

Brussels, 30 January 2012

Emissions Trading: Partial activation of the Union Registry for airlines

Today another step was taken in the implementation of the inclusion of aviation in the EU's emissions trading system (EU ETS): the European Commission has partially activated the new Union registry to enable access for aircraft operators.

The single Union Registry

The Union registry operated by the Commission will ensure the accurate accounting of all emission allowances issued under the EU ETS and keep track of the ownership. Currently, allowances are held in accounts in electronic registries administered by Member States. The revised ETS Directive adopted in 2009¹ provides for the centralisation of operations in a single Union registry. The partial activation of the Union Registry for airlines is a first step towards the full activation of the Union Registry, which will not take place before June 2012. Until then, existing national registries remain operational, in particular for allocation and for the completion of compliance activities for stationary installations.

What does it mean for aircraft operators?

From today onwards, aircraft operators can open accounts in the Union registry. Account requests and all required supporting documentation² shall be verified by the relevant national administrator. Aircraft operators with an open account will be able to receive free allocation as determined by their administering Member State.

What are the next steps for aircraft operators?

All aircraft operators covered by the EU ETS have to open an account in the Union registry. Based on a benchmark published by the Commission in September 2011 Member States calculate the amount of allowances to be allocated for free to each aircraft operator in accordance with the rules set out in the EU ETS Directive. Aircraft operators will receive the first annual batch of free allowances credited on their registry account by 28 February 2012 or as soon as their account is opened. In total, approximately 181 million aviation allowances will be handed out to airlines for free in 2012.

¹ Directive 2003/87/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 October 2003 establishing a scheme for greenhouse gas emission allowance trading within the Community and amending Council Directive 96/61/EC, amended by Directive 2009/29/EC.

² The documentation required includes the information related to the identification of the operator (registration and VAT numbers), the monitoring plan setting out measures to monitor and report greenhouse gases emissions, identity documents and contact details of persons managing the accounts.

Aircraft operators covered by the EU ETS will also have to complete a number of steps in the registry to ensure that they comply with the EU ETS. These include a requirement to enter verified emissions in the registry by 31 March of each year after 2012 (e.g. by 31 March 2013 they will have to ensure that verified emissions for 2012 are entered in the Union registry) and a requirement to surrender by 30 April of each year a sufficient number of aviation allowances, general allowances and/or international credits to cover their emissions from the previous year(s) (e.g. by 30 April 2013 they will have to surrender units covering emissions from 2012).

Can aircraft operators trade allowances before the Union registry is fully operational?

Aircraft operators will neither be able to transfer their aviation allowances, received on their accounts in the Union Registry, nor to receive general allowances or international credits in the Union Registry before full activation. In the meantime, aircraft operators who wish to trade general allowances and international credits can open an account in a national registry. Furthermore aircraft operators can enter into futures contracts for the delivery of allowances and units at a future date. After the full activation of the Union registry, aircraft operators will be able to transfer allowances and international credits with other participants in the EU ETS.

For more information, see also:

http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/ets/registries/index_en.htm