

Controlled Rest on the Flight Deck

This paper is an update to, and supersedes, 21HUPBL01, of the same name.

NOTE

Controlled rest is not permitted by some regulators and operators.

BACKGROUND

The purpose of this briefing leaflet is to advise Member Associations of the guidance material available concerning procedures for Controlled Rest (CR) on the flight deck. It also gives information on the prerequisites when CR may be used.

The use of controlled rest is regarded as a safety net. Therefore, **ITS USE SHOULD BE EXCEPTIONAL RATHER THAN ROUTINE**. If operations require routine use of controlled rest procedures, an underlying fatigue issue pre-exists which needs to be addressed.

The IFALPA position for fatigue counter measures on the Flight Deck acknowledges controlled rest as one of several countermeasures that may be utilised if unexpected fatigue or decreased alertness is experienced. The IFALPA position states:

"It is the responsibility of all crew members to be appropriately rested before flight. During all phases of flight each crew member required to be on flight deck duty shall remain alert. However, if unexpected tiredness or decreased alertness is experienced, appropriate fatigue counter measures may be used. Such counter measures include physical exercise, bright cockpit illumination, intellectual exercise, and when possible, controlled rest on the flight deck at the normal crew stations at the discretion of the commander. Such counter measures on the flight deck cannot be planned before flight and may never be used to extend duty limits, as an alternative to crew augmentation or be considered as part of a rest period for the purposes of calculating flight time limitations."

Guidance material for Controlled Rest on the Flight Deck is contained at Appendix C to the [IATA ICAO IFALPA Fatigue Management Guide for Airline Operators – Second Edition 2015](#). Additionally, the Flight Safety Foundation has provided the document [Controlled Rest on the Flight Deck: A Resource for Operators](#) which discusses factors that need to be considered when developing or reviewing an operator-specific controlled rest procedure.

These resource publications provide valuable information for use by Member Associations if their regulatory authority and operators develop their own regulations / procedures for the use of controlled rest.

Prerequisites for use of Controlled Rest

- CR has to be approved by the regulatory authority and the operator.
- Operators have the responsibility to roster sufficient pre-flight rest and sleep opportunities.
- Crewmembers have a responsibility to be appropriately rested before flight.
- The use of controlled rest is regarded as a safety net. Its use should be exceptional rather than routine. If operations require routine use of controlled rest procedures, an underlying fatigue issue pre-exists which needs to be addressed.
- CR is only intended to be used during low workload phases of flight (e.g., during cruise flight) at times when it does not interfere with required operational duties.
- Flight crews may only use controlled rest if they have completed the appropriate training.
- The effects of fatigue are insidious. Crewmembers should be aware of signs indicating the onset of fatigue in themselves and others so that appropriate countermeasures can be applied in a timely manner when required. It is particularly important to guard against the unacceptable situation of one or both pilots succumbing to uncontrolled sleep.

Controlled Rest Procedures

- Only one pilot may take controlled rest at a time in their seat. The harness should be used and the seat positioned to minimize unintentional interference with the controls.
- Controlled rest on the flight deck may be used at the discretion of the captain to manage both unexpected fatigue and to reduce the risk of fatigue during higher workload periods later in the flight.
- It should be clearly established who will take rest, and when it will be taken. If the captain requires it, the rest may be terminated at any time.
- The captain should define criteria for when their rest should be interrupted.
- Hand-over of duties and wake-up arrangements should be reviewed.
- To make sure that the pilot flying has not fallen asleep, there should be a means of alerting the pilots when CR is planned to be finished.
- Some operators involve a third crew member (not necessarily a pilot) to monitor controlled flight deck rest. This may include a planned wake-up call, a visit to be scheduled just after the planned rest period ends, or a third crew member on the flight deck throughout controlled rest.

- Time should be allowed for rest preparation. This should include an operational briefing (e.g. anticipated weather, ATC clearances, etc), completion of tasks in progress, and attention to any physiological needs of either crew member.
- Controlled rest should only be planned during the cruise period from the top of climb to 30 minutes before the planned top of descent. This is to minimize the risk of sleep inertia and allow sufficient time for operational briefings and increasing workload prior to commencing descent.
- During controlled rest, the non-resting pilot shall perform the duties of the pilot flying and the pilot monitoring, and cannot leave their seat for any reason, including physiological breaks.
- The planned rest period should be no longer than 40 minutes, to facilitate enhanced alertness but not detract from operations.
- A sufficient period, a minimum of 20 minutes, should be allowed following the controlled rest to overcome the effects of sleep inertia.
- Personal equipment (such as eye shades, neck supports, ear plugs, etc.) is permitted for the resting pilot.

A **FATIGUE REPORT SHOULD BE FILED** following **ALL INSTANCES OF THE USE OF CONTROLLED REST** procedures to enable the frequency of use to be monitored and fatigue risk to be appropriately assessed and mitigated. A culture which encourages effective reporting of fatigue hazards and reporting of incidents is critical to achieving this goal.

IATA, ICAO, and IFALPA (2015) state: Use of controlled rest on the flight deck should result in a fatigue report to enable the FSAG or SMS process (as applicable) to evaluate whether existing mitigation strategies are adequate.

[IATA ICAO IFALPA Fatigue Management Guide for Airline Operators](#)

***See also [20HUPBL01 – IFALPA Fatigue Reporting Guidance](#)**

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