

Over 450 US Planes Carrying Weapons Landed in Shannon Airport in 2019

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Over 450 planes carrying weapons on board landed in Shannon Airport last year.

The Government approved 454 applications for “the carriage of munitions of war on civil aircraft” in Shannon Airport in 2019.

The practice has continued into 2020, with the Limerick Leader being made aware of a photo that depicts a commercial plane carrying US troops - wearing uniforms and carrying rifles - in Shannon Airport.

Under the terms of the Air Navigation (Carriage of Munitions of War, Weapons and Dangerous Goods) Order 1973, the carriage of weapons and munitions of war is prohibited in any civil aircraft in Irish airspace and onboard any Irish registered aircraft unless an exemption is granted by the Minister for Transport, Tourism, and Sport.

A spokesperson for the Department of Transport confirmed the Department issued exemptions for flights on February 24 and 25, around the date of the photo.

“The Department did issue an exemption for an airline on the 24th and 25th of February for a technical stop in Shannon Airport. We do not disclose details of the commercial flight. To reiterate these flights are prohibited in carrying live munition onboard,” said the spokesperson.

“Applications for exemptions are considered on a case by case basis in consultation with Department of Foreign Affairs Trade and Department of Justice,” they added.

Information found on Gov.ie, states that:

“Ireland’s traditional policy of military neutrality, which has been pursued by successive Governments, is characterised by non-participation in military alliances. Granting permission for these civil aircraft to refuel at Shannon airport does not amount to any form of military alliance with the US.”

Commenting on the exemptions, Senator Paul Gavan said:

“The United States have been engaged in a series of ongoing wars of aggression in countries where they have no right to be such as Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan. They also provide logistical support for the ongoing war by Saudi

Arabia against Yemen where thousands of men women and children have been slaughtered. By allowing the US Military to use Shannon Airport to support these military adventures successive Irish Governments have allowed themselves to become complicit in these wars of terror.

“We are supposed to be a neutral country. As a country that has itself suffered centuries of occupation, we should be particularly aware of the damage that current US Foreign policy is causing throughout the world. We need a vibrant commercial airport at Shannon, not a semi-military outpost for the US Government.”

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