



Media release

Zurich Airport, 5 February 2010

ESTA approval now compulsory for travellers to the USA

SWISS customers travelling to the USA are now required to obtain electronic approval of their travel from the US authorities in advance of their flight. The new “ESTA” requirement enters immediate effect.

The Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) was introduced by the US authorities in January 2009, and is applicable to all travellers who wish to enter the USA under the Visa Waiver Program. The requirement to obtain ESTA approval prior to departing for the USA has now been made compulsory for all such travellers, with immediate effect. If no such approval is obtained, the traveller may be denied boarding at their airport of departure. Travellers holding a valid visa for entering the USA do not require ESTA approval.

SWISS advises the customers concerned to apply for their ESTA approval (using a valid passport) at least 72 hours prior to the scheduled departure of their flight to the USA. The company also advises travellers to obtain a printout of their ESTA approval, and to carry this with them throughout their trip.

ESTA approval, which is free of charge, can only be obtained from the US authorities online at <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov>. In most cases, approval will be granted within seconds. In combination with a valid passport, it will then remain valid for two years from its date of issue. Travellers who have already obtained ESTA approval but need to change some of the details originally provided can do so at any time via <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov>. The site also contains further information on the ESTA requirement along with frequently-asked questions and the answers to the same.



In addition to their ESTA approval, travellers to the USA under the Visa Waiver Program must continue to complete the green I-94W immigration form on board before landing.