

Information

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AIRLINES HAVE LOST CONFIDENCE IN VOLCANIC ASH DATA AEA: “We want robust, harmonized and better European crisis management”

The current procedure for determining the no fly zones due to volcanic ash, is based upon calculations by the Volcanic Ash Advisory Centre in London; in a recent statement, the VAAC defended its modelling of volcanic ash as ‘proven and internationally’ endorsed.’ The Association of European Airlines, which represents 36 leading European network airlines, reacted with disappointment.

“190.00 flights in European air space have shown no sign of any volcanic ashes on hull or engines. The VAAC cannot continue to rely on simulations; further verification flights are essential to increase the accuracy of the VAAC data”, said AEA’s Secretary General Ulrich Schulte-Strathaus. “AEA airlines have lost confidence in the VAAC as a sufficiently robust and reliable data to be the only source of information for decisions on safety of air services. The French government recently used data from verification flights across its national air space, and data available from its meteorological offices, as basis for its own analysis and decisions. Other governments in Europe are likewise resorting to additional test flights and data to develop practicable solutions”.

The AEA says that there is evidence that the current system is inappropriate, as the VAAC model provides a forecast of ash dispersion. Closure of airspace cannot be based merely on a forecast of ash presence.

“Other regions in the world also deal with volcanic ash eruptions. In the USA, for example, a data source is used which is empirically demonstrated to be robust, accurate and actual.”

AEA says that governments across Europe should not have to pursue different additional data sources to arrive at a sufficiently accurate assessment of the

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- Aegean Airlines
- Aer Lingus
- AeroSvit
- airBaltic
- Air France
- Air Malta
- Alitalia
- Austrian
- bmi
- British Airways
- brussels airlines
- Cargolux
- Croatia Airlines
- Cyprus Airways
- Czech Airlines
- DHL
- Finnair
- Iberia
- Icelandair
- Jat Airways
- KLM
- LOT
- Lufthansa
- Luxair
- Malev
- Montenegro Airlines
- Olympic Air
- SAS Scandinavian Airlines
- SWISS
- TAP Portugal
- TAROM
- TNT Airways
- Turkish Airlines
- Ukraine International Airlines
- Virgin Atlantic Airways

hazardous zones. “Accurate data sources are available right now. AEA calls for an urgent resolution of the ongoing uncertainty and a streamlined use of that pertinent data. Pilots must have accurate data, so that they can avoid hazardous zones.”

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Note to the Editor: The Association of European Airlines (AEA) brings together 36 European established scheduled network carriers. These collectively carry 347 million passengers and 6 million tonnes of cargo each year, operating 2,160 aircraft serving 662 destinations in 162 countries with 11,400 flights a day. They provide around 385,000 jobs directly, and generate a total turnover of €70 billion