

EVA Air ranked among world's 20 safest airlines



Taipei, Jan. 4 (CNA) Taiwan-based EVA Airways (EVA Air) remains one of the safest airlines in the world, ranking in the top 20 on a 2018 list compiled by the website AirlineRatings.com.

In its latest report published on Jan. 3, the airline safety ratings website said EVA had maintained its place on the top-20 list for five years in a row among the 400-plus airlines that were monitored.

The safety rating for each airline is based on comprehensive analysis, utilizing information from the world's aviation governing bodies and leading associations, as well as government information and crash data, said AirlineRatings.com Editor-in-Chief Geoffrey Thomas.

However, the website does not consider just the number of incidents, he said.

"All airlines have incidents every day and many are aircraft manufacture issues, not airline operational problems," Thomas said. "And it is the way the flight crew handles incidents that determines a good airline from an unsafe one. So just lumping all incidents together is very misleading."

He said the top ranked airlines are standouts in the industry and are at the forefront of safety, innovation, and launching of new aircraft.

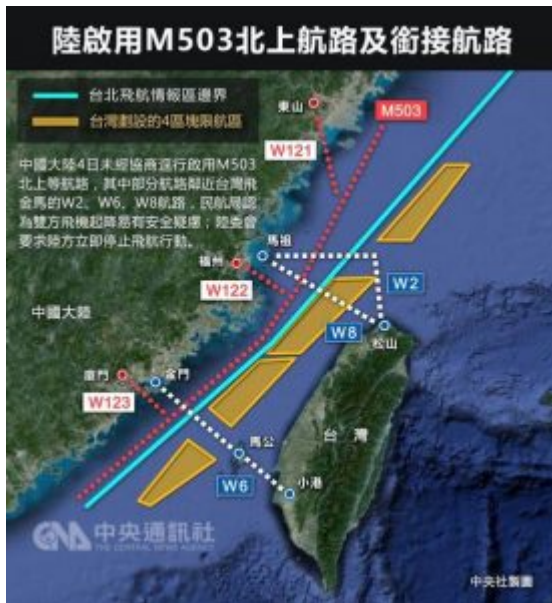
Apart from EVA Air, the other airlines ranked among the 20 safest in the world were Air New Zealand, Alaska Airlines, All Nippon Airways, British Airways, Cathay Pacific Airways, Emirates, Etihad Airways, Finnair, Hawaiian Airlines, Japan Airlines, KLM, Lufthansa, Qantas, Royal Jordanian Airlines, Scandinavian Airline System, Singapore Airlines, Swiss, Virgin Atlantic, and Virgin Australia, in alphabetical order.

The website also listed the 10 safest low-cost airlines, namely Aer Lingus, Flybe, Frontier, HK Express, Jetblue, Jetstar Australia, Thomas Cook, Virgin America, Vueling, and Westjet, in alphabetical order.

(By Lee Hsin-Yin)

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Taiwan calls for talks with China on aviation issues



Taipei, Jan. 7 (CNA) Taiwan is calling for discussions with China on issues related to aviation management in the Taiwan Strait, in the wake of China's recent unilateral activation of four aviation routes close to the median line of the strait.

Last week, China reneged on a 2015 cross-strait agreement with Taiwan and unilaterally activated four new aviation routes in the Taiwan Strait – a northbound path on the M503 route and three east-west extension routes called W121, W122 and W123.

The M503 at its nearest point is only 7.8 km from the centerline of the strait and close to the Taipei Flight Information Region, while the W122 and W123 are close to Taiwan's offshore islands of Matsu and Kinmen, respectively.

China's move to open the four flight routes without prior negotiation with Taiwan has sparked concerns in Taipei about potential intrusions into domestic flight routes to and from Matsu and Kinmen.

Detailing such concerns, Lin Kuo-shian (林國顯), director-general of Taiwan's Civil Aeronautics Administration (CAA), said Xiang'an International Airport, under construction on China's southeast coast, is just 10 kilometers from Kinmen.

The Xiang'an airport in Xiamen, which is being built to ease

congestion at Gaoqi International Airport in the same city in Fujian Province, is scheduled to be completed in 2020, he noted.

If the new airport begins operations without prior cross-strait negotiations, it will have a huge impact of air traffic in and out of Shang Yi Airport in Kinmen, as it is even closer than the Gaoqi airport, Lin said.

Expressing similar views, another CAA official Shiue Shao-yi (謝少夷) said it is essential for civil aviation authorities in China and Taiwan hold discussions on flight route controls and other relevant issues before the Xiang'an airport opens.

He declined, however, to comment on aviation experts' speculations that when the new airport opens, a new flight route will be launched from Xiang'an to link with Taiwan's domestic routes to and from Kinmen.

It is not yet clear what routes Xiang'an airport will use, Shiue said.

(By Wang Shu-fen and Evelyn Kao)

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