

Dear Sir / Madam,

I refer to ICAO State letter AS8/5-18/17 requesting Member States to indicate the progress made in efforts to enforce the legislation and provision of penalties regarding Laser illumination and flight safety. In this regard, Ireland's position in relation to the action required, is set out below:-

a) continue to raise awareness of the dangers of laser illumination of aircraft.

This is noted but there is a need to ensure that unwanted activity is not encouraged.

b) indicate progress made to enforce applicable laws when laser attacks are perpetrated;

A small number of prosecutions have been made however, there are still difficulties in providing the necessary evidence to secure a conviction

c) indicate progress made in including legal provisions and enforcing penalties, if necessary in 2014 Ireland introduced Primary Legislation to support the pursuit of convictions and the relevant extract (section 44) of the State Airports (Shannon Group) Act, 2014 is below.

Prohibition on dazzling aircraft

44. (1) A person who deliberately or recklessly directs or shines a light at or in the direction of—

(a) a pilot or co-pilot of an aircraft,

(b) a person involved in the operation of the flight of an aircraft, or

(c) a person carrying out air traffic control services, so that the light may dazzle, distract or confuse the pilot or person in the performance of his or her duties commits an offence.

(2) A person who commits an offence under this section is liable—

(a) on summary conviction to a class A fine or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 months or to both, or

(b) on conviction on indictment—

(i) where the person is an individual – to a fine not exceeding €50,000, or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 5 years or to both, or

(ii) where the person is a body corporate – to a fine not exceeding €250,000.

(3) In this section—“aircraft” means any machine that can derive support in the atmosphere from the reactions of the air other than the reactions of the air against the earth's surface;“ air traffic control service” means a service provided for the purposes of—

(a) preventing collisions between aircraft and, on the manoeuvring area, between aircraft and obstructions, and

(b) expediting and maintaining an orderly flow of air traffic

The Level of activity involving lasers in relation to aviation is also set out below.

The following is a chart of the activity levels reported since 2013

