THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

http://www.wsj.com/articles/u-s-european-aviation-authorities-at-odds-over-cybersecurity-1450816124

BUSINESS

U.S., European Aviation Authorities at Odds Over Cybersecurity

Sides divided over approach to ensure integrity of software, hardware of electronics on smaller planes

U.S. and European authorities are considering upgrading standards for onboard electronics to protect airplanes from cyberthreats. Industry officials worry suppliers could face major challenges if differences between the two sides aren't resolved. *PHOTO: ASSOCIATED PRESS*

By **ANDY PASZTOR**

Dec. 22, 2015 3:28 p.m. ET

U.S. and European aviation authorities are at odds over one of the industry's hot-button issues: devising ways to protect an array of aircraft from potential cyberattacks.

Regulators and committees of experts on both sides of the Atlantic are considering beefing up standards for onboard electronics to shield airliners, business jets and small private planes from such threats.

There is general agreement on updating software and implementing future safeguards for large commercial planes, including enhanced separation of cabin entertainment and passenger Internet access from any safety-related systems. But people involved in the

discussions say the two sides remain divided over the best approach and extent of testing necessary to ensure the integrity of software and hardware of electronics on smaller models. Unless the issue is resolved relatively quickly, industry officials worry U.S. suppliers could face major challenges selling avionics and various flight-management systems for general aviation and some business aircraft in Europe.

Details of the trans-Atlantic tiff, which haven't

RELATED COVERAGE

- Future Air-Traffic Systems to Reduce Anxiety for White-Knuckle Fliers (http://www.wsj.com/articles/future-air-traffic-systems-to-reduce-anxiety-for-white-knuckle-fliers-1450732094) (Dec. 21)
- EU Adopts New Plane-Tracking Rules (http://www.wsj.com/articles/eu-adopts-new-plane-tracking-rules-1450270791) (Dec. 16)
- U.N. Aviation Agency Poised to Delay Global Airliner Tracking to 2018, Sources Say (http://www.wsj.com/articles/u-n-aviation-agency-poised-to-delay-global-airliner-tracking-to-2018-sources-say-1443581994) (Sept. 29)
- European Air-Safety Chief Spreads Wings (http://www.wsj.com/articles/european-air-safety-chief-spreads-wings-1434317533) (June 14)

been reported before, emerged during a meeting of U.S. industry and government experts in Washington last week. At one point, Richard Jennings, the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration's main representative to RTCA Inc., the U.S. standard-setting organization working on the issue, said: "We may just have to agree to disagree." Mr. Jennings didn't elaborate.

Others familiar with the details said the friction stems from different approaches by the FAA and the European Aviation Safety Agency to deal with aircraft having fewer than 19 seats. EASA and European advisory groups want to subject all aircraft, regardless of size, essentially to the same cybersecurity standards.

By contrast, the FAA and the larger, more active U.S. private aircraft industry believe tougher assurance requirements should be imposed on airlines that carry large numbers of passengers, versus a single-engine, propeller-powered plane used for private flying. The U.S. favors "different standards based on the threat and magnitude of a potential nefarious actor," said Jens Hennig, co-chairman of the FAA-created panel charged with making recommendations for new rules. "Having differences between U.S. and European standards is never good for manufacturers," he said in an interview. An FAA spokeswoman didn't have any immediate comment.

Dominique Fouda, an EASA spokesman, said current European and U.S. regulations dealing with cyberthreats were developed separately and rely on "slightly different philosophies." He added that efforts to come up with joint new safeguards are under way but the participants "are still not there."

The hope is to hammer out a possible compromise before proposed U.S. standards are considered by the FAA starting next summer. But for now, the subject has sparked controversy partly because it has become embroiled in internal European Commission politics. Europe's aviation agency is seeking more authority and funding on the grounds that it has been given new areas to police such as cybersecurity. So the agency is eager to move quickly and decisively in this arena.

In documents spelling out the scope of the problem, EASA has emphasized that "all recently designed large airplanes are known to be sensitive" to cyberthreats because of the "interconnectivity features of their avionics systems."

The U.S. industry working group created by the FAA earlier in the year to recommend solutions agreed on the goals for their work last week. The panel, among other things, decided that protecting aircraft equipment and software "must be ensured by showing that the security risks have been identified, assessed, and mitigated as necessary."

The same document released by the working group noted that equipment suppliers "must provide procedures for the operator," along with maintenance instructions, "to ensure the aircraft equipment, systems, and network security protection are maintained."

Write to Andy Pasztor at andy.pasztor@wsj.com

What To Read Next...
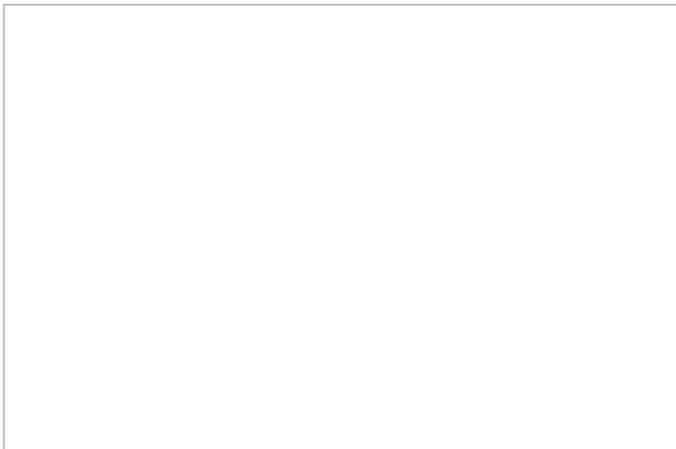
HEARD ON THE FIELD

Jim Furyk Makes PGA Tour History With Final-Round 58