



PRESS RELEASE

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Independent Scientific Study is Severe on Current European Air Crew Fatigue Rules

"Unacceptable"; "exceeding the reasonable limits"; "allowing for high density of work..." That is how the experts charged with the scientific evaluation of EU laws on Flight Time Limitations described some of the current laws to protect against crew fatigue. The conclusions of the experts can be found in an independent Study published today by the European Aviation Safety Agency. The European Cockpit Association welcomes the publication and urges a swift review of the rules taking into account the study's results.

The European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) has today published the medical and scientific evaluation of European laws on Flight Time Limitations (FTL) for pilots. This Evaluation was required by the "EU-OPS" Regulation, approved by the European Parliament and the Council in 2006¹. This Regulation also requires the European Commission to "draw up and submit proposals without delay to amend the relevant technical provisions" on the basis of this evaluation.

The scientists identified some critical items which need urgent review:

- Maximum duty hours (currently 13/14 hours)
- Night duty hours (currently 11:45 hours)
- Split duty (duty combined with a short rest)
- Rest hours
- Standby and breaks

According to the scientists' findings, the current EU laws on these points do not seem to offer appropriate protection against pilot fatigue and related safety risks. The scientists give specific recommendations such as the reduction of maximum duty hours to below 13 hours, of night duties to maximum 10 hours and the limitation of split duty to 14 hours.

Fatigue is a contributing factor in 15 to 20% of all fatal aviation accidents caused principally by human error. EASA is currently in the process of drafting new legislation for air operations. The 38.200 pilots represented by the European Cockpit Association call upon the EU Institutions to swiftly integrate the study's results into this legislative process in order to ensure adequate levels of protection for European crews and passengers.

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Visit our FTL section on the ECA web: <http://www.eurocockpit.be/content/view/414/252/>

¹ Regulation (EC) No 1899/2006 of 12 December 2006