

Information

07 July 2006

European Parliament's Opinion on environmental impact of aviation: Good debate, flawed conclusions, says AEA

This week's debate in the European Parliament, on the impact of aviation on climate change, highlights possibly the major challenge facing the airline industry today – how to improve environmental performance while responding to growing demand for its services.

These two priorities tend to pull in opposite directions, although they are not mutually exclusive. Airlines and other industry stakeholders, in cooperation with the European Commission, have for some time been actively involved in developing an emissions containment policy which would allow for sustainable growth – a process combining investment in greener technology, improving aviation infrastructure and evaluating the incorporation of the industry into an emissions trading process.

Unfortunately the Parliament's vote blew away the notion of plotting a course that would satisfy both objectives. It opted for an unequivocal policy path involving a reduction in the numbers of airline passengers in Europe, who would be priced out of the market by a combination of fuel taxes, ticket taxes and environmental charges.

The airlines have been working proactively towards reconciling the different dynamics of the market and the environment – to the benefit of both, as their track record shows. "It is not an easy process", said AEA Secretary General Ulrich Schulte-Strathaus; "but now is not the time to reject this approach and opt instead for the systematic dismantling of a key industry by political manipulation of its price structure".

"Politics is supposed to be the art of the possible", Schulte-Strathaus added, "yet the Parliamentarians seem not to have taken that approach. If these measures were to be introduced, the mobility of European citizens would be greatly reduced, the competitiveness of European business would be damaged, the economies of Europe's tourist regions would be devastated".

Note to editors: For more information on the environmental record of European airlines, see www.aea.be: [The Value of Air Transport for Europe](#).

For further information, please contact:

Françoise Humbert, General Manager Communications

francoise.humbert@aea.be (+32 2) 639 89 93

www.aea.be

- Adria Airways
- Aer Lingus
- Air France
- Air Malta
- Alitalia
- Air One
- Austrian
- bmi
- British Airways
- Cargolux
- Croatia Airlines
- CSA
- Cyprus Airways
- Finnair
- Iberia
- Icelandair
- Jat Airways
- KLM
- LOT
- Lufthansa
- Luxair
- Malev
- Olympic Airlines
- SAS
- SN Brussels Airlines
- Spanair
- SWISS
- TAP Portugal
- TAROM
- Turkish Airlines
- Virgin Atlantic Airways