



DGCA'S FLIGHT DUTY TIME LIMITATIONS GUIDELINES IMPLEMENTED BY AIR INDIA

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DGCA asked Air India to implement the new FDTL guidelines effective September 16, 2012. FDTL basically deals with six parameters including maximum daily flight duty period and flight time, weekly/monthly/annual limitation of flying hours, rest period, staff on duty travel or position and number of landings. One of the key elements of the FDTL guidelines is that pilots have to be available for 9-10 hours daily as opposed to the current 6.5-7 hours availability. Air India will now have to adhere to the Civil Aviation Requirement ("CAR") containing the new FDTL guidelines instead of going by the present agreements inked with different pilot unions. This has caused discontentment amongst the Air India pilots forming part of the Indian Commercial Pilots Association ("ICPA"). ICPA is of the opinion that implementation of FDTL guidelines without discussion with the pilots is arbitrary and illegal.

PSA view – While the civil aviation ministry expects that FDTL will lead to optimum utilization of its pilots and crew members and also reduce the requirements of operating staff, the ICPA feels differently. According to ICPA, the new FDTL guidelines have not been explained to the pilots and they are unaware of the same. Seems like another strike by the pilots of Air India could be brewing.

By:

Krishna Jhala



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