

Beat: Travel

European Commission reinforces his rules for air passengers rights

Looking ahead to summer

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USPA NEWS - As millions of European citizens will be travelling during the summer period, the European Commission is taking action for the better enforcement of air passenger rights in the European Union. The new rules affect all passengers departing from or arriving in Europe.

The new guidelines adopted this Friday will clarify the existing rules and facilitate their application, for the benefit of travellers and businesses. This is yet another deliverable of the Aviation Strategy for Europe adopted by the Commission in December 2015 to strengthen the competitiveness of European aviation and maintain the highest standards.

EU Commissioner for Transport Violeta Bulc said: "Transport is first and foremost about people, and I am proud that the EU protects its passengers across all forms of transport. The guidelines published today will bring further clarity and legal certainty to ensure that the rules are applied properly. All EU citizens travelling by plane should receive the level of protection they are entitled to."

The EU's Air Passenger Rights legislation is among the most advanced in the world, said European Commission, offering a high degree of protection against unforeseen circumstances to people travelling by plane to and from the EU. A number of judgements of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) have, however, affected the content and scope of the legislation since it entered into force in 2005. A clarification was therefore needed for travellers, airlines, and the national authorities, which are in charge of making sure the rules are properly applied at national level.

This new guidelines summarise the existing case law and consolidate all ongoing practices. Of particular relevance are four. About compensation for a delay, expands the right to compensation after a delay of three hours at the final destination. About compensation for a missed connecting flight, the right to compensation in case of a long delay on arrival due to missed connecting flights.

In case of extraordinary circumstances, when various situations such as technical defects linked to the premature malfunction of certain components of an aircraft or aircraft collisions with other aircraft/devices whereby airlines cannot be exempted from the payment of compensation in case of a cancellation and delay. And about measures to be taken in extraordinary circumstances, as the right to assistance and care during exceptional events such as the ash cloud in 2010.

The guidelines will apply pending the adoption and entry into force of the new Air passenger legislation proposed by the Commission in 2013. The objective of this proposal was to clarify certain aspects of the current regulation and to introduce new passenger rights where necessary. The legislative procedure in the European Parliament and Council is ongoing.

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