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- CSA
- Cyprus Airways
- Finnair
- Iberia
- Icelandair
- Jat Airways
- KLM
- LOT
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- Luxair
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- Olympic Airlines
- SAS
- Spanair
- SWISS
- TAP Portugal
- TAROM
- Turkish Airlines
- Virgin Atlantic Airways

## Q&A: Passenger Name Record data (PNR)

### 1 – What is a Passenger Name Record (PNR)?

A Passenger Name Record (PNR) is a record stored in the database of an airline's Computer Reservation System (CRS) or in a Global distribution System, such as Amadeus or Sabre. A PNR contains the travel information for a passenger or a group of passengers travelling together. Some countries – e.g. the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand – require airlines to send them some of this PNR data for security reasons before the passenger(s) reach their territories.

### 2 – What does a PNR contain?

Before the booking can be completed, the PNR needs to contain a minimum set of data:

- PNR record locator
- Travel agency or Airline office identification
- Date of the reservation
- Name of the passenger(s)
- The travel itinerary for this specific PNR: flight number, date, departure and arrival stations, times of departure and arrival.

Some more data may be included to respond to customers requests, such as:

- Ticketing information
- The fare details, including any restrictions that may apply to the ticket,
- The form of payment used,
- Any further contact details, such as phone contact numbers at their home address or business address
- Any specific service information (SSR) relevant to the travel (e.g. unaccompanied minors, or elderly passengers requiring assistance, special meals, seating request or health information needed for assistance).

There are also 'open text' fields where the travel agent and/or the airlines may enter additional information about a passenger's tastes and preferences not covered by the SSR fields.

### 3 – How did the first EU-US PNR agreement come about?

In the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, the US government decided that PNRs were valuable tools for investigating and thwarting terrorist attacks. Accordingly, the US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Bureau of Customs and Border Protection (CBP) was given by law the role of collecting, transferring and storing PNRs.

In May 2004, the US government negotiated the [2004 Passenger Name Record Data Transfer](#) agreement (aka US-EU PNR agreement) with the European Commission, giving CBP the right to access up to 34 different pieces of information provided they

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are present in the PNR<sup>1</sup>. The European Commission was satisfied that the level of protection afforded by the US to such PNR transfers would meet EU data protection standards – as long as the data was transferred and used solely for the purposes for which it was collected, i.e. “preventing and combating terrorism and related crimes and other serious crimes that are transnational in nature, including organised crime”.

The 2004 US-EU PNR agreement required European airlines to give the US Bureau of Customs and Border Protection access to PNR data. This agreement was invalidated by the European Court of Justice on 30 May 2006 for purely legal reasons, to be replaced by a temporary agreement in October of the same year. This agreement allowed European carriers to continue granting the US access to the passenger data in their reservation systems while complying with EU law. This temporary solution was necessary to accommodate the security concerns of the US government while taking into account European privacy regulations.

**4 – How does the October 2006 agreement differ from the earlier agreement?**

The agreement is not fundamentally changed. It is now with the US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and not only with the US Bureau of Customs and Border Protection (CBP). DHS has more latitude to share the information with other security agencies

**5 – Why do the EU and the US have to negotiate a new agreement?**

The intermediary agreement signed in October 2006 will expire on 31 July 2007. The European Union is now negotiating a new agreement with the US. Without an agreement, European airlines may be subjected to conflicting regulatory requirements from opposite sides of the Atlantic and, in Europe, to diverging national data privacy laws and regulations.

**6 – What does the US hope from the new agreement?**

Several issues have been dividing the EU and the US in the negotiations. One is the period of time during which US authorities should be able to keep and use passenger data. Another is which US government agencies should have access to the information, and the means by which they should access it. The European Union favours a system in which airlines themselves transmit the data to the US authorities (the so-called “push” system).

**7 – What are the possible consequences of an EU-US PNR agreement on airlines' operations?**

Airlines are not informed of the progress of the negotiations. However, they are seeking to be consulted on the processes that may be agreed between the parties and on their feasibility, as they will support the entirety of the technical, operational and financial consequences of these decisions.

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<sup>1</sup> See Annex: 'PNR data elements required by the US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Bureau of Customs and Border Protection'.

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AEA member airlines, in accordance with EU Member States' wishes, would prefer transmitting the information themselves; in other words, they hope that the agreement will allow the 'push' system to be implemented. Computer Reservation Systems have technical constraints and cannot cope with any amount of requests; a 'push' system would mean that airlines can monitor both the size and the frequency of the transmissions, which would also allow them to monitor the costs.

### **8 – Does AEA expect an agreement to be reached in July 2007?**

Obviously, AEA member airlines want an agreement to be signed between the EU and the US before the temporary scheme expires on 31 July, to avoid possible legal difficulties – such as denied landing rights in the US – that may ultimately have damaging consequences on their customers.

However, AEA trusts the EU and the US to reach an agreement in time. The EU-US Air Transport Agreement, signed in Washington on April 30th, mentions an enhanced harmonisation and cooperation between the two blocs on security, which should help both parties to reach an agreement.

### **The Association of European Airlines (AEA)**

AEA has been the trusted voice of the European airline industry for over 50 years. AEA brings together 31 European network carriers, collectively carrying more than 320 million passengers and 6 million tons of cargo each year, operating 2,400 aircraft and serving 620 destinations in 160 countries with 10,720 flights a day.

A non-profit-making association, the AEA represents its members' interests in contacts with the institutions of the European Union, the European Civil Aviation Conference, and all other related international and European organisations in the aviation value chain.

### **For more information**

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**Annex**

**PNR data elements required by the US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Bureau of Customs and Border Protection**

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1. PNR record locator code
2. Date of reservation
3. Date(s) of intended travel
4. Name
5. Other names on PNR
6. Address
7. All forms of payment information
8. Billing address
9. Contact telephone numbers
10. All travel itinerary for specific PNR
11. Frequent flyer information
12. Travel agency
13. Travel agent
14. Code share PNR information
15. Travel status of passenger
16. Split/Divided PNR information
17. Email address
18. Ticketing field information
19. General remarks
20. Ticket number
21. Seat number
22. Date of ticket issuance
23. No show history
24. Bag tag numbers
25. Go show information
26. OSI information ('Other Service Information'– General remarks, e.g. connecting flights, V.I.P. passenger, etc.)
27. SSI/SSR information ('Special Service Information / Request' – Open fields, e.g. unaccompanied minor, wheelchair user, etc.)
28. Received from information
29. All historical changes to the PNR
30. Number of travelers on PNR
31. Seat information
32. One-way tickets
33. Any collected APIS information ('Advanced Passenger Information System'; a 'passenger manifest' mentioning name, nationality, passport number, date of birth, etc.)
34. ATFAQ fields ('Automatic Ticket Fare Quote', i.e. price of the ticket)