

**Question for written answer E-010358/2014
to the Commission**

Rule 130

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Subject: Circumvention of European social and safety standards by Norwegian Air International

Ireland-based Norwegian Air International (NAI) employs workers from Asia on loan from a Thai subsidiary. This is clearly a way for the company to avoid having to apply for Norwegian and EU work permits and to keep wages low. The more widespread use of such business and employment models may result in a race to the bottom in the area of social and employment standards, which could lead to job losses and a decline in the quality of service and safety levels in the aviation sector. European trade unions and airlines have publicly criticised this arrangement and are calling on the EU institutions to act.

In September 2014, the US Department of Transportation refused to issue NAI with a temporary permit to fly, although it failed to give reasons for its decision in writing.

In October 2014, the Commission wrote to the US authorities requesting a meeting of the EU/US joint committee to discuss the alleged discrimination suffered by EU airlines in the USA. According to our information, the NAI case was also discussed at the meeting.

1. At the joint committee meeting, did the Commission discover whether the refusal to issue a permit to fly was in any way linked to safety concerns stemming from the practices described above?
2. Irrespective of the answer to the first question, does the Commission not agree that the business practices described above are posing an obstacle to fair competition and harming the European aviation industry and its employees?
3. What steps does the Commission intend to take to counter these developments?