

Brussels, 28th November 2007

Black list of banned airlines: the European Commission adopts new measures

The European Commission adopted today the sixth update of the Community's list of airlines banned in the European Union. With this update the Commission is lifting the ban imposed upon Blue Wing Airlines from Surinam together with the operating restrictions imposed on Pakistan International Airlines (PIA). The new list replaces the previous one and can already be consulted on the Commission's website¹.

Jacques Barrot, Commission Vice-President in charge of transport said "This latest revision shows that when airlines take rapid and sound corrective action to comply with safety standards, they can be withdrawn from the list quickly. It also shows that the list increasingly serves as a pre-emptive rather than punitive tool for safeguarding aviation safety. There are now numerous instances where the Community has successfully addressed potential safety threats with third countries and airlines in advance and before it is forced to take the drastic measure of imposing restrictions."

Blue Wing Airlines and PIA have successfully completed the implementation of a corrective action plan following their inclusion in the list. Their oversight authorities have produced evidence that they verified the measures taken by the airlines and that these measures provide for long-lasting sustainable solutions to avoid the same problems recurring in the future.

This update also highlights the continuous dialogue between the Commission and certain states regarding the safety of their carriers. In this respect, following evidence of improvements in safety standards, the Commission will monitor closely and verify various Russian air carriers on which the Russian authorities have imposed operating restrictions. Furthermore, this update acknowledges the efforts made by the civil aviation authorities of Indonesia, Iran, Ukraine and Angola to enhance the exercise of their oversight responsibilities with a view to improving safety and cooperate closely to that end with the Commission.

By the same token, this update pays particular attention to the individual carriers TAAG Angola Airlines, Mahan Air and Ukrainian Mediterranean Airlines, which have shown clear progress towards the measures required to address the root causes of their safety deficiencies. However, given that in these cases there are still significant safety deficiencies which have yet to be addressed, the Commission considered with the unanimous support of the Air Safety Committee that a decision to withdraw these airlines from the Community list would, at this stage, be premature.

Hence, today, the Community's list contains 8 individual carriers whose operations are fully banned in the European Union, together with all carriers from Equatorial Guinea, Indonesia, the Kyrgyz Republic, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Swaziland and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) (with the exception of one). Three airlines are subject to operating restrictions on specific aircraft.

¹ <http://ec.europa.eu/transport/air-ban/>

Nonetheless, all carriers mentioned, together with those carriers being withdrawn from the list, will continue to be subject to prioritised ramp inspections at Community airports in order to ensure their consistent adherence to the relevant safety standards.

For more information on the black list:

http://ec.europa.eu/transport/air_portal/safety/black_list_en.htm