



PRESS RELEASE

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Ministers Agree on European Flight Time Limitations – Pilots Call for Safety Improvements & a Swift Review –

Safety risks caused by pilot fatigue are not addressed sufficiently in today's Council Common Position on the new "EU-OPS" Regulation¹, which seeks to harmonise minimum Flight Time Limitations (FTL) for flight crew across the EU.

The European Cockpit Association (ECA), representing over 34.000 pilots from across Europe, considers the EU-OPS initiative as a first step towards a safety-based level playing field in Europe. However, the **proposal is incomplete** and does **not take into consideration the latest medical and scientific research**, which would avoid pilot fatigue compromising flight safety.

The proposed Regulation will now enter its **2nd Reading in the European Parliament**.

After the tragic aircraft accidents last year, the EP has shown that it can forcefully address flight safety in Europe. ECA is confident that the **Parliament will look at the flight safety implications of the proposed FTL**.

Given the insufficient medical/scientific foundation of the current FTL, ECA will call on the EP to **support the proposed Scientific Review** of the FTL provisions, to bring forward the deadline for its completion, and to commit to changing the future Regulation in line with its findings.

In addition, ECA will recommend MEPs to improve what the Council has put on their table. Rather than re-opening the EU-OPS package, ECA will propose a *limited* number of **amendments to improve the text from a safety point of view**. Some crucial safety issues will, however, have to wait until the scientific review is carried out.

ECA reminds EU decision-makers that existing studies show that the effects of fatigue on a pilot's performance after flying more than 10 hours at night is **equivalent to 0.08% alcohol in the blood** – a level at which car drivers would normally be barred from driving. The Council allowed up to 11 hours 45 minutes for pilots.

Statistical evidence demonstrates that **exposure to an accident is 6 times higher** on aircraft whose crew has been working longer than 12 hours. The current proposal allows up to 14 hours during day.

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For further information (incl. a 2-page FTL summary), please visit: www.eurocockpit.be
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¹ Draft Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Council Regulation (EEC) n° 3922/91 on the harmonisation of technical requirements and administrative procedures in the field of civil aviation (EU-OPS). The Regulation's Subpart Q covers Flight Time Limitations for pilots. Council has now formally closed the 1st Reading on EU-OPS.