

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3596/09
by Georg Jarzembowski (PPE-DE)
to the Commission

Subject: EASA NPA 2009-2 / in-flight relief of the pilot in command

EASA Notice of Proposed Amendment (NPA) 2009-2 was issued for comments. It will form the basis for the future EASA OPS rules which will replace EU-OPS.

Through its rule-making proposal NPA 2009-2, EASA has invented a new requirement (AMC to OR.OPS.015(d)) suggesting that there is a need for a commander to relieve the pilot in command/commander even above Flight Level 200 (in-flight).

This EASA proposal would lead to unjustified costs for EU airlines in case of augmented flight crew to comply with Flight Time Limitations (FTL) restrictions (e.g. requiring two commanders and one first officer for those flights that require three pilots instead of one commander and two first officers as allowed under EU-OPS provisions and as is the case in all airlines worldwide).

The EASA proposal for in-flight relief of the pilot in command is also in contradiction to EU-OPS (Appendix 1 to OPS.1940 (c) Minimum requirements for a pilot relieving the commander for operations above FL200), which requires a suitable qualified pilot for the in-flight relief of the pilot in command without implying a need for a commander above Flight Level 200

1. Could the Commission explain what safety case EASA has made for changing the EU-OPS requirements related to the in-flight relief of the pilot in command?
2. Could the Commission confirm that the EASA OPS rules should be based on EU-OPS with changes limited to cases where safety benefits can be clearly identified?
3. Is the Commission aware that this EASA proposal could result in business shifting to non-EU airlines, in particular on long-haul flights?