



ECA
Piloting Safety

The Intelligence Component of Pilots' Background Checks

– ECA Position –

European legislation prescribes that flight crew members must periodically have a background check that covers at least criminal records. ECA fully endorses the provisions of EU Regulation 300/2008, Annex 1.2.4 according to which *“persons, including flight crew members, should have successfully completed a background check before either a crew identification card or an airport identification card authorising unescorted access to security restricted areas is issued to them”*.

It has come to ECA's attention, however, that, in some Member States of the EU, pilots can face problems with the issuance and revalidation of a background check. This could happen if the pilot and/or their partner have stayed abroad – in a non-EU State - for more than 3 months and if there is no sharing of information on individuals between the Intelligence Agencies of the concerned EU Member State and the non-EU country.

In some cases, the lack of information available to the EU State has led to the rejection of a pilot's background check, resulting in the pilot being denied work as flight crew member within that EU State. Consequently, some air carriers are becoming reluctant to select pilots who they expect might have difficulties in obtaining a background check for the above explained reasons.

ECA supports all efforts made by States to gather information about individuals to ensure their trustworthiness. This may include company records, criminal records, intelligence information and others.

ECA, however, emphasizes that the lack of intelligence information should never be a reason for the rejection of background checks.

It is up to the States to ensure they gather enough and proper intelligence information and the fact that such information may not be available should not prevent a pilot from exercising his/her profession. As individuals have no knowledge of – or control over – the level of information sharing between Intelligence Agencies, they should not suffer the consequences of any lack of cooperation between these Agencies.

(See also IFALPA Position Paper [16POS13](#) on the subject of Background Checks for Pilots)

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