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World Airline Entertainment Association Hosts Session at Consumer Electronics Show to Discuss Onboard Telecommunications

Experts review growth in passengers using personal wireless devices on flights

January 13, 2009, McLean, VIRGINIA, USA—Members of The World Airline Entertainment Association (WAEA) were panelists in a session titled, *“Using Your Wireless Device on an Airplane: All Type and No Talk?”* at the Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Las Vegas, Nevada on January 10, 2009. Produced by the Consumer Electronics Association (CEA), CES is the largest electronics trade show in the world, attracting over 110,000 attendees at the 2009 event.

Inflight mobile phone usage and inflight internet via WiFi were the key innovations discussed by the panelists.

“We see more and more travelers bringing their own wireless phones, PDAs and other devices onboard flights,” said WAEA Vice President Patrick Brannelly of Emirates Airlines. “Airline passengers have been able to communicate using voice, email and SMS for years when at 35,000 feet via the embedded seatback TV systems, and it is only natural that they now want to do this using their own personal devices. The CES event has become far more relevant for airlines wishing to offer these services, so that they can better understand the consumer trends for such devices.”

Today a number of international airlines allow passengers to use their mobile phones while inflight, although this is not currently allowed over US airspace. However, US passengers are already able to surf the internet using their personal devices on some airlines using the US-based AirCell service.

The panel represented innovators of inflight wireless technology from top airlines, a leading airline manufacturer, and leading satellite and cellular-based service providers. These inflight entertainment

industry leaders presented the trends in passenger wireless device usage, discussed regulations that could hamper technologies on airplanes and the possibilities for global broadband connectivity in the future. Moderated by Brendan Gallagher, Editor of *Inflight Online*, panelists included:

- Doug Backelin— Manager, Inflight Communications & Technology, American Airlines
- Patrick Brannelly— Vice President, Passenger Communications & Visual Services, Emirates Airlines
- Henri Broussalian— Head of Business Development, North America, OnAir
- Dave Carson— Co-Chair, RTCA SC-202, Associate Technical Fellow, Cabin Systems Integration, The Boeing Company
- David Coiley— Head of Aeronautical Business, Inmarsat Global Limited

The 2009 Consumer Electronics Show (CES) was hosted by the Consumer Electronics Association from Jan. 8–11 in Las Vegas, Nevada, USA.

About WAEA

Founded in 1979 as a non-profit organization, The WAEA is the official worldwide network representing nearly 400 airlines and airline suppliers committed to excellence in inflight entertainment and communications and the continual improvement of the airline passenger experience. For more information regarding WAEA and the IFE and communications industry, please visit www.waea.org.