

EC warns that all UK-EU-UK flights will end on March 2019

The European Commission Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport has formally pointed out that all UK flights to and from the EU will effectively be grounded when the UK's EU membership ceases on March 19, 2019.

In its latest statement (11.12.17) the Commission acknowledges that 'negotiations are ongoing with the UK...', but it also makes it clear that all current market access and freedoms enjoyed by EU aviation stakeholders are obviously granted under EU law.



The European Union member state flags.

As a result, 'free and unlimited access' to intra-EU landing rights no longer applies to any country that ceases to be an EU member – with the UK scheduled to leave the EU on March 19, 2019.

CONCERNS THAT TALKS ARE MOVING TOO SLOWLY

The withdrawal of any member state from the EU also means that airlines from other EU countries will see their 'free and unlimited access' landing rights withdrawn at that airport – in this case, the UK.



Brian Strutton BALPA General Secretary.

As a result, all of these landing rights and terms will have to be negotiated all over again, with several experts concerned that not enough progress is being made at present. This has not been helped by uncertainties related to the UK's 'exit' from the EU in March 2019.

Not surprisingly, this latest statement from the European Commission is concerning UK airlines, airports, tourism bodies, exporters and the British Airline Pilots' Association (BALPA) just to name a few.

As such, the British Airline Pilots' Association (BALPA) has consistently called for clarity on how flights will operate post-Brexit and it says that a no deal scenario is simply 'not an option'.

THE FORMAL EU POSITION TOWARDS THE UK TODAY.

BALPA says that this month's statement from the EU Commission's Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport couldn't be clearer in terms of a wake-up call.

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It states: "Air carriers of the United Kingdom will no longer enjoy traffic rights under any air transport agreement to which the Union is a party, be it to or from the territory of the United Kingdom, be it to or from the territory of any of the EU Member States."

BALPA General Secretary, Brian Strutton commented: "Here it is in black and white from the EU Commission – UK flights to the EU will be grounded in March 2019 should no agreement be reached. We need the UK Government to sort air traffic rights now. Once again, no deal is not an option.

(For a full copy of the European Commission Directorate-General statement, dated December 11, 2017 and entitled: 'NOTICE TO OPERATORS SUBJECT TO UNION LEGISLATION IN THE FIELD OF AIR TRANSPORT', click here:

<https://ec.europa.eu/transport/sites/transport/files/legislation/2017-12-11-notice-to-stakeholders-air-transport.pdf>)



Every single EU country will be involved if these negotiations are not successful, since EU carriers won't be able to fly to the UK either.