

Press Release

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Removing the ban on liquids in hand luggage for air passengers

It has been a while that the European Community has set the goal to remove liquid restrictions for air passengers by 29 April 2013. By that time all European airports must have acquired screening machines that can detect suspicious liquids.

The first step is due to be taken next month and will consist in relaxing the ban which applies to liquids, aerosols and gels in containers greater than 100ml. Those liquids will still have to be carried in clear plastic bags and put through screening machines.

Our Association cannot but welcome this step. However, we notice that within the EU there are differences between countries in how the governments will apply the new rules. Some European countries are simply not ready while others have opted for partial measures. We are concerned that this complexity will certainly confuse passengers. "We appeal to the European Community to take all necessary steps to reinforce the new rules and ensure these are applied uniformly across all EU airports." says Helmut Messner, Secretary General of Association of the European Travel and Tourist Agencies.

"Furthermore, we believe that the European Community should set a more ambitious goal for lifting the ban on liquids in hand luggage e.g. removing the ban already as of 2012. Most anti-terrorism experts consider the ban as ineffective and too predictable for real terrorists. And we should remember that this measure is a huge waste of resources as it costs air passengers transiting through European airports hundreds of millions of euros every year." adds Mr Helmut Messner.

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Note to the Editor: Association of European Travel and Tourist Agencies (AETTA) brings under one roof over one thousand travel and tourist agencies working in Europe or serving European destinations. Each year these collectively serve 8.5 million clients, generate a total turnover of some €4.7 billion and employ directly 22 000 people.

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