



European Travel Retail Council

Securing Europe's Airports post 10/8 ETRC response to European Commission proposals for new airport security rules restricting liquids & gels in airports.

31st August 2006

Background

Following the events of 10 August, the European Union (EU) plans to introduce new security measures at European airports to address the threat of terrorist attacks against air passengers and aircraft.

The European Travel Retail Council (ETRC) has serious concerns as to how these new security measures will impact airport shopping. Current restrictions, imposed by the US Transport Security Administration (TSA), forcing the delivery of duty free purchases to the door of the plane on US bound flights are already having a serious and material effect upon airport retailing across Europe.

The prospect of new security measures and uncertainty as to when and how these measures will be introduced, will compound this negative effect on airport shopping. Airport commercial and retail operations play a vital role in European aviation. Airport shopping provides jobs; airport shopping revenues finance airport infrastructure investment to reduce congestion; airport shopping makes air travel more enjoyable for passengers.

Restrictions on Liquids and Gels

The European Commission has proposed a set of short-term security options, a number of which deal specifically with the threat of smuggling liquid explosives onboard aircraft. These options range from adding certain liquids to the list of prohibited items in cabin baggage to an outright ban on liquids, gels and pastes carried onboard aircraft in passenger cabin baggage.

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The ETRC understands the need to address the threat of liquid explosives. However, an outright ban on liquids, gels and pastes in cabin baggage would effectively prohibit most airport shopping, would result in job losses and would harm dozens of predominantly European producers whose products are sold in airport shops.

If the EU is to proceed with restrictions on liquids and gels, the ETRC believes that these restrictions should apply only to liquids and gels brought to the airport by the passenger.

Liquids and gels purchased in the secure area of the airport should be exempted completely from any ban, given the robustness of the supply chain and the fact that complete security background checks are carried out on personnel. Airport airside duty-free retailing has always been the most heavily regulated retail sector in the world, and it remains so.

For shopping between the police emigration point and the security screening point*, the ETRC proposes the use of sealed transparent bags, with proof of purchase, for liquids and gels. ETRC proposes a unique sealed bag design, which could be deployed across Europe

ETRC Recommendations

The ETRC is encouraged by the consensus between EU Member States that new security measures must not hinder airport shopping and believes that new security measures to address the threat of liquid explosives can be introduced without damaging airport commercial and retail operations.

- The ETRC calls on EU Member States and the European Commission to exempt airside retail purchases of liquids and gels from any new restriction on liquids and gels in cabin baggage.
- The ETRC proposes the use of a unique design of transparent sealed bags, with proof of purchase, to enhance the security of purchases of liquids and gels from airport retail outlets between the police emigration point and the security screening area.
- The ETRC urges EU Member States and Institutions to quickly agree the new security measures to be introduced and end the current uncertainty about these new measures.

The industry remains committed to working with EU Member States, the EU Institutions and all other stakeholders to address security threats and ensure the safety of air travel in Europe and beyond, whilst continuing to trade legitimately and provide an enjoyable retail experience for all passengers.

**Some airports have most if not all of their retail facilities after police emigration control but prior to the main security screening point. There are also a significant amount of airports that have gate security screening, with all retail outlets prior to gate.*

About the European Travel Retail Council

The European Travel Retail Council represents the interests of companies retailing tax and duty free products and services to international air and sea travellers. The organisation works closely with European and international government, regulatory and other stakeholders and is composed of national trade associations made up of over 500 European companies.

The European Travel Retail Council's operations are directed by its supervisory board and carried out by a full-time secretariat headquartered in Paris. For more information about the organisation, please see our website – www.etr.org