



THURSDAY, 17 JULY 2008

ELFAA condemns verdict on Dutch Travel Tax

Brussels, 17 July 2008 - The European Low Fares Airline Association (ELFAA) today strongly condemned Dutch court's decision in appeal, by which the court decision in first instance to allow a travel tax on departing passengers in the Netherlands to continue, was upheld. The airlines operating to and from the Netherlands are very disappointed and are considering to lodge an appeal in cassation.

This claimed environmental tax of €11.25 for intra-European flights and €45 for long-haul flights is expected to raise at least €350million annually, none of which will be used for environmental purposes but instead will accrue straight into the Exchequer's money box. Transfer passengers are, however, exempted from the tax, despite connecting travel being the least environmentally efficient segment of aviation.

John Hanlon, Secretary General of ELFAA said:

"Low Fares Airlines pride themselves on being the most environmentally efficient airlines by operating the most technologically advanced aircraft, coupled with dense seat configuration and very high load factors, thus producing the lowest emissions per passenger kilometre. At a time when the aviation industry is going through its toughest challenges yet, the Dutch Government's irresponsible travel tax imposes a further financial burden on airlines, while producing no environmental benefit at all.

Governments should focus on creating a Single European Sky to address the current inefficiencies of Air Traffic Management, which alone is responsible for 12% of current emissions. This is an easily available measure to deal with the 2% of global emissions which account to aviation. A blunt instrument such as taxation will do nothing to address environmental concerns, but will further hinder the ability of airlines to continually renew their aircraft and invest in new technology."



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NOTES TO THE EDITOR:

ELFAA airline members include: clickair, easyJet, flybe, Jet2.com, Myair.com, Norwegian, Ryanair, Sky Europe, Sterling, Sverige Flyg, transavia.com and Wizz Air.

ELFAA airline members will carry over 150 million passengers in 2008, using a combined fleet of some 500 of the most technologically-advanced, environmentally-efficient aircraft.

Low fares airlines currently account for over 35% of scheduled intra-European traffic.

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