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Aviation



Yemenia Airways jet crashes in Indian Ocean

On Tuesday, an Airbus A310-300 operated by Yemenia Airways crashed shortly before landing in the Indian Ocean. Of the 153 people on board, one teenage girl survived the accident. The causes of the crash are still unclear, and the search for the cockpit-voice and flight-data recorders has immediately started. In the light of this crash, Antonio Tajani, Vice-President of the European Commission responsible for transport called for a worldwide blacklist of airlines deemed unsafe.

BEA releases preliminary results of AF447 crash

On Thursday, the French accident investigation agency BEA released its preliminary investigation results into the crash of AF447 on 1 June. The agency said it believed the A330 broke up on contact with water, not in the air as it was speculated in the media. They also found that the plane's speed sensors had been "a factor but not the cause" of the crash. Of concern to the investigators is the fact that the hand-off of the plane from Brazilian authorities to their counterparts in Dakar, Senegal was never completed. BEA officials concluded during a press conference "We are far from determining the cause of the accident".

High-level EASA delegation meets Interstate Aviation Committee (IAC)

From 2-4 July, Patrick Goudou, Dr Norbert Lohl, Francesco Banal and other Agency staff members are in St Petersburg (Russia) for a working meeting with the Interstate Aviation Committee (IAC). During the meeting, hosted by Tatiana Anodina, the committee's director, ongoing certification and validation projects as well as questions on standardisation will be discussed.

EC publishes 2008 Analyses of the European air transport market

The European Commission, Directorate-General for Transport published this week its annual analyses of the European air transport market. The report states that air transport, particularly the cargo traffic, witnessed the drop in demand during the second half of 2008 as a result of the financial crisis. The report highlights developments on legislative and regulatory measures and covers analyses of capacity, traffic and financial performance of airlines and airports, as well as includes topics such as air traffic control, environment, consumer issues and aircraft manufacturing. To access the report, click [here](#).

Alternative fuels specifications pass first certifying hurdle

The aviation fuels subcommittee at ASTM, a voluntary standards development organisation, voted in favour of specifications that will enable commercial aircraft to operate with blends of generic synthetic paraffinic kerosene (SPK) derived from the Fischer-Tropsch process. Commercial airlines, as well as private operators and the military, will be able to use up to 50% blends of Fischer-Tropsch synthetic fuels with standard petroleum-derived jet fuel once ASTM finalises specifications. Before approval can happen, the ASTM petroleum products and lubricants committee must also pass the new specifications. The committee is expected to receive a ballot on the matter within the next two weeks.

EC extends Austrian/Lufthansa investigation

The European Commission announced on Wednesday that it will open an in-depth investigation into the proposed takeover of Austrian Airlines by Lufthansa. Competition Commissioner Neelie Kroes said, "The Commission has decided to open an in-depth merger investigation into Lufthansa's takeover of Austrian Airlines because it has serious concerns that the result for passengers could be higher prices or reduced services on certain routes. It is essential that airline consolidation does not deprive consumers of a choice of airlines, competitive prices and other benefits of liberalisation of air transport in the EU." Such a probe could last for up to three months, although the European Commission could also reach a decision more quickly if issues are resolved. To access the EC press release, click [here](#).



Sweden takes over EU presidency

On 1 July, Sweden officially took over the presidency of the European Union. The key priorities during this presidency are the economic crisis and climate change. "The most important thing is to ensure that we are able to gather the EU together to respond to the challenges that people care about and where strong European cooperation can make a difference. This is a matter of dealing with the financial crisis together and tackling the rising unemployment that is currently affecting the whole of Europe. It is also matter of doing our bit to rally the whole world to tackle climate change. These two priorities will dominate our Presidency", says Fredrik Reinfeldt, Sweden's Prime Minister. The official website of the Presidency is www.se2009.eu.

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