



PRESS RELEASE

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NEW INDEPENDENT SCIENTIFIC STUDY SHOWS NEED FOR AIR CREW FATIGUE LAWS TO BE REVIEWED

A forthcoming medical and scientific Study evaluating the EU Flight Time Limitations law is expected to identify a number of legal provisions that need improvement to ensure adequate levels of flight safety. It will be up to the European Institutions to revise Flight Time Limitations laws without delay in order to avoid the risk of human error contributing to accidents and incidents.

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

Flight Time Limitations is one of the cornerstones of aviation safety. Scientific research has long established the link between pilot fatigue (e.g. due to long duty hours, following insufficient rest sleep opportunities, etc) and the risk of accidents and incidents. Scientific experts identify fatigue as a contributing factor in 15 to 20% of all fatal aviation accidents caused principally by human error. It is obvious that air crews can only perform their duties safely if they are sufficiently alert, especially in critical circumstances; this is not possible in the presence of fatigue. European passengers and crews have the right to benefit from high scientifically based safety standards: European regulations must ensure that crews are fit to operate and free from fatigue.

The 38.000 pilots represented by the European Cockpit Association await with interest publication of EASA's Medical and Scientific Evaluation Study and the plans of the EU Institutions to implement those results without delay, as mandated by the EU-OPS Regulation.

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