

Week 33: Dangerous airlines on the EU black list



**The
European
Commission
keeps a
public list on
the Internet
of airlines
deemed
dangerous.**

**An
airline
included in
the list is
banned
throughout
the European
Union.**

Summer 2005 was a dark period for air traffic. In the space of just a few weeks, there had been several accidents in different parts of the world that took the lives of over 500 people. Eighteen Italian holiday travellers died when a Tunisian plane made an emergency landing in the Mediterranean close to Sicily on 6 August, and 121 people were killed when a Cypriot Helios aircraft crashed on 14 August near Athens. A little earlier, on 2 August, over 300 passengers had a narrow escape when an Air France aircraft slipped off the runway and set on fire in Toronto.

The European Union decided to draw up a black list of dangerous airlines. An airline which is found unsafe in one Member State is now automatically banned throughout the EU. Previously, airlines which were banned from landing in one Member State could land elsewhere in the EU. For example, an airline banned in the Netherlands, Germany and France could land and take off in Belgium.

All passenger and cargo airlines whose aircraft and operation have been found to present serious safety deficiencies and which are therefore more liable to have accidents will be added to the list. When assessing safety, attention will be given to the results of inspections carried out in European airports, to inadequately maintained, outdated and obsolete aircraft and to the inability and unwillingness of the airlines to rectify the deficiencies found in the inspections. The assessments will also take into account the ability of the safety authorities to do their job.

The black list provides travellers with useful information especially on air travel outside Europe. It increases the safety of aviation in the EU by keeping suspect airlines out of the Union's territory and by forcing local actors to follow the safety requirements to the full. In addition, the list will reduce the number of so-called flag of convenience countries which grant operating licences to suspect airlines. Many countries and airlines which did not previously comply with national operating bans have agreed to cooperate with the European Commission after the establishment of the list to resolve the aviation safety problems identified.

The European Commission updates the list where necessary and in any case every three months. If a listed airline considers that it fulfills the safety requirements and wants its name taken off the list, it may contact the Commission or the authorities of an EU country and the Air Safety Committee will then assess the situation. The Commission decides whether to take an airline off the list on the basis of the opinion of the Air Safety Committee. The same procedure is followed when an airline is to be added to the list. In that case the Commission may act on its own initiative or at the request of a Member State.

Citizens planning to travel by plane may check on the Internet whether the airline they are considering is included in the list. A travel agency must always indicate the name of the airline to the passenger. If the name of the airline is not known at the time of booking, it must be indicated to the passenger as soon as the information is confirmed. If the airline is changed after booking, passengers must be informed of this at check-in or at the latest when they are boarding the aircraft. The passenger is entitled to compensation or re-routing if the airline is added to the black list after booking and the flight is cancelled as a result.

The black list of airlines is published on the Internet on the European Commission website: (http://ec.europa.eu/transport/air/safety/flywell_en.htm). Airline service providers and airports

in the Member States must publish the list both on their Internet pages and where necessary in their premises.

Further information

Black list of airlines

http://ec.europa.eu/transport/air/safety/flywell_en.htm

Regulation (EC) No 2111/2005 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 December 2005 on the establishment of a Community list of air carriers subject to an operating ban within the Community and on informing air transport passengers of the identity of the operating air carrier, and repealing Article 9 of Directive 2004/36/EC (Text with EEA relevance)

http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2005/l_344/l_34420051227en00150022.pdf

Commission Regulation (EC) No 473/2006 of 22 March 2006 laying down implementing rules for the Community list of air carriers which are subject to an operating ban within the Community referred to in Chapter II of Regulation (EC) No 2111/2005 of the European Parliament and of the Council

http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2006/l_084/l_08420060323en00080013.pdf

Commission Regulation (EC) No 910/2006 of 20 June 2006 amending Regulation (EC) No 474/2006 establishing the Community list of air carriers which are subject to an operating ban within the Community referred to in Chapter II of Regulation (EC) No 2111/2005 of the European Parliament and of the Council (Text with EEA relevance)

http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2006/l_168/l_16820060621en00160027.pdf