

Aerospace Medical Association

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The Honorable Michael Huerta, FAA Administrator
Department of Transportation
Federal Aviation Administration
800 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20591

Subject: Mandatory Reporting of Medical or Psychiatric Conditions to Civil Aviation Authorities

The membership of the Aerospace Medical Association (AsMA) passed a resolution supporting an international policy for mandatory reporting of aircrew and aviation-related personnel who have medical or psychiatric conditions that would be hazardous to safe aviation duties. AsMA passed the resolution at their annual business meeting held during the 88th Annual Scientific Meeting in Denver, CO, on May 2, 2017.

The background for the resolution is as follows:

- Many U.S. and international organizations have reporting and information sharing requirements for diseases of consequence to public safety such as infectious diseases. In addition, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) already has an anonymous reporting hotline for medical conditions which may impact individual pilot safety or the safety of the flying public.
- The Bureau d'Enquetes et d'Analyses (BEA) report on the Germanwings crash of 2015 that resulted in 150 fatalities¹ found the cause to be a co-pilot who intentionally flew the aircraft into the ground to commit suicide. It was later learned that the pilot's physicians were known to have been treating him for multiple episodes of major depression with psychosis². The BEA report recommended reporting of conditions that pass a threshold of risk to the public while balancing individual medical confidentiality and passenger safety.
- Many international agencies are contemplating, or have enacted, requirements for physicians to report unsafe medical conditions for airline pilots and multiple states in the U.S. already have motor vehicle laws for reporting medical impairment, secondary to both cognitive and physical limitations.

The AsMA resolution states: **The Aerospace Medical Association advocates a uniform international policy on mandatory reporting of aircrew and aviation-related support personnel with psychiatric, psychological, behavioral and/or medical issues that pose a significant risk to public safety.**

Thank you for your kind consideration of this important effort to enhance the safety of global aviation operations. Please feel free to contact the Aerospace Medical Association at (703) 739-2240 x105 if we can be of assistance.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey C. Sventek, MS, CAsP, FAsMA, FRaES
Executive Director

CC: Dr. Michael Berry, FAA Federal Air Surgeon

References

1. (https://www.bea.aero/uploads/tx_elydbrapports/BEA2015-0125.en-LR.pdf)
2. Regarding Pilot Mental Health: The Aerospace Medical Association formed a working group on pilot mental health in 2012. This group produced a Commentary, published in *Aviation, Space and Environmental Medicine* (2012; 83(12):1184-1185). The recommendations from this commentary were updated in 2015 and posted on the AsMA website: <https://www.asma.org/asma/media/AsMA/pdf-policy/2015/AsMA-Pilot-Mental-Health-Working-Group-Recommendations-September-2015.pdf>.