EU TO CHALLENGE GERMANY OVER PILOT LICENSING AFTER GERMANWINGS CRASH - SOURCE

News / Airlines

The European Commission is poised to launch a legal challenge against Germany's air safety authorities and in particular its system for renewing pilots' licences, a person familiar with the matter said on Wednesday.

The Commission will tell **Germany** that its licence renewal practices are not in line with EU law in that they gave priority to privacy rules over safety for pilots wanting to keep their licences, the person said.

The issue came to light earlier this year after 27-year-old co-pilot Andreas Lubitz, barricaded himself inside the cockpit and crashed the **Germanwings** airliner he was flying from Barcelona to Dusseldorf into the French Alps, killing all 150 people on board.

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In addition, the Commission will take issue with Germany's supervision of the airworthiness of planes and related operations.

The European Aviation Safety Agency had found issues with Germany's aviation authority as part of regular checks before the crash.

While Germany has addressed some of the issues, problems remain, the person said. If Germany does not comply with the Commission's demands it could be taken to the European court.

A spokesman for the German transport ministry in Berlin could not immediately be reached for comment.

Following the crash it was revealed that Lubitz had broken off his pilot training due to a period of severe depression, raising questions over whether medical checks of crew members by air-safety regulators and airlines are rigorous enough.

But Germanwings parent Lufthansa has said that upon resuming training he passed all medical and suitability tests again.

In July a panel of experts appointed by the Commission in the wake of the crash and led by Europe's aviation safety regulator called for more pilot screening as well as support schemes.

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