



FEDERATION OF INDIAN PILOTS

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11th September 2021

To,
Shri Arun Kumar, IAS
Director General of Civil Aviation
Office of Director General of Civil Aviation,
Aurobindo Marg, opp. Safdarjung Airport,
New Delhi, Delhi 110003

Sub: Secondary Flight Deck Barriers to mitigate enhanced security threats

Dear Sir,

Today, the 11th of September, marks the anniversary of a series of infamous terror attacks in the USA due to which the entire approach to aviation security underwent a paradigm shift.

While the most notable outcome of the same was the introduction of reinforced cockpit entry doors, the consistent rise of disruptive passenger incidents and the recent geopolitical developments in the Afghan-Pak region have made it imperative to revisit the issue from a national security perspective.

The use of current inflight practices i.e., reliance on a reinforced flight deck door, and supplementary crew procedures, does not provide a complete solution for securing the flight deck and infact makes the cabin crew extremely vulnerable.

As India's foremost and largest professional body comprising more than 5000 members who are mostly airline pilots, we strongly recommend the mandatory installation of secondary flight deck barriers in Indian registered aircraft used in airline operations.

A secondary flight deck barrier is a lightweight device that is easy to deploy and stow, installed between the passenger cabin and the cockpit door that blocks access to the flight deck whenever the reinforced door is opened in flight for rest breaks, meals, etc. This will reduce the vulnerability of another 9/11 type attack in which an airliner is commandeered by terrorists, kept under control for some time, and then crashed into a specific target.

In addition, secondary barriers provide a secure buffer area before the cockpit door that gives the crew an opportunity to visually assess a perceived threat and reveal a perpetrator's hostile intent to crewmembers and sky marshals which would afford them the benefit of critical extra seconds to react.

A security measure is cost-effective when the benefit of the measure outweighs the cost of providing the security measures.

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It is reliably learnt that a secondary barrier reduces risk by up to 15% and break-even analysis shows that even if there were only one unlawful cockpit intrusion attack in a Thousand years (annual attack probability of 0.1%) secondary barriers would still be cost-effective.

In addition, from a security resource and commercial standpoint, secondary barriers may also reduce the requirement of sky marshals on many sectors thereby enabling the government to conserve and redeploy such security personnel for more critical sectors whilst enabling the aviation industry to release more revenue seats for sale over a long term.

Based on the above, we look forward to a suitable regulatory policy response.

Thanking you,

Yours Faithfully,

Capt. Surinder Mehta
President, FIP

Encl:

Image of Secondary Flight Deck Barrier

Copy to:

- 1) Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation, New Delhi
- 2) Director General, Bureau of Civil Aviation Security, New Delhi.
- 3) President, Confederation of Indian Industries (CII)

