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Columbus Direct provide extra protection to customers stuck abroad by Ash Cloud or any other unforeseen circumstance!

In response to the chaos caused by the Icelandic Ash cloud and the subsequent confusion many passengers felt in regards to what their travel insurance covered them for, Columbus Direct has acted swiftly by adding a new "Emergency Travel Upgrade" as an option on its gold policy range.

This new cover is at present unique in the travel insurance market, in that it covers passenger in the event of **any** unforeseen circumstance preventing their return Home. So for example, in addition to further "ash cloud" disruption, it would also cover for things such as unforeseen strikes by airline/air traffic staff or other major weather or natural disasters.

The upgrade, worth up to £4,000 per policy, is intended to cover customers for the cost of alternative accommodation, or to enable them travel by alternative means, (e.g. to allow them to use a train if flights are cancelled, or to take a flight if a ferry is cancelled) to get them home.

This latest move is not the first time Columbus has put itself at the forefront of the travel insurance market, as it was also among the first major travel insurance brands to offer Scheduled Airline Flight Insurance (SAFI) which covers people should their airline go bust –something Columbus offers at no extra cost to customers!

Graham Linney, Director of Columbus said "Not all travel insurance is the same, and we are very proud to be the first provider to offer such comprehensive cover that will help compensate people through very difficult circumstances such as the ash cloud, and who knows what else in the future."

For more details Customers can contact Columbus via its website www.columbusdirect.com or by calling 0800 082 1287.

Ends

Notes to editors - About Columbus

Columbus Direct is a leading travel insurance specialist which was established in 1988, selling both online via www.columbusdirect.com and offline via call centre channels. Customer satisfaction and value for money are the driving forces behind Columbus Direct and we pride ourselves on providing a quick, efficient and hassle-free service. Independent research by online Consumer Intelligence in March 2010 showed that 95% of people could save with Columbus Direct travel insurance.

Over the last decade, more than 11 million customers have trusted Columbus Direct with their travel insurance needs.

We are authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority and also operate a claims charter.
