

Qatar Airways issues statement on Airbus A350 Aircraft

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Qatar Airways is ready to see its legal dispute with Airbus over flaws with the protective skin of A350 wide-body jets through to trial, the Gulf carrier said. Qatar Airways is suing the European planemaker in a UK court for \$1 billion in damages after grounding about two dozen of its A350s experiencing the flaws, which it says raise safety concerns - something Airbus and European regulators deny.

Until now, Qatar Airways has appeared broadly isolated in the dispute as other airlines continue to fly the jets, though the Gulf carrier has won some public encouragement from global airlines association IATA and rival Gulf carrier Emirates.

A British judge last week rejected Qatar Airways' requests for a series of injunctions, clearing a path towards a full trial on the A350 surface problems and a related dispute over the planemaker's decision to revoke a contract for smaller jets. On Tuesday (May 31), the airline noted that a longer written version of the judge's

decision reflected some arguments that it intends to make in the main trial, as it took the unusual step of reproducing lengthy extracts from the judgment.

Summarising evidence in preliminary hearings, Judge David Waksman noted that the problem that originally appeared in one plane in late 2020 could potentially affect all A350s because of the choice of materials, for which there was no simple fix.

Airbus has acknowledged that such issues tend to affect carbon composite aircraft but maintains it is not a safety issue. Qatar Airways says it cannot know for sure whether it is a safety problem until Airbus provides a fuller explanation.

"Qatar Airways is ready to see this matter through to trial to ensure that its rights are protected and that Airbus is required to address an unprecedented and extremely unique and concerning defect impacting the A350 aircraft type, across the industry and multiple carriers," it said in a statement.

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