The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

European Airlines Denied Overflight

By The Moscow Times

June 12, 2012

Russia has denied Lufthansa Cargo and Finnair requests for additional overflights. **Maxim Stulov**

Russia has turned down requests from Lufthansa Cargo and Finnair for additional overflights, the airlines said Friday, though the reason for the refusal was not immediately clear.

Airlines routinely have to negotiate overflights and market access through a maze of bilateral agreements that govern aviation. The use of Siberian airspace by European airlines has been a source of trade friction in the past.

Russia is scheduled to phase out charges for overflights but has threatened to restrict the use of its air corridors that connect Europe with North Asia as part of protests over EU plans to include all flights in and out of Europe in its Emissions Trading Scheme.

The EU decision to include aviation in the ETS has stirred international outrage and threats of a trade war, with Russia among the staunchest opponents.

"The [European] Commission and the Russian side are in the process of talks over the ETS," a

Russian diplomatic source said. An EC spokesman said the denial of overflights was not directly related to the ETS row.

Finnair said in a statement last week it had adjusted its long-haul capacity plans, citing several reasons, including a shortage of overflight rights as well as maintenance on large aircraft. But it also said that even with the adjustments, it would fly a record number of flights to Asia.

A Lufthansa spokesman also said some requests for incremental traffic had been turned down.

Since the EU began implementing its law at the start of this year to make all flights in and out of Europe buy carbon allowances under the ETS, there has been a series of threats. The European Commission said only 10 airlines — all from China and India — had so far failed to submit emissions data, while some 1,200 have complied.

In addition, India briefly held up some traffic requests from charter airlines as a symbolic protest, industry sources said.

Original url: https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2012/06/12/european-airlines-denied-overflight-a15383