



ACI EUROPE

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Airports call for European Aviation Relief Plan

For immediate release

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Brussels, 21 April 2010: European airport trade body ACI EUROPE estimates that **9.5 million air passengers** were unable to travel, due to the eruption of the Icelandic volcano between 15 April and 20 April. As air services are gradually resuming across the European network, airports are now coping with the challenge of ramping up operations, while continuing to assist stranded passengers.

Tallying the revenues lost by the airport sector as a direct result of the episode, ACI EUROPE released a revised figure of **EUR250 million**. With most of their costs being fixed, any cost savings during the disruption have been minimal for Europe's airports and were eliminated by the extra cost of providing assistance to passengers.

Reiterating its relief at the re-opening of European air space, ACI EUROPE went on to commend the leadership of the EU Commissioner for Transport, Siim Kallas and EUROCONTROL, in securing a European response that effectively allowed the reassessment of the initial restrictions imposed at national level.

Olivier Jankovec, Director General ACI EUROPE commented "*These past 6 days have unequivocally shown that Europe is in dire need of a fully functioning Single European Sky and that the lack of it can lead to paralysis, with dramatic consequences.*"

He added "*But it is not just about the need for a Single European Sky. The embattled state of our industry now calls for a European Aviation Relief Plan. We are presently discussing this with the European Commission and it is clear from the losses sustained by Europe's airports that they must be part of any compensation measures.*"

Concluding his remarks, he said "*This situation has also been a stark reminder of the irreplaceable role that aviation plays in connecting our continent and making it work. It is a wake up call for all Governments to finally develop a long-term strategic vision for aviation and make it part of our future.*"

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ACI EUROPE is the European region of Airports Council International (ACI), the only worldwide professional association of airport operators. ACI EUROPE represents over 400 airports in 46 European countries. Member airports handle 90% of commercial air traffic in Europe, welcoming more than 1.5 billion passengers each year.

Press release