

Pilots stage fatigue protest

Posted on [May 17, 2012](#) by [Aimee Turner](#)

Hundreds of pilots and cabin crew from across Europe this week demonstrated in front of the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), in Cologne to convince them that safety must be at the heart of new pilot fatigue rules.

EASA is currently meeting to discuss their latest draft of pilot fatigue rules which safety campaigners and pilots believe are unsafe and unscientific. BALPA members joined colleagues from across the continent in telling EASA that safety must be their number one priority.

Jim McAuslan, BALPA's General Secretary, said, 'As we have said many times, EASA's current proposals are deeply flawed. Would you feel safe driving your car after having been awake for almost a full day? Under its current proposal for air crew on standby, EASA would require a pilot to land an airplane full of passengers around 22 hours after having woken up in the early morning. This is only one of the many striking unsafe examples that the current proposal would permit.'

Nico Voorbach, President of the European Cockpit Association, said 'Science has demonstrated that long flight and duty hours, and insufficient rest and sleep opportunities will lead to a decline of alertness and performance. To guarantee that pilots and cabin crew are fully alert, strong EU rules, based on science, are essential.'

François Ballester, Political Secretary of the European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF) said, 'The "S" in EASA's name stands for SAFETY. And this is what we rightfully demand from the Agency. But EASA is not yet fulfilling its duty as a safety regulator. Instead it is giving in to the lobbying of big airlines, which are commercially-driven.'

Jim McAuslan went on: 'We need two things. EASA needs to drastically improve their proposals in some key areas, and take on board the scientific advice that they have received. And we need the UK Government to say that unless these rules are significantly improved, and made to reflect the scientific recommendations, that they would not support their implementation in the UK.'