



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**

**PRESS RELEASE**

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## **Aviation Safety: Parliament Committee vote puts at risk key measures to improve aviation safety**

Following the Transport Committee's vote this afternoon to reject proposals to improve crew protection against fatigue, Vice-President Kallas said: "This vote puts at risk key measures to improve aviation safety. Safety is the first priority for the EU and the sole objective of this revision. Pilot fatigue is a very serious issue and that's why there are already strong EU rules in place. This proposal goes a step further bringing together the best safety practices from all EU Member States and the latest scientific evidence. With these rules, we want to consolidate Europe's position as the safest place to fly. To do that, we need a debate based on facts, not based on misleading scare stories and false claims. We look forward to a transparent debate with Members of the Parliament before the vote in Plenary."

The purpose of this new legislation to modernise the high European standards on aviation safety is to clarify and improve the current regulations on flight and duty time limitations (known as flight time limitations, or "FTL") — taking into account the latest scientific and technical evidence.

The proposal includes more than 30 provisions aimed at improving the crew protection against fatigue, without deteriorating their working conditions. They include important issues such as in-flight rest for cabin crew, night flights and standby airport duty and reserve.

The rejection of the draft Commission regulation on FTL would have negative effects on safety, since a series of clear improvements in crew protection against fatigue would not be adopted. We would in that case revert back to the old rules.

Below are 10 key examples of concrete safety improvements which will be lost if the new regulation on aircrew fatigue cannot be adopted:

- Night flight duty will go back up to 11h45 instead of 11h in the new regulation. Only one EU Member State has set lower limits under national law (11h15); nowhere is the limit below 11h. Moreover, more flights will be considered daytime flights and subject to longer duty periods.
- Standby at home will no longer be limited to 6 hours when combined with maximum flight duty time. The limits set under national law will apply or the airline will decide. Standby can go up to 24 hours – including in Germany, France and Belgium. After those 24 hours pilots are still allowed to fly to the maximum flight duty time.
- The combination of standby at the airport with flight duty will not be capped at 16 hours. It will be 20 hours or 26 hours, or even without limit at all in some Member States.

- Total flight time in 12 consecutive months will not be limited to 1000 hours but to 1300 hours.
- There will be no increase of the weekly rest by 12 hours twice a month.
- Time zone crossing will not be compensated with up to 5 days of rest at the home base; instead it will be 2 days or even less in some Member States.
- Flight and cabin crew will not be entitled by law to horizontal rest during flight in most Member States. Current national rules allow airlines to offer only economy seats for rest.
- No additional rest will be provided for schedules that disrupt crew members' body clocks (like early starts and night flights).
- Airlines will not need to ensure crewmembers receive initial and on-going fatigue management training, where aircrews would learn, among other things, how to best plan their sleep. Training in fatigue management would help to reduce cases of fatigue.
- National oversight authorities will have less access to information on how specific airlines manage fatigue of their crew members.

FTL safety rules are without prejudice to the applicable EU and national legislation, including rules concerning working time, health and safety at work or existing and future collective labour agreements (CLAs). In addition, the relation between safety and social rules is based on the principle that the most protective rule applies.

In rejecting the draft regulation, the EP Transport Committee did not follow the view of the majority of aviation safety professionals in favour of a comprehensive and well balanced approach which will bring about safety improvements to flight attendants and pilots in the European aviation sector – to the benefit of passengers.

The draft Commission regulation received a positive vote in the EASA Committee meeting on 12 July 2013 and was submitted to the EP for a three-month scrutiny.

Next steps:

The motion for rejection will be considered by the European Parliament plenary in October.

For more info: [IP/13/690](#)

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