

GREEN LIGHT FOR THE NEW PORTUGUESE AIRPORT REGULATION MODEL

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The launch of a new regulatory framework brings closer a new Lisbon airport

The launch of a new Airport Economic Regulatory Framework (AERF) has clarified many of the operational issues surrounding ANA - Aeroportos de Portugal ahead of its planned partial privatisation, and helped further clear the way for Lisbon's new international airport, says António Moura Portugal, partner with ABBC.

"The framework is significant in that it

responds to calls by airlines and operators to bring new regulation and an empowered regulatory authority to the sector. The existing Civil Aviation Authority (INAC) has long lacked the necessary power, personnel and resources, while ANA has for too long operated in a monopolistic fashion with reduced accountability."

The AERF reinforces the powers of the INAC as well as clarifying the role and responsibilities of ANA ahead of the construction of the planned €3.3bn new international airport, which is expected to come into service in 2017 and handle as many as 22 million passengers a year.

"The framework enables the Government to plan for the future, to bring new investment into the sector, and clarify the rules of the game for those interested in tendering and running the new airport scheme," he says.

El lanzamiento de un nuevo marco de regulación económica (ERF) ha aclarado muchas de las cuestiones legales a las que ANA – Aeroportos de Portugal se estaba enfrentando con su proyectada privatización, y ha allanado el camino para el nuevo aeropuerto internacional de Lisboa, dice António Moura Portugal, socio de ABBC.

Among the major changes introduced by the AERF is the removal of ANA's previous division of commercial and aviation revenues to create a single till model from which all future investments and costs will be financed, the setting of charges stability through time and the establishment of quality benchmarks.

What is evident also, says Moura Portugal, is that the future will bring more competition among airports and

that the level of charges and the quality of service will be key factors to attract new customers and to maintain the existing users. The challenge is to ensure that Portugal's airports remain competitive and attractive for all carriers to use.

"The privatisation of ANA remains delayed, but the new framework clarifies what is expected of it going forward in terms of definition of the activities subject to regulation – and most importantly in terms of indicators of services' quality – the role it will play in co-ordinating Portugal's existing airports and in the operation of the new Lisbon airport," he says.