

**Question for written answer E-011669/2012
to the Commission**

Rule 117

Hubert Pirker (PPE), Georges Bach (PPE), Jim Higgins (PPE) and Dominique Riquet (PPE)

Subject: European Aviation Safety Agency opinion on flight-time limitations for air crew

On 1 October 2012, the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) issued its opinion on air crew flight-time limitations (FTL). Keeping in mind the interest of European citizens in safe air transport services, can the Commission:

1. confirm that the EU-OPS 'non-regression' principle will be retained in the future FTL regulation, allowing Member States to maintain or introduce stricter FTL safety requirements?
2. provide an overview of the areas in which the scientific advice contained in four reports commissioned by the EASA in 2009 and 2011 has been followed and, where it has not been followed, provide an explanation as to whether it considers operations carried out under such provisions to be demonstrably safe and, if so, why?
3. explain whether it considers the EASA's night flight-time limit of 11-12.5 hours to be demonstrably safe, given that according to scientific advice night flights should be limited to 10 hours, and, if so, why?
4. explain whether it would consider duty days of 22 hours (i.e. 8 hours standby + 14 hours flight duty) to be demonstrably safe, given that the USA has put a 'cap' of 16 hours on standby and flight duty, and, if so, why?
5. explain the logic and safety justification behind the EASA's proposal to allow Member States to declare themselves as 'early types' instead of 'late types'? This will allow airlines from an 'early type' country to escape the 'disruptive schedule' limitations mentioned in the opinion for some of their early starts, and contravenes scientific advice on what must be considered as an 'early start'?