

## Information

02 November 2009

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- KLM
- LOT
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- Luxair
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- Olympic Airlines
- SAS Scandinavian Airlines
- SWISS
- TAP Portugal
- TAROM
- TNT Airways
- Turkish Airlines
- Ukraine International Airlines
- Virgin Atlantic Airways

### **AIRLINES WELCOME COST FREEZE FOR US HEALTH CHECKS**

#### **AEA commends withdrawal of planned price increase during ‘vicious’ market downturn**

The Association of European Airlines, representing Europe’s most important network carriers, has applauded a decision of the US Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) not to implement a 10% increase in the fees they charge for the inspection of arriving aircraft and passengers. AEA airlines were charged more than \$65 million for these inspections in 2008.

The proposed increase was intended to make up for an APHIS budget shortfall due to the reduced numbers of flights and passengers arriving in the US during the current market crisis in the airline sector. Said AEA Secretary General Ulrich Schulte-Strathaus: *“this planned increase, had it gone ahead, would have been a prime example of the cost-recovery pricing which is compounding the airlines’ financial woes right now. Not only are we suffering from a vicious market downturn, but our suppliers and service providers are protecting their revenues and their profits at our expense”*.

He commended the US authorities’ willingness to take on board the industry’s reaction. *“When this proposed increase was sprung upon us less than a month ago, the entire international aviation sector protested in the strongest of terms. It is gratifying that we have been listened-to”*, he said. *“Let us hope that airports and air traffic control agencies, who themselves are pursuing cost-recovery pricing here in Europe, will take note of the US decision and accept that during the most severe economic crisis the industry has known, it is essential for all stakeholders to accept their responsibility to pursue efficiency and cost reduction”*.

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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