common European rules for Air Operations and the licensing of flight crew. At this point I would like to clarify that the actual oversight of operators and the issuing of individual licences will be performed by the National Aviation Authorities, as it happens today. However in performing these tasks, they will have to follow the new common rules.

The main difference to the former JAA system is that these rules will now be legally binding. And in some cases, harmonization will go beyond what was covered by the Joint Aviation Authorities.

An important example of this is the authorisation of third country operators, to which I will come back in a moment.

Let me now give you some more details on the Agency's new tasks. In the area of Operations, the Agency will draft the common rules for commercial air transport. Common safety standards will apply to airlines throughout the EU. The cabin crew will also have to comply with common requirements in terms of

training and qualifications. In addition, the Agency will regulate operational issues for non-commercial operations.

In the area of Flight Crew Licensing, the Agency will draft common rules for the issuing of private and professional pilot licences, and the associated ratings. We will also approve and oversee training organisations and simulators, located outside the territory of the EU.

An important innovation will be the new pilot licence for light aircraft. With this new licence, as with several other initiatives in the area of General Aviation, we want to alleviate General Aviation from bureaucratic impediments and create rules proportionate to the risk.

I would like now to address an issue of particular importance for the UK aviation community: the UK IMC rating. I know that the future of this rating has been an issue of great concern for thousands of private pilots in the UK. I want to reassure you that the Agency's objective is not to abolish it. On the contrary, we want to allow this rating to continue. There are many opponents of the IMC Rating across Europe, which will have to be convinced of its importance. But we have in front of us a transition period of up to four years, during which our objective is to find a European solution.

The third important area of new responsibilities for the Agency is the authorization of third country operators. This advance approval, before they enter European airspace, is the convincing solution to implementing common safety standards.

The EU blacklist was a very important step forward. Now, it will be strengthened and complimented by a pro-active, advance audit of operators wishing to fly into Europe. If an approved foreign operator violates against international safety standards, the approval can immediately be withdrawn and the operator is automatically put on the blacklist until we are convinced it is safe again.

While our approval guarantees the necessary technical safety assessment, the blacklist ensures citizens are properly informed about our actions.

As I mentioned earlier, we are just at the beginning of what I am sure will be a constructive dialogue with our stakeholders' community. All new common rules will go through full public consultation. As in the past, transparency and cooperation are our two basic principles for this consultation phase. We want all stakeholders to be actively involved in the decision-making process.

Over the following months, the Agency will be publishing the respective Notices of Proposed Amendment (NPAs). Their

publication will be phased to help stakeholders. The consultation period will be adjusted appropriately, taking into account the amount of new material.

In parallel to the publication of the NPAs, the Agency is organising a series of public workshops. Their objective is to clarify the impact of the extension of the Agency's scope and the rulemaking process, as well as the structure and the content of the proposed implementing rules.

Although these new rules will be based on existing legislation and current practices, unavoidably there will be changes. It is the Agency's objective to ensure that their implementation is as seamless as possible. Transition phases will give stakeholders the time to adapt to the new framework. Again, these cannot go beyond 2012, as specified by the EU Regulation. During that time, approvals under previous regulations will remain valid.

In addition, the Agency will issue detailed documentation and explanatory material to help the day-to-day activities and facilitate the transition.

Here is the time plan for the publication of our NPAs. In each case, there will be a three-month consultation period. We will then have three months for the comment review. This will allow the adoption of the implementing rules by the Commission and the Member States, starting probably in 2009.

Four workshops are currently planned by the Agency around the publication dates of the NPAs. These workshops will launch the discussion and consultation phase and help stakeholders to take an active part in the process. I would like to invite any one who is interested in the technical details of our extension to participate. We also plan workshops in the Member States at a later stage.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have tried to give you a brief overview of the way forward for the Agency and, to a great extent, for European aviation. I strongly believe that these new responsibilities will bring benefits for European citizens and businesses, through harmonized, pan-European rules and an enhanced safety system. To achieve this, we rely on the active communication and the close co-operation and partnership with our stakeholders' community. This is why I was grateful for the opportunity to talk with you today.

Thank you for your attention.