



PRESS RELEASE

Luxembourg/Brussels, 15 June 2011

EU Ministers – Make Passenger Safety Your Priority No.1 Pilots Demonstrate for Safe Science-based Fatigue Rules

At tomorrow's EU Transport Council, in Luxembourg, pilots from across Europe will gather to call on EU Transport Ministers to place the safety of Europe's air passengers at the center of future EU rules on pilot fatigue. With pilot fatigue contributing to 15-20% of all fatal air accidents, Ministers cannot afford to look away while recently proposed EU rules disregard decades of scientific evidence. If the European Aviation Safety Agency's proposal is not significantly changed – in line with scientific evidence – Europe's future rules will reduce safety standards currently in place in many EU countries, to the detriment of the travelling public.

Demonstrating in front of the Council venue, airline pilots will publicly voice their safety concerns about EASA's draft pilot fatigue rules that were issued in late Dec. 2010 and which had been prepared without any scientific input, despite a legal mandate to do so.

By distributing thousands of information leaflets in the center of Luxembourg and by holding a press conference, pilots will **call on EU Transport Ministers** to

- **wake up to the real safety risk** pilot fatigue poses to the travelling public;
- strongly **support science-based EU rules** to effectively combat these risks;
- ensure that the **current proposal is changed** in line with scientific evidence.

"Long duty hours and short rest periods for pilots can be a deadly cocktail, if not properly regulated and backed up by science" says ECA President, Nico Voorbach. "The 50 people who lost their lives 2 years ago in the Colgan Air crash (USA) are a sad reminder to the EU Ministers that we should not wait for a deadly accident to prepare safe science-based pilot fatigue rules. After this accident, the US acted swiftly and decisively and will introduce new rules based on scientific evidence in August."

"Here in Europe, the EU Institutions do not seem to have woken up to the threat fatigue poses to our passengers" adds Philip von Schöppenthau, ECA Secretary General. "A lot of scientific evidence is readily available – including EASA's own study. But EASA's proposed rules are designed more to avoid costs to the airlines than to protect the travelling public. We agree that Europe needs a competitive airline industry. But under no circumstances should commercial interest come into the way of the passengers' basic right to a safe flight."

ECA, representing European 38.650 pilots, rejects the proposed rules and calls on the EU Ministers to confirm that EASA must revise their proposal in line with scientific evidence.

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