

Position Paper

19 July 2011

EASA FLIGHT CREW LICENSING (EASA FCL) (July 2011)

Background:

The European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) had issued on 28 August 2010 its final Opinion Nr 04/2010 on the proposed EASA Implementing Rules for Flight Crew Licensing (FCL). Following an extensive debate, the EU Member States under the EU comitology procedure (EASA Committee) agreed on a revised version of the EASA Opinion which, in particular, ensures a closer alignment with the existing JAR-FCL and EU-OPS rules. The new EASA FCL rules should enter into force on 8 April 2012.

Issue:

On 15 July 2011, the proposal was sent to the European Parliament and Council for scrutiny until 13 October 2011.

AEA position:

The AEA applauds the EU Commission and EU Member States (EASA Committee) for having amended the EASA Opinion in particular to ensure a closer alignment with the existing rules which have proven to be safe. **The AEA therefore encourages the EU legislator to swiftly adopt the EASA FCL rules so that work can start to implement the new rules.** Any further updates to the EASA FCL rules should be discussed with industry and National Aviation Authority experts in the context of planned new EASA rulemaking task (FCL.002) which will start its work next year.

The AEA in particular welcomes the EASA Committee decision to re-introduce the cruise relief co-pilot function (CRCP) in line with existing EU-OPS rules as well ICAO standards. CRCPs have been used safely by several leading EU and non-EU airlines for many years. The deletion of this function would significantly increase costs for no safety justification whereas it would result in an uneven playing field between EU airlines and non-EU airlines. The AEA therefore urges the EU legislator not to reopen the debate on this important issue.

The AEA understands that other parts of the aviation community continue to have concerns with the EASA FCL due to the issue of FAA licensed pilots on N-registered aircraft. This issue does not affect the commercial airlines and AEA would therefore encourage the EU legislator not to delay the adoption of those rules affecting commercial airlines.

For more info please contact:

Vincent De Vroey
General Manager Technical & Operations
Association of European Airlines
Louizalaan 350/4
1050 Brussels
Email: vincent.de.vroey@aea.be