



Aviation Group Client Update

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DOT FINES AEROFLOT FOR VIOLATION OF CONSUMER PROTECTION RULES

Today, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) fined Aeroflot for violating the expanded airline consumer protection rules. According to DOT, Aeroflot violated rules related to full-fare advertising and rules requiring airlines to include a commitment in customer service plans allowing consumers to either hold or cancel reservations at the quoted fare without penalty for twenty-four (24) hours after booking.

Under the rules, DOT requires all advertisements that include airfares to state the entire price to be paid by the consumer, including all government imposed taxes and fees. The entire price to be paid must be displayed when the fare is first stated and applies to U.S. and foreign airlines as well as ticket agents.

Airfare searches on Aeroflot's website returned separate listings of base fares for outbound and inbound legs that did not include additional government taxes and fees. Although the total fare to be charged was ultimately disclosed, the carrier failed to advertise the entire price to be paid when the fare was first stated. In addition, the customer service plan posted on Aeroflot's website did not include the required commitment.

The airline was assessed a civil penalty of \$60,000, which affirms the Department's vow to stand up for consumers and take enforcement action when rules are violated. If you have any questions related to the fine or DOT consumer protection rules, please do not hesitate to contact our office.

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