

Brussels, 5 March 2007

## Airlines black list: Commission adopts new measures

***The European Commission today adopted the third update of the Community list of airlines banned in the European Union, which is now available on the Commission's website<sup>1</sup>. The revised Community list is notable for (1) the withdrawal for the first time of two carriers who have introduced adequate safety measures, (2) the action by five countries to stop the operations of carriers included in the Community list, (3) the adoption at Community level of new safety measures imposed on two companies – Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) and Air West from Sudan and (4) the adoption by two states – Russia and Bulgaria – of autonomous measures on a number of their carriers.***

"For the first time, two carriers have been withdrawn from the blacklist after taking decisive action to remedy their failings. This shows that our list acts not only as essential protection against unsafe operations, but also as a strong and effective incentive for companies who deviate from international safety norms to address their shortcomings", said Jacques Barrot, Commission Vice-President, who is responsible for transport.

The decisions adopted by the Commission are based on a unanimous opinion expressed by its Air Safety Committee experts and can be summarized as follows:

- Two individual airline companies, Phuket Air (Thailand) and DAS Air Cargo / Dairo Air Services (Uganda/Kenya), have now been withdrawn from the Community list. They have proved to the Commission that they have now rectified the serious safety deficiencies which had originally led to their banning from Europe.
- A total of 49 carriers previously included in the list have been withdrawn since they have ceased operating. This was either because their countries have revoked (or refused to renew) their certificates or because the airlines themselves have decided to wind down their activities. These include two from Kazakhstan, six from Congo DRC, one from the Republic of Liberia, thirty-three from Equatorial Guinea and seven from the Kyrgyz Republic. Meanwhile, ten companies created in the Kyrgyz Republic (4), Equatorial Guinea (1) and the DRC (5) respectively have been added to the Community list for a total ban.
- Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) has been subjected to an operational restriction whereby it is allowed to operate into the Community solely with its Boeing 777 aircraft.
- The existing operational restriction on Air West (Sudan) has now been extended to a complete ban since new deficiencies have been identified even on the sole aircraft which was previously still allowed to operate into the Community.

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

- The Commission has taken note of the decision by Bulgaria to prohibit five Bulgarian carriers (Air Sofia, Bright Aviation Services, Heli Air Services, Skorpion Air and Vega Airlines) from operating into the other EU Member States as well as into Iceland, Norway and Switzerland.<sup>2</sup> This decision is of temporary nature pending the implementation of adequate remedial measures which will be jointly reviewed in a few weeks by the Commission and the Bulgarian authorities.
- Following consultations with the Commission, Russia decided on 12 February 2007 to prohibit nine national carriers – Aero Rent, Tatarstan, Atlant Soyuz, Aviakon Zitotrans, Centre Avia, Gazpromavia, Lukoil, Russian Sky (Russkoe Nebo) and Utair – from operating single flights and charter flights into the Community. However, under exceptional circumstances and on the basis of tight checks, some flights might be allowed.

Finally, the Commission and the Member States' aviation safety experts had a preliminary exchange of views on the safety situation of other carriers as well as some civil aviation authorities. These discussions did not identify a need for immediate changes to the list.

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<sup>2</sup> This decision follows a period of intensive examinations of the safety performance of these airlines by the Commission with the assistance of the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) and Member States experts in cooperation with the Bulgarian Civil Aviation Authority.