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EU expands Bilateral Aviation Safety Agreement with the United States to cover pilot licences and flight simulators

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The European Union and the United States of America today signed two new Annexes to the Agreement on Cooperation in the Regulation of Civil Aviation Safety (BASA), expanding its areas of application to allow the conversion of pilot licences and to reduce duplication in the oversight of flight simulators.

On pilot licencing, the new Annex will ensure that pilots residing in the EU fly aircraft on the basis of licences and ratings issued in accordance with EU regulations, under the oversight of EU Member States. It will also ensure that they maintain and develop their qualifications via EU training organisations. The objective of the new Annex is to convert certain US pilot licences into EU Part-FCL licences and ratings, while taking account of the similarities between the US and EU regulatory systems. This is a cost-effective solution to converting FAA pilot licences into EU Part-FCL licences. Several thousand EU pilots are expected to take advantage of the new provisions and complete the conversion of their FAA pilot licences and ratings.

The second new BASA Annex, on flight simulation training devices, will allow for the reciprocal acceptance of findings of compliance, as well as documentation, on the recurrent evaluation and qualification of EU- and U.S.-based full flight simulators. It will generate resource savings, in particular by eliminating duplicate evaluations by the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) and the US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). The aviation industry will also see costs fall: the operators of flight simulation training devices will no longer be subject to multiple re-evaluations, and these savings can be passed on to air carriers sending pilots for training.

Expanding the scope of the BASA between the EU and the United States marks another key deliverable under the Commission's Aviation Strategy for Europe – designed to generate growth for European business, foster innovation and offer passengers safer, cleaner and cheaper flights.

In addition to the new Annexes, the EU and the U.S. agreed on an amendment of the BASA annex on maintenance to allow that maintenance organisations from all EU Member States can participate in the safety cooperation as provided by the BASA framework and confirming the highest EU aviation safety standards as well the oversight role of the European Union Aviation Safety Agency ('EASA').

The new Annexes will enter into force as of today.

More information

