

LEADING BUSINESS AVIATION GROUPS FORM ALLIANCE AGAINST ILLEGAL CHARTERS

News / Business aviation



A global group of leading business aviation organizations announced a coordinated effort to combat illegal on-demand charter flights in the sector. The group, called the Air Charter Safety Alliance, will raise awareness among potential customers, charter brokers, ministries of transport, and national aviation authorities regarding the use of unauthorized aircraft operators for on-demand flights. While the overwhelming majority of on-demand charter flights comply with national and international safety standards, there have been instances of unauthorized aircraft operators actively avoiding aviation authority oversight, placing at risk the safety of unwitting passengers and hurting the economic health of approved charter operators.

In the past, several associations worked actively on reducing illegal activity by setting up dedicated websites to educate and engage aircraft owners and national authorities on proper compliance with charter regulations. Over the next three months, the coalition hopes to collect best practices from the various associations, create an online platform and initiate an online educational campaign to make main stakeholders aware of the dangers of

illegal charter.

The coalition will develop and promote several safety programs that assist on-demand charter operators while continuing to improve their already impressive safety performance. Industry-led programs focusing on Safety Management Systems, flight data recording and safety reporting, along with a focus on safety culture have aided in bringing greater value to state-approved charter operators. Creating more discerning customers, in addition to efforts that will help to identify illegal charters, will hopefully dissuade those seeking to compromise safety for profit.

Kurt Edwards, Director General, IBAC, said, “The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) has established obligations and guidance on the regulation of international air transport as well as standards and recommended practices for the safety and security of commercial and non-commercial air transport. These form the harmonized basis for legal international air charter activities. We are pleased to work with the IBAC member associations to raise awareness among national authorities and client populations of this international framework to further reduce the occurrence of charter operations inconsistent with the framework.”

Robert Baltus EBAA COO stated, “Business aviation is known as the most flexible means of transportation, using the highest safety standards, and EBAA and our partners aim to ensure that the travelling public can continue to trust our industry.”

“Illegal/Grey charters know no boundaries. NATA is proud to bring our proven expertise, tools, and resources, found at www.avoidillegalcharter.com, to a global movement to end this pervasive problem. The industry has made great progress in joining together to advance crucial initiatives such as sustainability. We look forward to experiencing that same level of success as a unified force in eliminating illegal charter operations,” said **Ryan Waguespack NATA Senior Vice President**

Dave Edwards, CEO, The ACA, stated: “Illegal charter goes against everything our industry works hard to deliver – it increases risk to passengers, damages the reputation of our industry and impacts careers and businesses. By working together with our partner associations around the world, we aim to protect the air charter community and educate passengers, pilots and aircraft owners about the serious consequences of illegal charter.”

ABAG Director General and CEO Flavio Pires said “ABAG fully supports any initiative to combat illegal charter! It is a growing concern worldwide! Authorities and Civil Aviation Industry communities must be together in combating the risks posed by illegal charter schemes. Aircraft owners and customers must understand, besides tax consequences, the significant liability since they may not meet the higher standards for proper pilot training and experience, maintenance programs additional requirements, right size insurance coverage and defined operational control of a certificated 135 air charter operator.”

“AsBAA's steadfast commitment to aviation safety includes educating and helping our members and the industry understand the risks of illegal charter. Through AsBAA's initiatives such as our Virtual Safety Summit, Safety Days, and others, members and the industry learn how to perform their due diligence, identify warning signs, and help deter illegal and unsafe flight activities with the aim to uphold the highest standards in the industry.” said **Jeff Chiang, Chief Operating Officer, Asian Business Aviation Association**.

Ali Alnaqbi MEBAF Founding & Executive Chairman stated, “Illegal chartering continues to have a huge negative impact on the business aviation industry worldwide. Unless a global approach is taken to fight to eliminate the illegal chartering, this issue cannot be solved at an

individual scale. An international coalition is the need of the hour to put our hands on the routes of illegal chartering and work together to come up with a global constant process to eradicate this issue.”

“For over 70 years, NBAA has aided members and the business aviation community by identifying and sharing best practices along with advocating for reasonable and effective safety regulation,” noted **National Business Aviation Association Vice President for International and Regulatory Affairs Doug Carr**. “We believe this multi-pronged approach to consumer education, along with regulator and supply-chain awareness, will reinforce the safety value of approved charter operators. Carr noted the association has a wealth of resources, including the [Aircraft Charter Consumer Guide](#) – updated in 2020 – which helps individuals and businesses become informed consumers”.

Going forward, the coalition is committed to upholding the business aviation industry’s highest safety standards and codes of best practice for passengers and crews alike. The coalition looks forward to engaging with and educating regulators, the industry, and public, at all levels, of the risks of these fraudulent activities.

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