

By Tariq Tahir - 19th June, 2012

Pilots declare emergency because they were too tired to land plane

Pilots flying a holiday jet declared an emergency because they were too exhausted to land the plane, it emerged.



The crew issued a distress ‘pan pan’ message (Picture: Alamy)

Their aircraft was 12 minutes from touching down when the crew issued a distress ‘pan pan’ message saying they could not complete the flight.

Instead, they switched the Airbus A330 to autopilot which landed the aircraft without further incident.

It is thought to be the first time pilot fatigue has been blamed for such an incident. However, unions say it will become more more frequent if proposed rules which will extend pilots’ hours are allowed to come into force.

The British Airline Pilots’ Association said: ‘This incident goes to show that fatigue is already a big problem that needs tackling.’

The ‘pan pan’ emergency involved an Air Berlin crew who had been on duty for more than ten hours.

They gathered at midnight in Nuremberg before being driven 160km (100miles) to Munich from where they flew the plane, which can carry up to 303 passengers, to Majorca.

They were on the return flight to Munich at 10.15am when they raised their alert, usually given only when there is an urgent situation on board.

It happened last month but was brought to light by pilots' organisation, the European Cockpit Association, as it campaigns against a change in rules governing how long

Read more: <http://www.metro.co.uk/news/902480-pilots-declare-emergency-because-they-were-too-tired-to-land-plane#ixzz1yFNMC3xi>