



EMIRATES HOPES NEXT US PRESIDENT WILL KEEP OPEN SKIES PACT INTACT

News / Airlines



Emirates is hopeful a change of guard at the White House in January will leave the open skies deal intact.

The current agreement between the UAE and the US allows Emirates to operate to any number of cities in the US.

"I do hope whoever becomes president will still recognise the value of the liberal open skies arrangements that they have [with] many countries ... and won't go after any kind of review of existing agreements," said Tim Clark, the president of Emirates.

"More importantly, they would recognise what would happen if they did start to revisit some of these open skies agreements that they have not just with ourselves, but with many countries such as India, the UK, Europe and Asia ... it's beneficial for the US, it's not a one-way street."

He was speaking on the sidelines of the World Passenger Symposium organised by the International Air Transport Association in Dubai yesterday.

The US and the UAE have had an open skies deal in place since 1999. The UAE is among 120 countries with which the US has similar arrangements.

Three US legacy carriers – Delta, United and American – have accused Middle Eastern airlines – Emirates, Etihad Airways and Qatar Airways – of receiving government subsidies and therefore unfairly competing in the world aviation market.

They have called the US government to review its open skies policy with the UAE.

Emirates denies receiving subsidies, saying the accusations are aimed at limiting the growth of the Middle Eastern carriers in the US market.

Emirates meanwhile will start flying to a 11th city in the US – Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport – from December 15.

The airline will operate a Boeing 777-200LR on the route, adding 266 seats and 15 tonnes of bellyhold cargo capacity.

It launched the Orlando route last September. The airline has a codeshare partnership with the US low-cost carrier JetBlue Airways.

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