



THE DEPARTMENT  
OF TRANSPORT

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FROM THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORT  
Rt Hon William Waldegrave MP  
Minister of State  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
Whitehall  
LONDON  
SW1A 0AA

2 MARSHAM STREET LONDON SW1P 3EB  
TELEPHONE 01-276 3000

My Ref:

Your Ref:

COP  
12/8

14<sup>th</sup> August 1990

Dear William,

**AVIATION SECURITY**

The Department of Transport is actively pursuing various aviation and shipping questions in relation to the crisis in the Gulf: this letter is to inform you and our colleagues of our actions on aviation security. The position has taken account of the assessment of the threat prepared by the Security Services on 9th August and subsequent events.

The threat to British airline operations outside the United Kingdom has increased, in particular in the Middle East and the Mediterranean region. The security of civil aviation is a host state responsibility, and at the request of this Department the FCO has asked British posts to consult the appropriate authorities in foreign states to convey to them our perception of an increased threat, and to invite them to ensure the security of British airline operations. We have informed British airlines of this and have asked them to review the security arrangements they are afforded overseas and to bring to the attention of this Department any major difficulties which cannot be resolved locally.

British airlines (including Cathay Pacific) have been reminded about the procedures they should adopt when operating in the vicinity of warships. These procedures were developed during hostilities in the Gulf in 1988. The Ministry of Defence have been asked to remind the Royal Navy about the procedures, and the FCO have been invited to ask posts in Gulf states to bring them to the attention of the Commanders of foreign naval units in the area. The US Navy will be very sensitive to aircraft movements in the vicinity of their ships and our instructions are consistent with their procedures.

The routing of aircraft in the Gulf area is already affected by the closure of Iraq and Kuwait airspace. Routing civil aircraft clear of areas of conflict will be undertaken by the appropriate air traffic control authorities in the area, and

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British airlines (primarily British Airways) are alert to the situation. The question of developing advice to airlines in response to changes in the situation is being addressed by this Department and the FCO: the FCO has been invited to communicate directly with the National Air Traffic Control Services in order that they may relay timely advice to airlines.

The threat to Civil Aviation interests in the UK is assessed low. The Department is sensitive to the Security of US airline operations in the UK, but considers that the enhanced measures in place to meet the longstanding threat are sufficient. The Department will monitor the security of British airlines operating in the UK, and also aircraft of Australia and France and other airlines of countries which have committed forces in the Gulf.

The United States Federal Aviation Authority have not issued any specific instructions or advice to United States airlines since the crisis in the Gulf developed. The FAA have merely relayed to US airlines "travel advisory" notices which the US State Department has issued for the guidance to US citizens.

The security of aviation will be kept under constant review.  
/ I am sending copies of this letter to the Prime Minister, Tom King, John Major, John Wakeham, David Waddington, Peter Lilley, Sir Patrick Mayhew and Sir Robin Butler.

*How's over  
Roger*

ROGER FREEMAN

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