



Confidential Human Factors Incident Reporting Programme

FEEDBACK

APRIL 1994

NUMBER 32

From, Chairman CHIRP Liaison Group

Since the last edition there have been several developments of interest to the readers of FEEDBACK. In the first place matters of concern which arise from your correspondence are now forwarded, disidentified, to the Chairman of the Flight Operations Directors' Liaison Group or to the Head of SDAU CAA, and RAF IAM has provided the CAA with a detailed critique of the latest JAA proposals on flight time limitations.

Another development is that the Master (Chris Hodgkinson) and Immediate Past Master (Clive Elton) of GAPAN have agreed to carry out an investigation on my behalf, as Chairman of the CHIRP Liaison Group, into the need to continue a confidential reporting system outside that provided by the CAA and the air carriers. I hope that their deliberations will be completed by the autumn, and their report will clearly be very influential for the future.

Finally, I much appreciate the direct contacts I have had with the readership of FEEDBACK – both on the telephone and by letter. I must say that I was more than a little surprised by the suggestion of one correspondent who purportedly represented "many pilots" to the effect that as CHIRP was in the pocket of the CAA it was not concerned with the welfare of pilots. Just in case he has forgotten – he signed himself "Chew that over! Welcome to a bag of nails or a tin of worms!" I can assure the readership that CHIRP is not in the pocket of the CAA (contact Peter Hunt CAA if you are in doubt) and that the management of CHIRP is interested in the welfare of pilots.

Tony Nicholson

HEIGHT CONFUSION!

The ILS was out of service awaiting

re-calibration following a frequency change, SRAs terminating 2 nautical miles from touch down the order of the day. A sequence of SRAs occurred some

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on QFE some on QNH. After the 4th SRA I passed, just once and corrected immediately, the QFE height at 3 miles as opposed to the QNH altitude, result pilot confused controller panic. No real incident occurred, but in these days of ATC standardisation, could someone standardise the Approach Datum for A/C?

The only alternative to a single standard datum seems to be, say both heights at each check – but you might have a better idea?

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CALLSIGN CONFUSION!

Aircraft A (a fairly local transit) was at 6 mile final on ILS squawking 4003 with callsign CALL#1 displayed. Aircraft B appeared two miles out on departure from the runway in use, squawking 4025, but the callsign on the Node display appeared as CALL#1, the same as aircraft A. (i.e. we had 2 of CALL#1 displayed, but at a distance of 8 miles apart.) Although one of the aircraft was asked to recycle the transponder to the same squawk - display still showed two callsigns the same.

This lasted over a minute. The displays at Centre showed correct callsign. Eventually the correct callsign appeared.

This is the latest in a long line of complaints with this equipment. Apart from a high SSR dropout rate, the SSR info regularly jumps from one primary target to another - it even latches onto weather returns. Presently we are instructed not to use the Mode C info, due inaccuracies and extremely slow update.

Problems started as soon as the equipment was installed. Extra

suppressors were required to combat the WX, which reduced its performance. Instead of installing SSR on the airfield - the SSR was piped in from a remote station. Due slow SSR rotation etc. the resulting performance is dismal.

As usual we are being asked to "make do".

CHIRP is told that the CAA accept that problems have been experienced with the introduction of this equipment and they are trying to improve the situation. Please let us know if they are succeeding.

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ME FIRST SYNDROME?

This is merely a back up of what I see as a cri de coeur in December FEEDBACK Page 3..With friends like these..etc.

Time after time this type of incident happens. These are rarely logged but frequently discussed with pilots who feel they are being given less than the best service. (After landing I hasten to add..comments such as those published are a waste of valuable r/t time especially on busy sectors.)

My main concern about writing is why DO they think they should always be first in any stream when often they are the least cooperative.

We have enough to do on busy TMA sectors particularly with the introduction of new procedures which are designed to increase the traffic flow and decrease delays without catering for individual company financial operating pressures.

We are frequently and indeed recently urged to consider the customer more. Given the necessary co-operation we would be delighted to oblige.

PILOT EMPATHY!

I refer to your article "With friends like these" in issue 31 Dec 93. As a PILOT flying scheduled/charter flights in Europe I would like to take this opportunity to express my sympathies with our ATC colleagues suffering the frustrations outlined in this article, particularly for those frustrations caused by the unreasonable and selfish attitudes caused by fellow PILOTS! I have listened to many such conversations over the R/T and have cringed in embarrassment accordingly!! If "I" were a busy ATC Controller I would be tempted to vector such people to the end of the queue!

We all know the present ATC environment in Europe in summer causes tempers to rise, but it never ceases to amaze me that there are a few pilots who seem to think THEY can control the traffic!! - Leave that to the CONTROLLERS lads - let us concentrate on the safety of OUR individual aircraft - the only job we are qualified and licensed to execute!

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FOREIGN ATC:

MIAMI VICE

Usual Miami approach - held high - 9000ft to 17 miles. Sorted all out by 1800ft on approach to 27R - cleared to land. A lot of verbal on RT.

At about 400ft heard "cleared immediate t/o 27R" - our runway. At about 260ft - decision height spotted dark coloured light twin rolling on runway. First reaction to go around - but chance of airborne collision high. Decided to land and risk collision on runway as safer. In event a/c was airborne at flight deck

height and turning right about one third way down runway when we passed him. If we had gone around - I would have turned right to avoid other active runways.

On phone to supervisor of watch - he didn't seem bothered as it is normal procedure to roll a light a/c in front of landing traffic due to the amount of traffic at the airport.

Risk of collision very high.

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IDLE VICE MISSION IMPOSSIBLE?

I was operating as P1(U/S) on this sector, I have flown into Zurich many times and the approach and landing was successful, but in my opinion not safe. The approach to R/W 14 is normally radar vectors to the ILS from position GOLKE. The airfield is situated in a bowl with high ground on all sides. The approach to R/W 14 is limiting as the glide-path parallels high terrain (at 5 miles you are only 800 ft agl). A GPWS alert is always a possibility. My question is this: Why, why do the controllers here consistently make you high and fast involving the necessity to drop the gear and everything else in order to stand any hope of intercepting the glide-path? It nearly always means capturing the glide-path from above which is untidy to say the least.

At an airfield not exactly noted for its safety record, how many other pilots feel as I do, that their ATC for arriving aircraft needs a good shake-up before somebody collides AGAIN with the high ground.

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SOLUTION ?

Regarding the "Parallel Runways = Double Trouble" incident in Feedback 31, there are some airfields, (I am thinking specifically of Frankfurt), where you are not told which of the two parallel runways you will land on until you are on base leg!

To help with this last-minute "rush", we used to set up the LHS radios for the 25L ILS, and the RHS radios for 25R. Thus, when ATC finally told you which runway it would be, the "other" pilot merely had to re-tune his aids to match his colleague.

As I remember, the Outer Marker and Decision Heights differed by no more than 20 feet or so, so one could use the higher values for both runways without problems.

We've had a number of suggestions on this topic including: putting information for both runways on the same plate, using colour to differentiate between the runway's information, doing it the French way as at CDG Runways 27 & 28. However, the suggestion published above seems to be the most immediately effective with minimum of effort from outside the flight deck.

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GUILTY SECRET....

As usual we were under local radar but were told to go to the hold as a nearby airfield had an emergency. We were transferred to airfield radar on approaching the hold, to find that the emergency was technically a fuel emergency. However, listening to the transmissions, it was apparent that the aircraft was lost and below radar cover.

Maybe he was trying to "beat the system" by trying to go visual to the airfield under the controlled area, but when asked where he was, his reply proved to be totally inaccurate. Ultimately he elected to divert and fly well below MSA but was warned of high ground between himself and the airfield, and told to climb to SSA! This he did and was then picked up on radar.

My concerns with this incident are:-

- 1. It was a commercial flight**
- 2. What sort of Company pressurises a crew to operate VFR under those conditions or to save money?**
- 3. Ref Feedback 31, "Heads they win, tails you lose", is this company operating in that type of manner?**

Perhaps this incident should be investigated, if only to protect the young up and coming captains of tomorrow.

If you do this and you've been lucky so far, don't hold your breath!

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Pressure aside – keep writing, we need to hear from you.....

NOT SO SILENT reporter says

... .. Persuading pilots to put pen to paper is one of the most difficult things one can achieve. I have to admit that over the years, I have been on the verge of writing to CHIRP but at the last minute, I backed off. I realize now why I didn't go ahead with my report. I felt that my information, or a particular incident was too unimportant for you and your readership. This last observation is

wrong, I know, but that is how the majority of pilots feel. There is a definite "small change" threshold, below which a pilot will not contact you.

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**and
"SILENT" reporter says**

This from a retiring aviator of 33 years standing -

...As one of the silent majority, may I thank you for all the work you have done to further safety. Wishing you continued success.

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SUPPORT FOR CHIRP

As soon as an incident occurs we are all on the defensive and truth is hard to find. Confidential reporting is an especially valuable way of spotting trends and daily concerns in the everyday life of pilots and controllers. We all need to feed our families too. So that what we tell our companies is highly censored to that end.

What we write in an MOR has to protect ourselves, our colleagues and our company.

You are probably the only people that ever hear the truth. One person, a pen, a piece of paper and your address. Not even a crew room mate to comment.

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DESIGNER CHIRP - NOW THEY ALL WANT ONE!

About a year ago the EEC provided funding for

a prototype aviation confidential reporting system. After much consideration it had been proposed that there should be a CHIRP in each of the EU countries. Funding from the EU should be made available to individual countries' offices remote from the regulatory authorities, airlines or trades unions. Some individual countries have an aviating population that is too small for anonymity. Then several smaller countries would combine to have one Regional Office. All of the individual offices would be autonomous and provide their own actions and feedback. Disidentified data would pass to the central office at regular intervals and analysis from the combined database would be received. Trends in behaviour or error would be identified more quickly for necessary action. A small step for man, a giant step for aviation! We shall see.....

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RED FACE!

As part of our Approach Briefing my F/O (non-handling) mentioned that on first sight the landing runway would "appear" to be on the left but that would be a new runway under construction. Well briefed and established on the localiser I saw the airfield at about 10 miles. My F/O was correct and my initial reaction was to accept the most obvious runway as the landing runway. For a second I also doubted the accuracy of the localiser. I commented on it to my F/O and then proceeded visually. Then to my horror I realised that I was mentally aligned on the taxiway off to the right which was also more visually obvious than the runway.

All this happened 8-10 miles from the airfield in good visibility and was more of a CRM exercise than a safety problem. Had the weather been close to minimums there also would have been no problems

because the distractions would have been out of the picture. But there must be a distance at which the distractions are obvious and the time short to assess the situation in full. There must be a way to make the landing runway the most obvious when construction work is in progress or there are long and wide taxiways.

No, this wasn't Gatwick. There are a number of airfields around the world that present this problem. The two that have most recently come to the attention of CHIRP are Luxor and Dusseldorf. Even when you are 100% certain, double check with other aids.

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RED FACE TOO

F/O flying. Thunderstorms precluding VOR/DME approach to R/W10. A/c flown around weather with descent to MSA to west of airfield. F/O with no previous airline operation experience wanted to fly to overhead at 1000ft on QNH with no radio aids to track on. NDBs being dragged off by storms and several large storms making VMC impossible. I had to be persistent and constantly drag him back onto the regime of the rules to make an approach and not just rake in below MSA with no tracking aids while IMC.

After holding for some time to the west, while Capt was distracted copying weather, returned to find autopilot disconnected and a gross overbanking (70 degrees) of aircraft below MSA. Situation was recovered followed by a very untidy go-around clean up requiring constant assistance from Capt. After holding for Wx, an approach to R/W28 (NDB) was made. F/O had to be reminded to stop descent at circling altitude as we had a 20 knot TWC. After going visual and circling to land on

R/W10, F/O made a large pitch down on turning final and cracked off the GPWS "SINK RATE" warning twice while Captain talked him through to a safe final, and landing. The F/O is a vastly experienced military pilot.

MOTTO: 1. Know the rules and if in doubt - don't. 2. Develop a "healthy" yellow streak, and use it. 3. If you have got automatics - use them - it saves spilling the coffee!

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BLUSHES SPARED?

My (P2) handling sector returning from West Coast USA to UK.

In good weather (visibility 5km with layer of Strato-Cu 2000ft to 5000ft) briefed for ILS approach to R/W 12L. Approaching the hold, approach turned us onto Southerly heading earlier than expected which placed us slightly high but with use of speedbrake and careful monitoring of vertical profile should be OK.

ATC then advised us that our runway would be 12R and continued to vector for the ILS. I became preoccupied with the VERTICAL profile and asked the Captain to set up 12R in the FMS, but due to preoccupation with vertical profile I forget to select correct frequency for ILS 12R. Established on ILS localiser and glideslope simultaneously at 2500ft when ATC queried if we were on localiser for 12R and reminded us of the correct frequency. We realised our mistake and fortunately at that moment broke cloud and were able to visually manoeuvre for 12R.

We often get a late change of runway so why did we get it wrong this time?

1. The route off the hold placed us high and fast so we became preoccupied with getting onto the vertical profile.

2. Preoccupation with that FMS instead of basic ILS tuning.

3. Maybe ATC could have reminded us of the correct ILS frequency when first giving the runway change.

Thank you to an alert radar controller who saved some very red faces from a serious incident.

Sleep management is very difficult on 24 hour slips and the time zone change from USA West Coast is one of the worst. Perhaps, with this 24 hour slip, there should be a limit of time zone change at less than the minus 8 hours. Anyway, the good news is that the Institute is presently finalising work on this particular topic – let's see what it says. When an operation has a heavy crew, should one of them be on the flight deck for landing or is that "too many cooks"?

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OFFLOADING?

Re: You have Control (Dec93 - No 31)

The writer has my sympathy. The problem he describes, is in my opinion a result of the demise of the independently minded Licensed Aircraft Engineer who has been replaced by the "Company Authorized Engineer" (in other words, someone who can be subjected to commercial pressure). A solution which I find works, should something similar occur again, is to Fax the responsible Manager requesting him to grant a concession (a word loved by Managers!!) to operate with a defect which EXCEEDS the limitations described in the "Despatch Deviation Manual". I can guarantee the writer some dramatic results!!

* * * * *

UPDATE ON FIXES!

We think we've had some success – you

may know different!

NATS reviewed the operation of flying displays after a reporter expressed concern. They looked and were satisfied.

Authorities and crews have given/are giving strobe lighting on aprons a second glance.

Assistance was given in LGW runway confusion re-occurrence.

Input given to the review of criteria applied to helicopter crew-log flying times.

Our views sought on "Easement of CAP 371 rules regarding dispensations" – these permitted only by Hd of Policy Flt Ops CAA.

Alerted CAA to a particular de-icing occurrence – published in CAA Digest.

Contribution made to REISSUE of warnings to EFIS aircraft operators – beware false locking on of some ILS installations.

Solving airmisses problem over Spain – FAILED!

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2 CLOSE?

We were returning to Base when Radar warned us of a pair of Tornado aircraft approaching (who had already "played" near us a short time before). Their tail chase brought them quite close to us several times and in the light haze they were difficult to spot.

They never got quite close enough for me to be able to say it was dangerous. It was uncomfortable especially when RAF radar refused to coordinate with civil radar.

I know that in VMC and only receiving an "information" service from radar they were quite within the strict terms of the law! However one wonders whose side they are on.

We make every effort to provide a professional safe and routine service for our passengers. Our passengers being in the oil/gas industry are also very safety conscious. They check in (just like an airport) for a public transport flight (just like an airline). However it's only on public holidays, weekends, very early mornings, night or in really filthy weather that things are sufficiently routine. While

most of the crews enjoy a display of aerobatics (when they KNOW the other aircraft are aware of them) none of our passengers do. If they can see another aircraft especially if it's closing they feel very worried.

Our management is well aware of the problem and have had personal liaison with the chairman of JAWG. We feel that CHIRP is our last line of communication to get the message across. In our helicopters we feel like sitting ducks when high performance aircraft are doing tail chases all around us, and are apparently unaware of us. It would be so easy to make our life a lot easier (we all talk to the same radar station) and by avoiding us by a slightly greater margin our passengers would be much happier.

We sought the views of Air Commodore Martin Abbott, Inspector of Flight Safety (RAF) (IofFS(RAF))

1. *Air Commodore Abbott felt that the report lacked sufficient detail to make a fully objective comment, and that without knowing where and at what height the aircraft were operating, what mark of Tornados were involved, which military radar unit was controlling the aircraft, and the type of radar service being offered, he could only make an educated guess.*

2. *But, first of all to exclude any misleading impressions. A "tail chase" in military terms refers exclusively to a medium level exercise carried out by basic and advanced student pilots in training, and RAF pilots are not authorised to conduct low level aerobatics - certainly not with two or more aircraft. It is, therefore, rare for operational pilots to carry out a "tail chase" and the IofFS(RAF) is convinced the Tornados were not performing aerobatic manoeuvres.*

3. *In turning to the incident, IofFS(RAF) assumed that the military aircraft were most likely Tornado F3s and that the incident probably occurred at below 3000 feet. The incident obviously occurred in Class G airspace, the so-called "open FIR", to which all aircraft have equal and legitimate access. The normal air traffic service (ATS) provided in Class G Airspace is a Flight Information Service (FIS). A FIS is a non-radar ATS in which information is provided to the pilot to assist in the safe and efficient conduct of flight. Such information may include weather reports, changes of serviceability of navigation and approach aids, and warnings that other aircraft are, or may be,*

in dangerous proximity. Because a FIS does not include any form of control, 2 different ATS each providing a FIS cannot provide radar coordination or separation. To obtain coordination, both formations would have to be in receipt of at least a Radar Advisory Service (RAS). Even under a RAS, no guarantee can be given to ensure that the standard ATS separation minima of 1000 ft vertically and 5 nm horizontally are maintained against non-participating traffic in the open FIR. The final onus of responsibility for avoiding other aircraft, when receiving a RAS, rests with the pilot.

4. IofFS(RAF) points out that the author implies that the Tornados were merely "playing" in close proximity to him. If, as IofFS(RAF) believes, the Tornados were F3s, then they would certainly not be "at play". Air Defence Tornados are required to train and maintain their skills in a number of tasks, which include radar interceptions, visual identification and shadowing, using only their on-board sensors, in addition to visual manoeuvring and weapon-aiming. These skills have to be practised at all heights, and often require large volumes of airspace. Because military radar control is not always available or required for all sorties, Air Defence crews occasionally fly with only the minimum ATS or totally under Visual Flight Rules, conducting mutual autonomous training.

5. Nevertheless, IofFS(RAF) agrees that this Incident Report does highlight an area of concern to both military and civil operators, namely the ever-increasing use being made of the open FIR by commercial carriers, rather than remaining within the protection of the airways structure. The RAF already recognizes the increased risk to its aircraft and has for some time been pursuing an active flight safety campaign to alert its crews to the dangers. Air Defence crews, the most regular RAF users of the open FIR over the sea, are actively encouraged to exaggerate the separation between themselves and civil traffic in their vicinity to avoid alarming the occupants of passenger-carrying aircraft. In the case of civil offshore support helicopters, IofFS(RAF) accepts that a controlled airspace route structure is not available in all areas and therefore, their pilots have to fly in Class G airspace much of the time. However, all pilots, both civil and military, who use Class G airspace must recognize that it is their individual responsibility to maintain safe separation from other aircraft. If RAF crews were constantly required to break off their training exercises every time they saw a civil aircraft, the sheer volume of civil traffic now using the open FIR would prevent the RAF from ever completing its essential training.

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GENERATION OF DESPAIR?

It seemed like an all too familiar scenario;

Turn up for duty period to be confronted by the latest in what seem to be an endless string of rumours and conjecture. In the opinion of most people the latest company cost cutting exercise can only lead to pay

cuts and redundancies, the more cynical amongst us are convinced that even the rumours are part of a complex company strategy designed to wear us down and make us more compliant when the axes fall, "maybe he's right" I think to myself. It isn't too long before the normally satisfying preflight discussions about the aircraft, the weather, and the various trivia attached to a successful operation are replaced by a selfgenerating sense of foreboding, a feeling of defeat. If the dissemination of rumour is a management tactic then they are placing themselves amongst the most irresponsible of people. They are paying lip service to the Flight Safety departments they have established, and in many cases smothered at birth, and are establishing an environment ripe for the development of various minor incidents, and most certainly providing the potential for a major accident.

Many thoughts are passing through my mind as I prepare for my flight the latest rumours provide me with a great deal of food for them. I watch my colleagues leave, and my concern deepens as talk moves inexorably from the hotel, to the crew room, to the Flight Deck; "Watch Out Below"!!!

Stress that is a result of apprehension is dependant on the perception of the individual so this sort of situation can result in a marked deterioration in the performance of the individual.

In this economic climate we empathise with this reporter and WE'RE not flying PAX!

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"THE IDIOT RUSH"?

A particularly annoying habit seems to be on the increase amongst our colleagues, i.e. the use of strobe lights and landing lights on the ground at night time. It seems to be SOP now to turn on strobes as soon as aircraft is cleared to line up -

why not leave it until actually on the runway rather than blind everybody on the holding area - one individual when questioned said "it was company procedure". Also, when holding facing landing traffic as on ALPHA NORTH or SOUTH at Gatwick how about turning off all unnecessary lighting? Let us hope airmanship and good manners overcome "company procedure" and the idiot rush to complete a checklist.

Do we need to shine the spotlight on this as well?

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RUSHED IDIOT?

This is unfortunately a true tale and whilst the runway excursion is not normal, the rest of the events are becoming so.

The final approach is textbook - the crew performing like a well-oiled machine getting, in this case, our 300-ton aircraft safely stopped on the runway. Rolling out nicely on the centre line, reversers smartly engaged, smooth, even braking, body-gear steering armed - perfect! Then Bang! There must be some electronic contact between the body gear steering switch and the pilot's finger for his brain has now switched from the erstwhile professional "flight" mode to a manic "ground" one.

No sooner had the body gear steering been armed than this most competent of fliers turns into a multi-fingered switch-flicker - 1000ft before our 120 degree turnoff to the right and at 50 knots, he is busily reaching across for the strobes, down and back for the transponder, NAV selector to HDG, Flight Director off, DME to STBY, ILS to VOR frequency - done it!! Oops! Here comes the turning! Going round the corner at 300 tons and 20 knots is daft enough but to switch off the landing lights

in the process and drag the starboard wing gear through the infield is perhaps just a "little bit over the top".

The only reaction to this excursion through the grass was the usual expletive.

Why must so many of us rush these things? Dozens of accidents and incidents occur each year whilst taxiing so it is imperative that both pilots devote themselves completely to the task at hand. Surely it is sufficient to call for the "After Landing" Checklist once the aircraft is clear (not "Hot Items" or "Clean Her up") and leave the knobs, switches, approach plates etc. until the aircraft is safely parked?

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We didn't want you to have "wot no fatigue?!" withdrawal symptoms -

NESSUN DORMA!

I had had two early mornings on two consecutive days to do two European flights and I was rostered for a night standby the following day at 0830L and did not sleep again that day. At 1900L crewing phoned to call me in for a UK-EUROPE-UK on which the rostered crew were already into discretion.

All went according to plan and I still felt fine as we set off from EUROPE for the UK(0300L). Due to the overlap of duty times we had three pilots on the flight deck and as always there was more stimulation and conversation than usual and I didn't start to feel jaded until the last 90 minutes of the flight. With one hour to go I really started to feel tired but thought I should be able to last the flight without falling asleep. At the top of descent my eyes closed for the first time and I was in somewhat of a dozy state during the descent. I still felt, however,

that I could make a big final effort during the last 10 minutes of the flight when there was more activity. Going downwind for landing, the approach checks, RT calls and then flap setting did increase the activity but I simply felt worse than ever. Commands/actions were followed immediately by falling asleep again. On final approach I found myself being woken up as the Captain was asking for gear down, flaps etc. When we finally landed I felt dreadful and possibly the worst in many years of IT flying.

There are obvious safety implications from this incident not the least of which was my driving home (0830L) afterwards. The irony of the situation was that the two pilots in discretion had been accommodated by crewing and felt fine whereas I was still within my allowed FDP and felt like death. I think that standby duties during late evening/early morning are almost impossible to rest and prepare for properly but can be acceptable with good rostering. I swear I will never accept an early morning duty followed by late evening standby on the roster again.

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Now, a few snippets we've pulled from your reports - they're not meant to be funny

ON US ATC

"America tends to use ten words when two will do."

PULLING A FAST ONE?

"After all - they are professional pilots and it's difficult to justify legislating against part time work as long as it's done legally."

.....CONVERSELY

"Part time work as pilots by dentists, accountants etc. is also difficult to criticise - altho' I doubt they would welcome pilots moonlighting in their jobs."

R L STEVENSON IN THE COCKPIT

...Asking a smoker not to smoke is not the answer over a long working day as, deprived of their routine fix, they change from Mr Jocular to Capt Hyde and their mental state is no longer conducive to a safe operation.

A PUN.....

Q. when is a discretion report not a discretion report?

A. when it's a split duty!

...return is delayed and you will be at least 2 hours into discretion. An abundance of discretion reports reflect badly on the company, so Ops/Management put pressure on the crew to describe that long delay on the ground (three and a half hours plus) as a split duty. At first crew disagree, but eventually give in when money is offered as an inducement to complete trip. This has removed the necessity and expense of calling out another crew, as standby crew are rarely available. What do these crews really think they are achieving? They are bringing the instability of their rosters upon themselves and ironically, often complain the loudest at these short notice changes.

...LOOK BUT DON'T TOUCH

...The airlines now cram so many people in that safety is compromised. Have a look for yourself at a 757 at the position of the cabin staff seating. Operators get what they want - safety last profit first.

AND

...KNEES of stewardesses touch knees of pax in first row.....

The final two reports need no comment.

PAPERWEIGHT

Contrary to what CAA say and what some people believe, it is the CAA's attitude towards flying operations in the commercial world which is directly contributing to crew fatigue and unnecessary bureaucratic requirements which cost a lot of money and significantly affect (adversely) company operations, particularly in relatively small helicopter units. Why must unnecessary documents be carried on helicopters where weight is critical when they can be inspected at base? Why create Performance A figures which are so complicated as to make practical flying impossible?

Why inflict flying patterns on light single and twin helios so as to make operations so cumbersome and costly as to kill the cost effectiveness of helicopters as a means of transport without adding one jot to flight safety? The answer: because CAA officials must do so to justify their jobs. There can be no other reason, in view of the adverse effect on flight safety.

PAPER WAIT

After pushback called for TAXY, set off TAXYING on TAXIWAY "edge markings" coming very close to hitting another aircraft PARKED ON STAND. Reason: Training Flt P2 handling, Captain and Training Captain discussing Radio load sheet, ON TAXY out there are no TAXIWAY centrelights and at an unfamiliar airport in an unfamiliar country one set of markings very much like another. However main criticism is Co policy of "Radio load sheets" they are a big distraction at just the wrong time.