

Star Alliance Pilots Urge Their Governments to Ensure UAE, Qatar Comply with Air Services Agreements

OSLO, Norway—The Associations of Star Alliance Pilots (ASAP) today unanimously passed a resolution calling for their governments to review all air service agreements between Star Alliance airlines' home nations and the United Arab Emirates and Qatar to ensure compliance with the fair competition provisions of those agreements. Cosponsored by the Air Canada Pilots Association and the German Cockpit Association (Vereinigung Cockpit), the resolution vote took place at the ASAP Executive Board meeting held this week in Oslo, Norway.

“Many Star Alliance airlines' home countries promote and negotiate air services agreements, including Open Skies, based on the principles that they will open new markets, promote fair competition, and provide more customer choice,” said Capt. Ron Pellatt, ASAP Executive Board chairman. “The facts show that the governments of Qatar and the United Arab Emirates have provided massive and sustained subsidies amounting to more than \$40 billion in unfair economic advantages to Qatar Airways, Etihad Airways, and Emirates Airline, clearly compromising fair competition in the marketplace.”

Titled “Fair Competition and a Level Playing Field,” the resolution underscores that the governments of the UAE and Qatar have formulated economic development strategies that depend on massive financial subsidies to support expansion of international air passenger traffic through their hub cities and as key elements of their countries' future economic development strategies. Backed by the support of all ASAP Executive Board members, the resolution goes on to state that it is only due to government subsidies that Qatar Airways, Etihad Airways, and Emirates Airline have grown at an unprecedented rate.

“As a result of the massive subsidies received by Qatar Airways, Etihad Airways, and Emirates Airline, some Star Alliance airlines are being forced to withdraw or reduce services, putting pilots' and other employees' jobs at risk,” continued Capt. Pellatt. “ASAP pilots are calling on our home country governments to review air services agreements with these countries to ensure that the UAE and Qatar are in compliance with the agreements' requirements for fair competition.”

ASAP represents approximately 30,000 pilots who fly more than 18,500 daily Star Alliance flights to 1,330 airports in 192 countries. The Star Alliance is an airline marketing consortium made up of 28 member airlines. ASAP consists of the leadership of the pilot unions and associations at those carriers. Learn more at www.starpilots.org.

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