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IFALPA supports SEPLA call for Flight Time Limitations based on science

Chertsey 14 Dec: The International Federation of Air Line Pilots' Associations (IFALPA) supports calls by its Member Association in Spain, the Sindicato Español de Pilotos de Líneas Aéreas (SEPLA), to Minister José Blanco to reject late appeals by a number of airlines to delay implementation of a Royal Decree that will introduce regulations designed to reduce pilot fatigue.

According to SEPLA, Airline managements are seeking to use the turmoil created by the ongoing dispute between Air Traffic Controllers and their employers AENA, to delay this vital safety legislation even though negotiations were successfully concluded a year ago. Already, a meeting scheduled for 9 December to finalise the legislation has been delayed until today, and yet the airlines are seeking to not only delay this meeting but in fact, to shelve the Decree entirely until the new EASA rules are in force in 2014.

At present, Spanish pilots are working without even the duty time limitations afforded to workers in non safety critical roles. This means that these pilots are working to rules that allow duty times far in excess of scientifically established norms required for fatigue management. Clearly this will have a detrimental impact on flight safety.

While the Federation recognises that the combination of the economic climate and the Controllers dispute has had a significant impact on the revenues of Spain's airlines, it argues that any attempt to delay implementation is a cynical attempt to put profit ahead of the safety of the travelling public, a wholly unacceptable course of action.

Accordingly, IFALPA urges Minister Blanco to ensure that Spain is in the vanguard of the creation of flight and duty time regulations that will improve safety by implementing the agreed provisions of the Royal Decree without delay.

Notes to Editors

The International Federation of Air Line Pilots' Associations represents in excess of 100,000 pilots in more than 100 countries world-wide. The mission of IFALPA is to be the global voice of airline pilots, promoting the highest level of aviation safety and security world-wide and providing services, support and representation to all of its Member Associations. See the Federation website www.ifalpa.org

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