



Editorial



Cpt. M. Chalk
ECA President

What have we achieved?

In key areas of European based professional pilots' lives, ECA has had an enormous impact. Flight Time Limitations (FTL), the rules surrounding medical and licence proficiency requirements, the development of international air transport agreements and the development of the next generation of air traffic management systems are just the tip of the iceberg.

At the end of this month ECA will have a new President; so this will be the last time my thoughts will appear in Cockpit News. For inspiration, I looked back at the minutes of a Board Meeting of 2004, just before I was elected. Although I could make the usual comments about which agenda items are still there today; what struck me most was how significantly the *environment* which ECA addresses has changed!

Back in 2004, EASA was excited to be contemplating their first rulemaking tasks. The Council and Parliament were seeking to agree a package which in principle sought to convert the JAA rules on air operations, operator and personnel licensing and FTL into EU Law. When this was complete, EASA was going to be given the task of administering and updating them. The Single European Sky project was in its infancy and ECA was contemplating its first definition of a strategy for SES. There were only 7 items on the agenda including whether to challenge our US based cousins, ALPA, to a sail boat race!

Today, EASA is seeking to rewrite entire regulations in areas as important and diverse as the requirements for National Aviation Authorities, medical and proficiency requirements for licence holders, air operators' licence and operational rules; defining the safety regime for air traffic management, airports and inspections; safety management systems, FTL and Fatigue Risk Management Systems

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Towards Global Standards for Pilot Training

From the US, through Europe, to the Gulf region and Asia, everyone is talking about pilot training. The challenges are known: growing competition in the aviation sector, an increasingly challenging economic environment, projected traffic growth over the next decade(s) and an increase in automation; pilot skills and entry requirements to the profession are under growing scrutiny. By organising an IFALPA workshop on the future of pilot training, pilots have placed themselves behind the controls of this important challenge.

From October 26 to 28, pilot training experts from around the world came together in Paris to develop **IFALPA Pilot Training Standards (IPTS)**. Operational pilots from 23 countries and 5 continents with a wealth of expertise on pilot training are committed to establish IPTS as the main standard for the future of pilot training.

The 3 day workshop kicked off IPTS which will become the new vision on pilot training. It will outline the full set of training needs, starting from the initial selection of candidate pilots up to recurrent training of experienced pilots. The outcome of the workshop will result in an IFALPA Position Paper to be adopted at the IFALPA Human Performance Committee in November (16-18) and is expected to evolve into a full IFALPA Policy at the IFALPA Conference in April 2011.

Professional pilot skills are key preconditions to ensure safe operations even under the most demanding circumstances. Pilot training experts have defined visions

that guarantee the necessary quality and quantity of training for a student to become a pilot, and for the pilots to maintain and further develop their skills and airmanship.

ECA and its members were instrumental in organising the event together with IFALPA and we have actively contributed to this workshop. ECA will use the resulting IFALPA Policy as its basis and benchmark for contributions to the development of future pilot training requirements in Europe, with the aim of ensuring the

“Professional pilot skills are key preconditions to ensure safe operations even under the most demanding circumstances.”

highest level of training and safety standards. With the new Flight Crew Licensing rules currently going through the European co-decision process in Brussels and EASA starting to produce output from its internal group on pilot training, the need for European pilots to be vocal on pilot training is a 'must'. The EASA work will result in some policy papers on automation training and training implementation and ECA will be ready to present IPTS as the global pilot vision on pilot training standards. ■



and more. Our own members also demand ECA coordinates work in improving our membership, understanding pension requirements and entitlements in different EU countries, ensures fair access to the flying on international routes both between our own airlines and with the 3rd country competitors and more. Sailboat races have long since been forgotten!

Despite the ever growing list of areas where ECA Members recognise that their interests can only be served by a strong ECA, and a natural tendency for the reallocation of resources to lag behind the need; ECA has been successful in delivering meaningful and tangible change at European level. All the areas I have mentioned bear the hallmarks of ECA's work; a brief exploration of our website will convince any observer of this fact.

I will hand on a strong, effective and successful ECA to the new ECA President later this month – but he or she will face still greater challenges in the coming months and years! ■

Next Meetings

15-17 Nov.: IFALPA Human Performance Committee, Hong Kong, HK

18 Nov.: EASA Safety Advisory Committee, Cologne, DE

23-24 Nov.: ECA General Assembly, Brussels, BE

24 Nov.: SAGAS meeting, Brussels, BE

30 Nov.: EASA OPS.055, Cologne, DE

1-3 Dec.: IFALPA Aircraft Design & Operations Committee, Bali

1-2 Dec.: EASA Safety Standards Consultative Committee, Cologne, DE

2 Dec.: ECA Drafting Group Advance Arrangements, Brussels, BE

6-8 Dec.: IFALPA Air Traffic Services Committee, Auckland, NZ

6-7 Dec.: EASA Helicopter Safety Team meetings, Cologne, DE

8-9 Dec.: EASA 4th Rotorcraft Forum, Cologne, DE

9 Dec.: EASA Advisory Board Meeting, Cologne, DE

9 Dec.: SESAR Joint Undertaking Quarterly meeting, Brussels, BE

9-10 Dec.: Eurocontrol/IATA SMS Workshop, Brussels, BE

14-15 Dec.: ECA Executive Board Meeting, Brussels, BE

Cockpit News, November 2010

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The **European Cockpit Association** is the association of Flight Crew Unions from European States. Based in Brussels, ECA has 38 Member Associations, representing over **38.600** pilots from 38 countries. For more information: www.eurocockpit.be.

EU Aviation Summit: Competitiveness & Safety

When over 300 delegates met in Bruges for the EU Aviation Summit organised by the Belgian Presidency on 26-27 Oct, the overall message was clear: Europe needs a competitive aviation industry, free from financial and administrative burden, and benefitting from an efficient, seamless Single European Sky. While the welcome theme of competitiveness dominated the event, Europe's pilots called for higher priority to be given to aviation safety. Because even the most competitive industry will fail if it is not – first of all – SAFE.

As one of the panellists on aviation safety, ECA warned the delegates about taking a safe industry for granted: As safety is a dynamically unstable situation it will collapse unless continuously maintained. Latest accident and incident data shows that safety levels are not improving anymore, and just maintaining today's accident rate within a context of growing air traffic, potentially means *1 airliner crash every 48 days in 2028*. This is clearly not an option!

According to ECA, three factors will impact Europe's ability to improve safety levels:

1. Fierce competition, including cost-cutting. Comfortable safety buffers that many companies still had in the "good old times" are being gradually skimmed away; more and more operators are now flying – or want to fly – strictly to the legal limits;
2. EASA's future soft-law and performance-based rules, which will come under pressure when the companies themselves are under commercial pressure; which are more likely to be interpreted and implemented in differing ways; and which will be more difficult to oversee and enforce; and a
3. Lack of resources at EASA and national level to oversee and enforce

safety rules, with EASA having insufficient resources and with many national authorities having seen their finances, manpower and expert knowledge cut down significantly.

Against this background, a coordinated and well-funded effort is needed, based on a clear safety target, strategy and action plan, as well as strong political will to consider 'Safety First'.

Crucially, what is required in the EU's current search for competitiveness is an acknowledgement that safety does not come for free. Safety does cost money and resources. Even in times of economic hardship – this is an investment we cannot afford to neglect. ■



To see the [Bruges Declaration](#)
To see [ECA's speech at the Summit](#)

“NO” to an EU Aviation Tax

With the EU seeking to find new ways to finance its central budget, the European Commission recently made a worrying and ill-conceived suggestion: to introduce an EU charge on aviation as one of several new financing mechanisms for the EU's own resources. ECA reacted strongly by asking Commission President Barroso to immediately withdraw this idea which would seriously harm the industry and its employees.

In a joint letter with ETF, ECA voices its concern that such a tax would be counter-productive as it would:

- negatively impact a sector which contributes significantly to the EU's socio-economic development, providing significant economic activity and employment, and which acts as a catalyst for Europe's economy as a whole;
- be against the Lisbon Agenda's objectives to make our economy more competitive and to generate quality employment. ECA is particularly concerned about the negative impact on employment in a sector, where employees are already under considerable pressure due to the economic slowdown and fierce

competition in an increasingly aggressive market place.

- reduce the sector's competitiveness vis-à-vis air carriers from other regions (Gulf region, Asia, etc.). The tax would *de facto* be an EU subsidy to these foreign carriers as it would help them to replace air transport currently undertaken by European carriers – thereby destroying quality employment in Europe by off-shoring it to these regions, where employment conditions are often far below the EU's standards.

ECA asked the EU Commission President for a meeting and is awaiting a formal answer to our concerns – concerns that are widely shared by many other aviation stakeholders. ■