



ETRC welcomes EU guidance to restart aviation industry

New operational guidelines released today from the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) establish a clear path to restart aviation following air travel restrictions implemented in the context of COVID-19.

The guidelines identify detailed recommendations to be introduced at airports and on aircraft to facilitate the resumption of air transport in the European Union, and most importantly, ensure travellers feel reassured and safe when flying again.

Commenting on the announcement, Nigel Keal, President of the ETRC, said “This is welcome leadership from both EASA and the European Commission which sets out harmonised measures to be introduced in the EU Member States. The guidance shows a clear path to reopening of travel retail and duty-free shops as people return to air travel.

We now urge EU Member States to support this coordinated approach and work with Travel retailers at local level to implement these high standards which allow for shops to reopen safely. This will enable European airports to generate important non-aeronautical revenues which will be key to their recovery following this sustained period of disruption.

This pandemic and its impact is not limited to Europe, around the world countries are dealing with the same issues. ETRC are calling on ICAO, when developing the international guidance for measures to be introduced for the aviation industry, to follow the position taken by EASA and the European Commission to ensure that duty-free shops can reopen alongside the resumption of air travel.”

While the guidelines recommend that the reopening of non-essential airport services should be pursued whilst ensuring physical distancing is implemented with respect to national provisions, the guidelines suggest that additional measures should temporarily be considered for activities taking place in-flight including no in-flight duty free sales.

“We advocated strongly for a resumption of all duty-free services, including inflight sales, and are disappointed that this temporary restriction is proposed in the guidelines. We will continue to voice to the relevant authorities our position on this and hope this is removed soon” said Keal.

ENDS

Notes to the Editor

1. The European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) is the centrepiece of the European Union's strategy for aviation safety. Its mission is to promote the highest common standards of safety and environmental protection in civil aviation. The Agency develops common safety and environmental rules at the European level. It monitors the implementation of standards through inspections in the Member States and provides the necessary technical expertise, training and research. The Agency works hand in hand with the national authorities which continue to carry out many operational tasks, such as certification of individual aircraft or licensing of pilots.
2. EASA Guidelines announcement can be accessed here:
<https://www.easa.europa.eu/newsroom-and-events/press-releases/easaecdc-issue-joint-guidelines-assure-health-safety-air-travel#group-easa-downloads>