

15 September 2009

Tomorrow, Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2009, is the second anniversary of the Thai Air disaster at Phuket, Thailand, when the budget airline, One-Two-Go, crashed one of its airliners on approach to landing. 90 passengers and crew lost their lives, and many others of those onboard were badly injured. Amongst those who lost their lives were Bethan Jones and Alex Collins, post graduate students from Maesteg and Porth, both 22 years old.

In the past two years, lawsuits against the Airline and its Directors were started in the US courts by the families. The families also approved the European Commission to investigate widely known allegations that One-Two-Go was an unsafe airline involving widespread allegations of falsification of official flight and training documentation. As a result of that, the European Commission banned One-Two-Go from EU airspace, and placed it on the EU Blacklist of unsafe airlines.

The parents of Bethan and Alex, Jean and Steve Jones of Porth, and Margaret and Richard Collins of Maesteg said:

*"No parent should ever have to go through the nightmare of losing a child in such a devastating way. We firmly believe this accident was preventable. The European Commission absolutely did the right thing in naming and shaming One-Two-Go Airlines.*

*At this time, many families will have their student children travelling abroad, and Thailand is a very popular destination for British families. Our message to those families is very clear: at all costs do not fly on any airline that has been on the EU Blacklist, or is associated with an airline that has been named or shamed. Very few people are aware of this EU Blacklist and we want to raise awareness of its importance, and the fact that it has and will save lives. Tragically this comes too late to have saved the lives of Bethan and Alex and the other 88 who died in this disaster"*

So far, the Thai Aviation Authorities have only issued a superficial accident report. There does not appear to be any urgency in producing the final accident report – whose aim is

to identify shortcomings in air safety. Without any final report, the Coroners Inquest into the deaths of all the British passengers cannot proceed.

The EU Blacklist can be found here: [http://ec.europa.eu/transport/air-ban/doc/list\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/transport/air-ban/doc/list_en.pdf)

In 2008, there were 8 incidents involving EU banned airlines, including the Itek Air crash in which 65 passengers lost their lives and the Hewa Bora Airlines crash in which a total of 40 people lost their lives including many on the ground. In 2009, to date, there have been 6 incidents involving EU banned airlines. Further details can be found here: <http://aviation-safety.net/database/dblist.php?Year=2009>. Blacklisted airlines are indicated by  .