COMMISSION ADOPTS NEW RULES ON AIRCRAFT TRACKING

News / Airlines



Today the **Commission adopted new rules** for flight recorders, underwater locating devices and **aircraft tracking systems**, addressing the issues raised by the accident of AF447 and the disappearance of MH370

A week after the adoption of the new Aviation Strategy and the update of the EU Air Safety List, today the Commission took further action to boost Air Safety by adopting new rules on aircraft tracking. The objective is to address the issues raised by the accident of Air France flight AF447 in June 2009 and the disappearance of Malaysian Airlines flight MH370 in March 2014. The new rules will improve the tracking of European aircrafts and the location of an aircraft in distress anywhere in the world. In case of an accident over water, they will also allow for a quick localisation of the wreckage and a swift recovery of the data contained in the flight recorders.

EU Commissioner for Transport Violeta Bulc said, “For the general public, it is not understandable that aircraft are not permanently tracked wherever they fly. The rules we adopted today aim to address this deficiency and to prevent the reoccurrence of the disappearances of flights AF447 and MH370. Only days after the adoption of the new Aviation Strategy and the update of the Air

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Safety List, these new rules are another concrete step to show that safety of European citizens is an absolute priority of the Commission.”

The new rules concern aircraft tracking systems, underwater locating devices and flight recorders. The main elements include:

Operators of large aeroplanes must establish, as part of the system for exercising operational control over the flight, an aircraft tracking system.

Newly manufactured large aeroplanes are to be equipped “with robust and automatic means” to accurately locate the end point of flight following an accident in which the aeroplane is severely damaged. This is to prevent the disappearance of an aeroplane where all communications and its track are lost abruptly.

The technology of flight recorders will be enhanced, and the recording length of the Cockpit Voice Recorder (CVR) will be extended from 2 hours to 25 hours. The protection of CVR recordings will be reinforced, in particular during their maintenance. Finally flight recorders will be equipped with locating devices with an extended transmission time so as to facilitate their localisation.

The rules on aircraft tracking and on the localisation of an aircraft in distress are performance-based and do not favour any specific commercial or technical solutions. They will provide the necessary flexibility and will accommodate a number of technical options, both existing or under development, such as Galileo Search & Rescue.

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