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Gates joint venture provides for airline disaster planning

By Jonathan Rest, 01 July 2005

GATES & Partners, a specialist aerospace law firm, has agreed a joint venture with Houston-based Kenyon International Emergency Services to provide comprehensive emergency and disaster planning to airlines exposed to reputational risk arising from accidents causing large numbers of casualties.

Kenyon is a worldwide disaster management group that specialises in co-ordinating emergency responses to a disaster be it aviation, rail, shipping or industry anywhere in the world in less than 24 hours.

The most recent air disaster it dealt with was the SAS crash in Milan on October 2001, but Kenyon's most notable aviation accident response came a month prior to that; at Ground Zero in New York City, after the September 11, 2001 attacks on the twin towers of the World Trade Center.

Under the terms of the coalition, Gates and Kenyon will also provide auditing services to airlines and other industries.

These services will, said Gates partner Paul Freeman, focus on "procedures, response, legal arrangements, and training". He added: "If the worst possible situation arose, it can be dealt with as soon as possible".

The firms are already working with South Korean and Singaporean airlines to implement such services.

It is claimed the joint venture is unique to the insurance world. Sean Gates of Gates & Partners said: "The services we jointly offer are unavailable elsewhere and will fill a significant gap in strategic risk management for a wide range of sectors within and beyond aviation and travel."

Robert Jensen, president and chief executive officer of Kenyon, also claimed the alliance "dramatically enhanc[es] the depth and breadth of disaster response service which will again raise the bar in disaster services worldwide".