

## Information

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### AEA WELCOMES EU-US PASSENGER DATA AGREEMENT

The Association of European Airlines, representing Europe's most important carriers, has described the agreement between the EU and the USA on the transfer of passenger data as 'a very welcome development'.

Said AEA Secretary General Ulrich Schulte-Strathaus: "Since 9/11, the USA has understandably sought to protect its citizens by tightening security, and one means has been to require airlines to provide data on arriving passengers in advance of travel. The EU has – just as understandably – been anxious to uphold the rigorous privacy rules with which it protects its citizens".

The intervening period has been one of uncertainty, short-lived interim agreements and legal challenges, he said, and the airlines had been caught between two conflicting sets of political priorities.

"We have always been confident that agreement would be reached", he said, "because the consequences of no agreement are unthinkable". Airlines in breach of US rules could be liable to fines of \$6000 per passenger, and could have their US landing rights withdrawn. He applauded the German Presidency of the EU for taking the initiative to conclude a deal well in advance of the expiry deadline for the current agreement, at the end of July.

"AEA airlines' first concern is their passengers", said Mr Schulte-Strathaus. "We respect their right to privacy and we insist that their travel experience be as hassle-free as possible, commensurate with their safety and security. Most importantly, though, we respect their right of mobility; it is essential that the politics of privacy and the politics of security do not conspire to hinder the free movement of people between countries and between continents".

For further information on the Passenger Data issue, please refer to Q&A: Passenger Name Record data (PNR) on the home page of the AEA website [www.aea.be](http://www.aea.be).

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**Note to the Editor:** *The Association of European Airlines (AEA) brings together 31 European established service and scheduled network carriers. These collectively carry 320 million passengers and 6 million tons of cargo each year, operating 2,400 aircraft serving 620 destinations in 160 countries with 10,720 flights a day. They provide around 378,000 jobs directly, and generate a total turnover of €75 billion.*