



Transport Committee debates flight and duty times for pilots

Committees Committee on Transport and Tourism [19-03-2013 - 20:15]

MEPs quizzed European Commission Aviation Director Matthew Baldwin on Tuesday about the new rules on flight and duty times for flight crews recommended by the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA). The Commission has yet to table a proposal to put these rules into effect, but some MEPs said they would exercise their right of veto if they do not guarantee that working conditions and passenger safety outweigh commercial considerations.

The Commission was considering minor changes to EASA's recommendation but might carry out its own impact assessment, said Mr Baldwin when MEPs asked him for science-based evidence for the proposal.

Stand-by times, on-call times and turn-around times need further clarification, members insisted. Some MEPs also wondered why US pilots' night flight-times were limited to 9 hours whereas the EASA recommends an 11-hour limit as the new EU standard.

Committee chair Brian Simpson pointed out that an 11-hour limit would still be preferable to the current 11 hour, 45 minute one. He also warned MEPs that if Parliament were to veto the proposal, this could actually freeze the current situation.

Mr Baldwin reported that a majority of member states support the proposal. He promised that the new "flight and duty times would remain without prejudice to collective labour agreements" and would offer more rather more than less protection than today.

The Transport Committee plans to hold a stakeholder hearing once the Commission proposal is on the table.

Watch the recorded debate via VOD (link on the right hand , click on 19.03.2013)

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