

For immediate release, 15 May 2006

EUROCONTROL launches 'banned' aircraft alerting function, in support to the SAFA Programme

Brussels, Belgium – EUROCONTROL has today begun providing an alerting service to those European states which are the departure or arrival point for an aircraft deemed by national authorities to pose a safety risk.

Since 1995, EUROCONTROL's Central Flow Management Unit (CFMU) has been responsible for collecting and re-dispatching all flight plans for flights entering, overflying or departing from Europe. The new service that has been put in place at the CFMU will issue an alert if any company or aircraft that is listed by national authorities as posing a potential safety risk according to the Safety Assessment of Foreign Aircraft (SAFA) programme, plans to enter European airspace. National Authorities in those European countries which are the departure or the destination of such a flight will receive a warning, enabling them to take appropriate action such as initiating an inspection, preventing the aircraft from taking off ("grounding") or even from entering their territory.

This alerting function was developed in the context of the European Civil Aviation Conference (ECAC) SAFA Programme, which facilitates sharing of information between the 42 ECAC Member States. The initiative is reinforcing the European Commission's Directive on 'safety of third-country aircraft using community airports' and an EC Regulation establishing a "black list" which is also monitored by the new alerting system. EUROCONTROL cooperates with the European Commission on these issues in the context of a Memorandum of Cooperation signed in 2003.

"This new alerting system will ensure that European countries are informed well in advance of the arrival of any aircraft that is the subject of safety concerns and that is on a 'banned' list," said Víctor M. Aguado, Director General of EUROCONTROL. "The programme is the result of close cooperation between EUROCONTROL, national authorities and the Safety Assessment of Foreign Aircraft (SAFA) programme, and we believe it will make a tangible contribution to passenger safety within Europe."

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Note to Editors:

EUROCONTROL, the European Organisation for the Safety of Air Navigation, has as its primary objective the development of a seamless, pan-European air traffic management (ATM) system which fully accommodates the growth in air traffic, while maintaining a high level of safety, enhancing cost-efficiency and respecting the environment.

EUROCONTROL has 36 Member States: Albania, Armenia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Malta, Moldova, Monaco, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine

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and the United Kingdom.

On 8 October 2002, the Member States and the European Community signed a Protocol on the Accession of the European Community to the revised EUROCONTROL Convention. Pending its entry into force after ratification by all Parties, certain provisions of the Protocol are already being provisionally applied.

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