

Information

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AIR TRAVELLERS ONCE AGAIN IN THE TAXMAN'S SPOTLIGHT

As consensus builds for a global approach to aviation emissions, further tax burdens threaten European airlines

The latest European Commission Communication on climate change has singled out aviation – along with maritime transport – as a source of funding for a proposal to mitigate the cost to developing nations of participating in schemes to combat global warming.

The Commission's document states: "International aviation and maritime transport could provide an important source of innovative financing if a global market-based instrument addressing their emissions were introduced". Once again, aviation – the source of just 2% of man-made CO2 emissions, it should be recalled – is thrust into a position of prominence.

Said AEA Secretary General Ulrich Schulte-Strathaus: "if all commercial flying were to cease tomorrow, the need for a debate on climate change would be scarcely lessened, and the need for rich countries to support poor countries in pursuit of a global solution would still be there – except of course the poorer countries would be even more isolated from the rest of the world".

The European aviation community, he said, was aware of its environmental responsibilities and was fully prepared to participate in market-based schemes ('emissions trading') to manage the industry's greenhouse-gas emissions.. "But our contribution to the solution cannot exceed our contribution to the problem". he said.

"But there can be no justification for threatening further penalties on our sector at a time when we are investing a great deal of effort into promoting global consensus for a global solution to a global problem".

For further information, please contact:

David Henderson

Manager Information

Phone : +32(0) 2 639 89 72

Email: david.henderson@aea.be

www.aea.be

Note to the Editor: The Association of European Airlines (AEA) brings together 33 European established scheduled network carriers. These collectively carry 366 million passengers and 7 million tonnes of cargo each year, operating 2,617 aircraft serving 662 destinations in 162 countries with 11,585 flights a day. They provide around 394,200 jobs directly, and generate a total turnover of €79 billion