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AEI PRESS RELEASE

Passenger Safety Compromised at Portugal's National Airline

TAP, Portugal's national flag carrier has broken the golden rule of aviation by allowing commercial pressure to become paramount ahead of safety. AEI has documented evidence relating to an incredible series of unsafe incidents which has led to non-airworthy planes continuing to transport unwitting passengers.

Complicit in this safety scandal are several TAP pilots and externally contracted maintenance organisations. The evidence is undeniable and clearly highlights:

- Falsifying of maintenance records
- Aircraft System faults erased from aircraft Logbooks
- Maintenance inspections performed and signed off by unqualified individuals

All to ensure that the flight schedule was met during an industrial dispute rather than announce cancellations.

Fred Bruggeman AEI General Secretary said "the evidence is shocking and must call into question TAP's approach to safety management particularly as TAP knowingly exposed unwitting passengers to unnecessary additional dangers".

AEI have been warning for some time about safety standards becoming compromised as commercial pressure and weak regulatory oversight increase their stranglehold on the aviation industry.

What we are witnessing here is the direct result of insufficient regulatory oversight at both national and European level. National Aviation Authorities are not complying with the regulations as they should; this has been clearly documented in the EASA Standardisation Reports whilst the European Commission all too often succumbs to industry lobbying. This leaves a void as far as enforcement of the regulations is concerned and industry takes full advantage of the fare paying passenger by cutting corners and lowering safety levels" Fred continued.

AEI has long maintained that “self regulation” or “regulation light” as some call it, has no place in the aviation industry as too much is at stake. AEI have also criticised pilots for continuing to fly unsafe aircraft. The evidence published on the AEI website is clear for all to see. Those pilots do place passenger’s lives in danger by taking unnecessary risks.

AEI demands that a full investigation be initiated immediately by the Portuguese National Authority and Department of Transport.

“It isn’t just about the regulators though” added Mr Bruggeman, “industry groups such as the European Cockpit Association and the Association of European Airlines have a lot to answer for by consistently failing to condemn the reckless and irresponsible behaviour of their members”.

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