



ECA
Piloting Safety

PRESS RELEASE

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EU Parliament weighs in on Flight Time Limitations debate

Members of the European Parliament (EP) have been warned that not enough has been done to keep Europe's sky safe and to protect the travelling public from the risks associated with aircrew fatigue. At a Public Hearing held on 18 June, pilots, cabin crew representatives and scientists addressed the members of the EP Transport Committee and reiterated the need for solid, scientifically validated Flight Time Limitations (FTL) rules for pilots and cabin crew.

The new Flight Time Limitations rules proposed by EASA have repeatedly been criticized for not complying with scientific recommendations on a number of issues, such as excessively long night flights and potentially dangerous standby provisions. At the Hearing, air crew have publicly warned about the dangers of this legislative proposal and called on MEPs to ask the EU Commission to put safety before the airlines' commercial interests.

"We have clearly heard the voice of scientists and their unanimous recommendations to change the proposal. From now on, nobody can claim *'We did not know'*", says Nico Voorbach, ECA President. "It's time for EU decision-makers to play with open cards: either they follow the advice of independent scientists and propose safe rules; or they reject their recommendations and push a text with serious safety loopholes. But then they must take full responsibility and face liability claims if an accident happens".

"We would like to thank the Transport Committee for its deep interest in this legislative proposal and for listening to all stakeholders", says Philip von Schöppenthau, ECA Secretary General. "This is what EASA has largely failed to do. Air crew and passengers are now counting on the EP to defend their fundamental right to travel safely."

"Both EASA and the Commission have shown an extraordinary resistance to independent external scientific advice", says Jon Horne, ECA Professional Affairs Director, who represented European pilots at the Hearing. "Our duty as pilots is to bring passengers safely to their destination. It is time for the European Parliament to show its political leadership and ensure we can fulfil that duty".

The purpose of this Hearing was to learn about the safety gaps in the EASA proposal and to provide an opportunity for MEPs to take an informed decision before accepting or rejecting the rules in the autumn.

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Note to editors: ECA is the representative body of European pilot associations, representing over 38.000 pilots from across Europe. Website: <https://www.eurocockpit.be/pages/flight-time-limitations> & www.dead-tired.eu