



GERMAN COURT ALLOWS ETIHAD TO CONTINUE MOST AIRBERLIN CODESHARES

News / Airlines



An appeals court in Germany on Thursday allowed Etihad to continue most of its disputed codeshare flights with airberlin for the winter schedule ending in March, handing the Abu Dhabi-based airline a partial victory.

The court ruled that Etihad should be allowed to continue its codeshare agreement for 26 international routes but rejected its request to continue codesharing on five domestic German routes.

The court said the international routes could continue as they were in accordance with a bilateral agreement struck between Germany and Abu Dhabi in 2000.

Codeshare flights allow carriers to jointly market a route, allowing them to expand their network and help fill their planes. Etihad says codeshares were a key reason why it invested in loss-making airberlin in 2012.

But the German government said in 2014 that some of the previous approved codeshares were

not covered by a traffic rights agreement between Germany and the UAE.

It said late last year it would approve about 29 disputed routes for the final time until January 15, a decision that was backed by a lower court in Brunswick.

Etihad, which owns 29 per cent of airberlin, had sought to appeal that decision and gain a temporary injunction to allow the code shares to continue at least until the end of the winter flight schedule.

During the past 12 months, Etihad and its Arabian Gulf peers, Emirates and Qatar Airways, have been under increasing regulatory scrutiny amid allegations from American and European rivals of unfair practices in breach of open-skies agreements. The Gulf carriers deny the allegations.

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