

IAG boss says new Norwegian bid unlikely, but “never say never”

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British Airways owner IAG is unlikely to renew its interest in Norwegian Air after ruling out a new bid for the Scandinavian carrier earlier in the year, but “never say never”, IAG Chief Executive Willie Walsh said on Wednesday.

“I’d never say never, but I think it’s unlikely,” Walsh told reporters on the sidelines of the Airlines for Europe summit in Brussels.

IAG sold its stake in Norwegian when it ended its interest in the airline, which competes with IAG’s low-cost long-haul Level brand, earlier this year.

“If there was a case that we might have done that (renewed our interest), we probably would have retained the shares in Norwegian,” he added.

Asked if Level could expand into Scandinavia, Walsh said: “It could, ultimately.”

“There are several significant markets that are underserved from a long-haul point of view and can be best served by a low-cost model,” he said.

He also said that, although he was still not interested in buying A380s, those who wanted to approach him with offers after Airbus said it was scrapping production of the superjumbo should do so.

“I’m not looking to buy A380s. If there are people looking to sell them, they should probably approach us, because we would be one of the few people who might be interested. But I’m not looking to buy,” he said. “Let’s see what happens.”

(Reuters)