

Subject:

Support to EC/EASA Research Study "Effectiveness of Flight Time Limitation (FTL)"

Dear Sir/Madam,

The European Commission (EC DG MOVE) together with European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) have set up a research study to perform a review of the effectiveness of the new flight and duty time limitations and rest requirements applicable as of 18 February 2016<sup>1</sup>. The objective is to determine whether these rules provide sufficient protection from potential consequences of aircrew fatigue and, if necessary, to make recommendations for changes to the rules.

This FTL review is being performed by a research consortium with the Netherlands Aerospace Centre NLR, Stockholm University, German Aerospace Centre DLR, and Jeppesen.

Starting point of the FTL research study is to determine the scope of a planned data gathering campaign in which aircrews will be followed and asked to collect data on alertness and fatigue. Before this campaign can start, the envelope of operations that will be the focus of the exercise needs to be determined based on expected level of fatigue risk. EASA pre-defined six flight duty periods that are to be investigated; two of which will be investigated in the current research study. In view of the large scope of the task encompassed by the review, it was decided to breakdown the review work into three phases – with each individual phase focusing onto two out of the six duty periods.

One of the methods that is used to define this envelope of operations is an online survey.

This letter is aimed at all who can play a facilitating role in distributing this survey. The goal is to reach a broad and large public within the European Commercial Air Transport (CAT) community. Therefore, the request of EASA and the research consortium is to spread – within your reach – the link to the online survey at the bottom of this letter and request participation.

*Who should fill in the survey?*

Aircrew members are the main focus of the survey; i.e. flight and cabin crew in all type of CAT operations are our main interest for the survey. In addition to this group of aircrews, the survey can also be spread amongst scheduling and safety experts working for European CAT operators and subject matter experts in fatigue management working for European aviation authorities or as consultants.

*Why should the survey be filled in?*

Completing the survey provides a solid contribution to the review of the effectiveness of the FTL regulation. The output of the survey shall determine which type of operations, and thus which specific operators, will be researched within this FTL review. The survey allows the participants to

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<sup>1</sup> EASA is tasked to perform a continuous review of the effectiveness of the provisions concerning flight and duty time limitations and rest requirements contained in Annexes II and III of Commission Regulation (EU) No 965/2012. This instruction is formalised in paragraph 9a of this Regulation.

share their recent experiences with the new FTL. The more people fill in the survey, the more insights we gain.

*How is data being handled after completing the survey?*

Survey participation is completely voluntary. Participants may decline altogether, or leave blank any questions they do not wish to answer. The gathered data will remain confidential and anonymous since the name of the participating individuals (or airline operators) is irrelevant to the needs of the research study. Survey data will be stored in a password-protected central database repository at NLR that can be accessed by consortium members only; i.e. excluding EC and EASA. The collected datasets will not be disclosed to third parties by the consortium during or after the study's lifetime or beyond.

*Can a CAT operator already volunteer to participate in the data gathering campaign?*

The survey will be a scoping activity for the planned data gathering campaign. If operators already know that they want to participate in this campaign, they are very welcome to volunteer. We can, however, not guarantee that these operators will be selected, as the survey needs analysis first to determine which type of operations will be researched. It is not possible for individual aircrew members to volunteer for the campaign. This needs to be coordinated through the airline operators.

*Who endorses this FTL research study?*

In order to guarantee that the work performed adheres to the highest scientific standards, a committee of renowned independent scientific experts is set-up by EASA. This group of global experts supports the research study approach worked out by the research consortium; this includes the use and set-up of the survey and of the aircrew data gathering campaign.

In addition, a "Mirror Group" of representatives from the main interested parties – viz. Member State, regulators, airlines and aircrew associations – is set-up by EASA. This group supports the research consortium in overseeing the definition of the scope and scale of the work to be performed with the goal of guaranteeing its fitness for purpose in effectively picturing aircrew fatigue within the EU aviation sector. The Mirror Group is also tasked to advise and facilitate the required interactions with third parties. You may have received this letter via a member of this Mirror Group.

The link to the online survey is: <http://survey.nlr.nl/flight.duty.periods/index.php/638451?lang=en>.

If you have any questions about this survey, or you want to volunteer for the upcoming data gathering campaign, feel free to contact *Henk van Dijk*, [henk.van.dijk@nlr.nl](mailto:henk.van.dijk@nlr.nl).

Thank you for your assistance in this important endeavor.

Sincerely yours,

**Research project officer EASA**

Mr. Daniel Coutelier



**Technical project lead NLR**

Mr. Henk van Dijk, PhD



**Scientific Committee**

- Ms. Barbara Stone, PhD, FRMSc
- Ms. Alexandra Holmes, PhD, Clockwork Research
- Mr. Steven Hursh, PhD, Institutes for Behavior Resources
- Mr. Kristjof Tritschler, MSc, smartshiftwork
- Mr. Prof. Philippe Cabon, Paris Descartes University

**Mirror Group**

Representatives of:

- National Aviation Authorities IT, FI, SE, UK, NL, FR, DK, AT, ES, TK
- European Cockpit Association ECA
- European Transport Workers' Federation ETF
- Airlines for Europe A4E
- International Air Carrier Association IACA
- European Business Aviation Association EBAA
- European Regions Airline Association ERA#

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