

PRESS RELEASE

Long-awaited data link exemption is a welcome change for Business aviation

Brussels, 16 July 2019. The European Business Aviation Association welcomes the updated rules on equipping aircraft with data link services for the Single European Sky, and specifically the exemption for most of the aircraft used by the business aviation sector.

The exemption means that most business aviation operators will no longer be obligated to retrofit their aircraft with the current datalink equipment which does not provide operational benefits. The previous criteria placed an undue economic burden on specific operator categories which contribute significantly less to Europe's overall number of flights.

Commenting on the new rules, **EBAA Secretary-General Athar Husain Khan** said, "We thank the European Commission for their cooperation, and we are pleased that our call for a workable solution recognising the specificities of business aviation were integrated in the amended data link rules."

A genuine acknowledgement that 'one size does not fit all', the new [Data Link Services Implementing Rule](#) published by the European Commission implements an exemption for "aircraft which have a certified maximum seating capacity of 19 passengers or less and a maximum take-off mass of 45,359 Kg (100 000 lbs.) or less, with a first individual certificate of airworthiness issued before 5 February 2020."

Typically, business aviation operators do not have significant aeronautical operational communications (AOC) but are still equipped with data link (see note to editors) to comply with air traffic control messaging requirements.

While we warmly welcome this important amendment, several implementing issues still need to be resolved to ensure a smooth deployment of the system;

- The lack of capacity of the data link system leads to oversaturation, meaning that ATC messages are not going through.
- The required communication ground infrastructure is not yet in place, or only partly.
- More clarity is needed for airspace users that do not hold formal agreements with data link service providers, and some of the technical requirements need to be better explained.

More than 700 aircraft were recently asked to not use data link avionics in some parts of the European airspace, showing the limits of the system as it stands today.

The current AOC activity is already saturating the data link system and the situation is not likely to improve anytime soon. The latest generation of aircraft boast more sophisticated systems which continuously emit AOC messages raising capacity demand to unprecedented levels. Whilst multifrequency provides additional capacity on the short term, a more sustainable solution needs to be found.

We will continue to work with the European Commission, EASA and our partners to help find answers that benefit all airspace users.

-ENDS-

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Note to editors

- **Data link** refers to a system of text message transmission between the aircraft and ground. Operators use data link services to transmit airline operational control messages (AOC), and flight crew and air traffic controllers can communicate via controller to pilot data link communications (ATC). Source: Eurocontrol
- **Operator** means a person, organisation or enterprise engaged in, or offering to engage in, an aircraft operation. Source: European Commission



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About EBAA

The European Business Aviation Association (EBAA) is the leading organisation for operators of business aircraft in Europe. Our mission is to enable responsible, sustainable growth for business aviation, enhance connectivity and create opportunities. EBAA Works to improve safety standards and share knowledge, to further positive regulation and to ease all aspects of closely tailored, flexible, point to point air transportation for individuals, governments, businesses and local communities in the most time-efficient way possible.

Founded in 1977 and based in Brussels, EBAA represents more than 730 members companies, corporate operators, commercial operators, manufacturers, airports, fixed-based operators, and more, with a total fleet of more than 1,000 aircraft. We provide more than 50 products and services to the business aviation community, including the European Business Aviation Convention & Exhibition (EBACE), Europe's largest business aviation trade show.

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