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4 of 5 pilots suffer from fatigue while flying

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The European Cockpit Association has yesterday unveiled the 2012 'Barometer on Pilot Fatigue' with the aim to bring some quantitative elements to the issue of aircrew fatigue.

The 'Barometer on Pilot Fatigue' assesses eight surveys carried out by ECA Member Associations between 2010 and 2012, covering a total of over 6.000 airline pilots in Europe. The Barometer confirms that pilot fatigue is a common, dangerous and an under-reported phenomenon in Europe.

According to polls carried out in Austria (85%), Sweden (89%), Germany (92%) and Denmark (93%), four out of five pilots have to cope with fatigue while in the cockpit. 65% of Dutch and French pilots report problems with "heavy eyelids" during flight.

Between 43% and 54% of pilots surveyed in the UK, Denmark, Norway and Sweden reported falling asleep involuntarily in the cockpit while flying while a third of the pilots in the UK said to have woken up finding their colleague sleeping as well.

More than 3 out of 5 pilots in Sweden (71%), Norway (79%) and Denmark (80-90%) acknowledge to have made mistakes due to fatigue, while in Germany it was 4 out of 5 pilots.

The 'Barometer on Pilot Fatigue' coincided with the publishing of the final proposal for Flight and Duty Time Regulations by the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) which the European Commission now has to approve or amend.

