ESTONIAN CAA GROUNDS AVIES OVER SAFETY CONCERNS

News / Airlines

The Estonian Civil Aviation Administration (Lennuamet) has grounded Avies (U3, Tallinn Lennart Meri) following concerns about the carrier's compliance with safety oversight regulations.

While Lennuamet did not explicitly state what its concerns were, it did state the suspension of the carrier's Air Operators Certificate (AOC) was effective April 1, 2016 and would last either for a period of six months or until Avies had resolved the issues.

"The grounding will give AS Avies the opportunity to restructure and improve its activities and to address identified shortcomings," the body said.

Avies has responded stating that it was 'surprised' by Lennuamet's move and would contest it given that it had presented the authority with updated safety certificates just recently. Lennuamet in turn responded that Avies had failed to address several areas thus resulting in the suspension.

"The company will make all effort possible to resolve all the shortcomings identified by the authority," it said. "In addition, we are working on a new action plan, which will be undertaken as a

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cooperation agreement with another carrier, to ensure passenger transport to the islands."

Avies operated scheduled passenger flights from its Tallinn Lennart Meri hub to the islands of Kuressaare and Kärdla locally, and Stockholm Arlanda regionally.

In July 2015, two of the carrier's Swedish business partners, SwedeWings AB and Bromma Air Maintenance AB, had the airline declared bankrupt in an Estonian bankruptcy court claiming it had failed to settle their claims. However, an agreement was reached in December last year allowing Avies to continue operations. The deal was formally accepted by the court at the end of last month.

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