

# Will 'Blacklists' Enhance Airline Safety?

*Andreas Knorr*

G.A.R.S. Amsterdam Workshop 2006



## *Outline*

- I. Introduction
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- III. Determinants of airline safety
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## I. Introduction

- EU's 'blacklist' announced on August 17th, 2005, after accident series (*Helios, Tuninter, West Carribean, AF*)
- Published on March 22nd, 2006, to be updated quarterly
- Currently bans 91 airlines from EU's air space
- 4 more carriers face substantial operational restrictions
- USA pioneered 'blacklists' in 1992 under the FAA's *International Aviation Safety Assessment Program (IASA)*
- Problem: 'Blacklists' are symbolical politics rather than a meaningful contribution to airline safety

## *II. The Economics of 'Blacklists'*

- Low accident risk is in airline's own business interest in a competitive market environment
- Asymmetric information prevents (potential) passengers from properly assessing an airline's accident risk
- May be (partly) overcome through private-sector and/or government signalling/screening activities, e.g. by
  - *Airlines*: 'Young' fleet; advertising; alliance membership
  - *Consultants/media*: Accident databases
  - *Trade associations*: Accreditation/Certification schemes
  - *Government*: Safety oversight agencies, accident investigations
  - *International Organisations*: Int'l minimum standards

- Practical shortcomings of signalling/screening efforts
  - Aircraft age ceteris paribus irrelevant for accident risk
  - Lack of reliable safety indicators
  - Safety advertising taboo/misleading
  - Self-proclaimed experts
  - Conflicts of interest
  - Corruption
  - Inadequate resources (qualified staff, funding)
  - Inadequate regulations
  - Political interference
  
- Plus: Airlines cannot fully control all safety-relevant areas

### *III. Determinants of Airline Safety*

- Determinants (largely) in control of airlines
  - Maintenance
  - Pilot/crew training
  - Safety 'culture'
- Determinants not (fully) in control of airlines
  - ATC
  - Airport infrastructure (navigational aids etc.)
  - Quality of gov't regulations/safety oversight
  - Aircraft design flaws
  - Weather
  - (Airport) Security

## IV. 'Blacklists' in practise

### ➤ The EU's 'blacklist':

- Factual basis: Contributions by national experts (the so-called Aviation Safety Committee) based upon
  - *the results of ramp checks at EU airports*
  - *use of "poorly maintained, antiquated or obsolete aircraft"*
  - *the airline's "inability to rectify shortcomings identified during inspections"*
  - *failure of national authority to perform oversight tasks*
- Sanctions: 91 airlines which are banned from EU airspace (84 of which are based in just 5 African countries), 4 more airlines subject to severe operational restrictions
- To be updated every 3 months at least
- Only 4 airlines were on the former national 'blacklists' of France, Belgium, the UK and Switzerland

➤ The US/FAA's IASA-based 'blacklist':

- Factual basis: FAA assesses its foreign counterparts' ability to enforce ICAO's minimum standards
  - *Category 1 countries: full compliance*
  - *Category 2 countries: do not (fully) meet ICAO standards (currently 23 countries, mostly from Third World, but also Argentina, Bulgaria, Serbia and Montenegro, Ukraine, Uruguay)*
- Sanctions: No total ban, but affected airlines may neither increase current service levels to/from USA, nor exercise unutilized traffic rights, nor operate codeshare services with US carriers, but may use wet-leased equipment registered in any Category 1-country

## *V. Critical appraisal*

- Political considerations override safety objective
  - No major operator of Airbus or Boeing fleets has been affected by EU's and FAA's 'blacklists'
  - FAA initially did not apply IASA rules to Russia, China, Nigeria, but cleared them with "minimally passing marks"
  - Most banned carriers have never served EU/USA, or at best are marginal niche players (ethnic traffic)
- Safety record of most of the 'blacklisted' carriers is not significantly worse than global/regional average despite their operating in extreme adverse environments
- No clear correlation exists between oversight activities and airline safety standards.
- Ramp checks useful, but are only spottily practiced and do not cover some crucial safety aspects (CRM etc.)

## *V. More effective alternatives*

- Improved information flow between national supervisory bodies
  - Obligation to pass around all relevant information
  - Joint database etc.
- Improved information disclosure vis-à-vis general public, operators about safety lapses of and sanctions imposed on specific airlines (FAA has long practiced naming and shaming them, German LBA offers no carrier-specific data)
- Improved liability rules: Proof of unlimited insurance cover should be mandatory to obtain/exercise traffic rights
- Improve ICAO's USOAP by naming and shaming substandard countries
- Passing IATA's IOSA (or comparable scheme) should be mandatory for airlines to obtain/exercise traffic rights

## V. Conclusions

- Blacklists:
  - do not positively contribute to airline safety in any significant manner
  - are no objective, reliable indicator of airline safety standards
  - are useless without subsequent efforts to remedy safety lapses, especially in poor countries
- Especially the EU's 'blacklist' is a mere placebo for a safety-conscious but chronically ill-informed public
- Airline accidents will continue to kill people on board (in) both 'blacklisted' and cleared carriers (countries)

## Annex I:

### **Airlines completely banned under the EU's 'blacklist' (as of 04/2006)**

<b>Airline</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
Air Koryo	North Korea	previously listed on France's 'blacklist'
Air Services Comores	Comores	
BGB Air	Kazakhstan	
GST Aero	Kazakhstan	
Phoenix Aviation	Kyrghizstan	previously listed on the UK's 'blacklist'
Phuket Airlines	Thailand	previously listed on France's and the UK's 'blacklists'
Reem Air	Kyrghizstan	
Silverback Cargo	Rwanda	previously listed on Belgium's 'blacklist'
Africa One	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	
African Company Airlines	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	

Aigle Aviation	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	
Air Boyoma	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	
Air Kasai	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	
Air Navette	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	
Air Tropiques	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	
ATO	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	
Blue Airlines	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	
Business Aviation	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	
Butembo Airlines	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	
CAA	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	
Cargo Bull	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	



Central Air Express	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	previously listed on Belgium's 'blacklist'
Cetraca	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	
CHC Stelavia	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	
Comair	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	
Compagnie Africaine d'Aviation – CAA	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	
CO-ZA Airways	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	
Das Airlines	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	
Doren Aircargo	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	
Enterprise World Airways	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	
Filair	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	

Free Airlines	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	
Galaxy Transportation	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	
GR Aviation	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	
Global Airways	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	
Goma Express	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	
Great Lake Business Company	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	
ITAB	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	
Jetair	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	
Kinshasa Airways	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	
Kivu Air	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	
LAC	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	
Malu Aviation	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	
Malila Airlift	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	
Mango Mat	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	
Rwabika Bushi Express	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	
Safari Logistics	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	
Services Air	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	

Tembo Air Services	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	
Thom's Airways	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	
TMK Air Commuter	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	
Tracep	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	
Trans Air Cargo	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	
Traco	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	
Uhuru Airlines	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	
Virunga Air Charter	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	
Waltair Aviation	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	
Wimbi Diri Airways	Dem. Rep. of Kongo	
Air Consul	Equatorial Guinea	
Avirex	Equatorial Guinea	
Coage	Equatorial Guinea	
Ecuato	Equatorial Guinea	
Equatorial Cargo	Equatorial Guinea	
Geasa	Equatorial Guinea	
Getra	Equatorial Guinea	
Jetline	Equatorial Guinea	

KNG Transavia	Equatorial Guinea	
Prompt Air	Equatorial Guinea	
Utage	Equatorial Guinea	
International Air Services	Liberia	
Satgur Air Transport	Liberia	
Weasua Air Transport	Liberia	
Aerolift	Sierra Leone	
Afrik Air Links	Sierra Leone	
Air Leone	Sierra Leone	
Air Rum	Sierra Leone	
Air Salone	Sierra Leone	
Air Universal	Sierra Leone	
Destiny Air	Sierra Leone	
First Line Air	Sierra Leone	
Heavylift Cargo	Sierra Leone	
Paramount Airlines	Sierra Leone	
Star Air	Sierra Leone	

Teebah	Sierra Leone	
West Coast Airways	Sierra Leone	
African Intern. Airways	Swaziland	
Airlink Swasiland (aka SA Airlink)	Swaziland	
Jet Africa	Swaziland	
Northeast Airlines	Swaziland	
Scan Air Charter Ltd.	Swaziland	
Swasi Express	Swaziland	

**Source:** EU (2006b)

## Annex II:

### Airlines subject to operational restrictions under the EU's 'blacklist'

Airline	Country	Remarks
Air Bangladesh	Bangladesh	only 747 with reg. S2-ADT banned
Ariana Afghan	Afghanistan	only A310 F-GYYY <b>not</b> banned
Buraq Air	Libya	4 IL-76 + 1 Let L-410 aircraft banned, reg.: UN-76007; 5A-DANN; 5A-DMQ; UN-76008; 5A-DMT.
Hewa Bora Airlines	Democratic Republic of Congo	only L-1011 9Q-CHC <b>not</b> banned

Source: EU (2006b)