



For immediate release

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Airports and airlines applaud EU moves to harmonise aviation security measures at more 'passenger-friendly' level

Brussels, 28 September 2006: European travellers can look forward to greater clarity as to what they can and can't take on board aircraft, following an EU announcement on the revision of security rules designed to harmonise the variety of measures in place across Europe since early August.

Since restrictions were placed on the carriage of creams, gels and liquids, and on hand-baggage dimensions, passengers and airlines alike have been faced with different rules, at different airports, on different routes. The Association of European Airlines (AEA) and the Airports Council International Europe (ACI Europe), in common with other industry stakeholders, have been pressing for a common-sense approach based on risk assessment and operational feasibility.

"Nobody doubts the seriousness of the threat that was averted by UK authorities on August 10th", said AEA Secretary General Ulrich Schulte-Strathaus. "The threat did not disappear with the actions taken on that day, but the risk has subsequently become more clearly defined, and the level of security should take this into account".

Regarding prohibited items in hand luggage, the AEA and ACI Europe welcomed the possibility for passengers to carry with them a limited quantity of liquids such as toiletries and cosmetics. Similarly, a standard size for hand luggage which permitted the popular trolley-bag style will be a great deal more convenient for passengers than more restricted dimensions.

"The Commission has taken a common sense approach which should ensure a viable future for airport retailing and provides clarity for travellers, airlines and airports alike, said Olivier Jankovec, Director General, ACI Europe. He added: "These new measures are sensible; however their implementation will have significant consequences from both a cost and operational perspective for both airports and airlines. The time allowed for implementation is short and as such, airports will have to recruit and train additional staff very quickly, and some airports will even have to make changes to the layout of their facilities." Ulrich Schulte-Strathaus added: "The industry hopes that Member States will all be able to contribute with adequate resources to address these new constraints".

"A transatlantic airliner could be carrying up to 420 passengers" added Mr Schulte-Strathaus. "If the security processing time for each one were to increase by just one minute, that's seven extra hours needed to handle the flight, which could be security man-hours or

scanning-machine-hours. This amounts to a huge additional burden on airline and airport resources, and a huge source of potential aggravation for passengers”.

To reduce this burden and ensure passenger awareness of the new rules and what to expect, the AEA and ACI Europe stand ready to assist the European Commission in developing a passenger awareness campaign through website messages and airport terminal communications.

Said Mr Jankovec: “Harmonisation of the rules should be just that: we want to see the same standards applied, from the same date, throughout the EU. We would also welcome a wider pan-European approach, as well as full harmonisation with the United States, our most important trading partner”.

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