

Information

17 August 2010

AEA annoyed that the EU Commission is targeting individual airlines over Ash Cloud Compensation Delays

The Association of European Airlines said in a statement that, from the beginning of the volcanic ash crisis, it had worked closely with the relevant authorities in Brussels to ensure a resumption of safe air services, and to suggest ways of compensation for the damage incurred to airlines and passengers as a result of the air space closures in April and May.

“From the outset of this crisis it was clear that reasonable solutions would be required”, explained AEA’s Secretary General, Ulrich Schulte-Strathaus. “EU law obliges airlines to reimburse passenger payments that were unavoidable before re-booking of the passengers. The Regulation is based upon the assumption that an individual airline had to cancel an individual flight, but not that an entire airline sector could not fly into Europe during a protracted period. The EU Commission, and the Council of Transport Ministers have acknowledged that this must be clarified in a revised Regulation on Denied Boarding Compensation.”

The Association also says that its members had done their utmost to comply with passenger reimbursement requests. “This is in the own interests of the airlines to maintain customer satisfaction”, said Mr. Schulte-Strathaus. “The problem is that the law was not drafted for such exceptional circumstances, so that the Commission has tried to provide guidance on how this Regulation should be interpreted by National Enforcement Bodies. The fact remains that there is no reason to target one airline for doing its best to apply, as did all airlines, this ambiguous legislation.”

The Secretary General was referring to statements by the spokesperson of the Commission that the EU Commission had threatened KLM with legal action for non-compliance. KLM denied having received any letter from the Commission over the ash cloud delays.

For further information, please contact:

David Henderson

Manager Information

Phone : +32(0) 2 639 89 72

Email: david.henderson@aea.be

www.aea.be

- Adria Airways
- Aegean Airlines
- 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

Note to the Editor: The Association of European Airlines (AEA) brings together 35 European established scheduled network carriers. These collectively carry 340 million passengers and 5.5 million tonnes of cargo each year, operating 2,620 aircraft serving 630 destinations in 160 countries with 11,200 flights a day. They provide around 383,000 jobs directly, and generate a total turnover of €70 billion