

U.K. warns flights may be grounded in case of no-deal Brexit

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The U.K. warned that flights may be grounded if the European Union doesn't grant reciprocal approvals to its planes and airlines in the case of a no-deal Brexit — a scenario it maintains remains unlikely, despite a recent setback in negotiations.

Britain will continue to recognize European Aviation Safety Agency certifications for up to two years after March 29, the government said Monday in a statement outlining the potential impact on aviation safety. However, there's no guarantee planes, parts, pilots, cabin crew and engineers certified by the U.K. will be recognized by the EU.

“Individuals and businesses exercising the privileges of U.K.-issued certificates for aircraft registered in the EU should consult the European Commission's notice to stakeholders and check with the relevant EU authorities,” the government said.

Airlines will be required to apply to EU states in order to continue flying after the split, the U.K. said in a separate bulletin. The U.K. is also in negotiations with 17 non-EU countries, and “a number” of those deals have already been agreed.

The government said it has encouraged the EU to recognize U.K.-issued aircraft certificates.

“It is clearer than ever that a no-deal Brexit risks disruption to air passengers and businesses,” Paul Everitt, head of the Aerospace, Defense, Security and Space trade body. “Our industries want to see renewed vigor in negotiations, with both the U.K. and the EU bringing pragmatism to discussions and making compromises.”

The government portrayed the warning as a contingency, talks “are progressing well and both we and the EU continue to work hard to seek a positive deal.” It said it has to prepare for all eventualities “until we can be certain of the outcome of those negotiations.”

(By Benjamin D Katz, Bloomberg)