



FEDERATION OF INDIAN PILOTS

FIP/MOCA/25-14

05 Dec 2025

Hon'ble Minister of Civil Aviation ,
Ministry of Civil Aviation,
Rajiv Gandhi Bhavan,
Aurobindo Marg,
New Delhi – 110003.

**SUBJECT: OBJECTIONS TO BLANKET DISPENSATIONS ON FDTL CAR 7/J/III
AWARDED TO INDIGO AIRLINES AGAINST THE COURT ORDER WHICH
CAUSED MASS SCALE PLANNED DISRUPTIONS IN THE COUNTRY**

Respected Sir,

1. Reference is made to the Zoom meeting held with pilot associations at 1500 hrs on 05 Dec 2025. Also, please refer to various FDTL dispensations granted on the FDTL CAR which jeopardizes safety.

2. Background and Context

2.1 **Federation of Indian Pilots (FIP)** represents the professional interests of Airline Pilots across India, advocating for aviation safety, regulatory compliance, and crew welfare. This is the largest body of pilots exceeding 5500-5700.

2.2. The ongoing disruptions in IndiGo operations — comprising widespread delays and mass cancellations observed across Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkatta, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, and other major/minor airports — have led to an unprecedented impact on the passengers and flight safety.

2.3. These disruptions have unfortunately been attempted to be wrongly portrayed as a consequence of the recent implementation of the Hon'ble Delhi High Court-directed Flight Duty Time Limit (FDTL) Regulations effective 01 July and 01 November 2025 respectively. The current disruptions **prove** that IndiGo does not possess the manpower capacity to operate this **expanded schedule** reliably under FDTL compliance even after committing in DGCA the compliance to the implementation of the new FDTL CAR on 01 July and 01 Nov 25. Since July 25 there were no cancellations or delays in the flights. After the implementation of second phase of FDTL CAR on 01 Nov 25 for which all airlines had earlier agreed for the implementation again a representation was made by Indigo and AI for dispensations and DGCA



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granted the attached dispensations. Further, DGCA approved **increased WINTER SCHEDULE of approx. 170 flights a day without verifying the availability of manpower and other resources.** Indigo had 755 cancellations on account of crew shortage in Nov and this was due the following:

- a) Stopping Recruitment of pilots to save finances.
- b) Extremely slow upgrades from P-2 to P1.
- c) Increased Winter Schedule.
- d) Poor Planning and Execution.
- e) Poor Crew Rostering practices.

2.4 On 28 Nov Airbus and EASA issued an Emergency Airworthiness Directive and approx. 6400 A-320 family a/c around the world were required to update the software by 2359 UTC on 29 Nov. 200 of Indigo a/c were affected for the software upgrade. This task was completed and again the airline did not have cancellations. Thereafter, from 02 Dec the number of cancellations by the airline kept increasing to more than 1200 flights on 05 Dec and this was primarily due to poor network and operational planning with the optimizer. The speech of the CEO of Indigo on 05 Dec is an indicator towards it.

2.5 FIP categorically submits that this is **not** a failure of FDTL implementation, but **a direct result of IndiGo's prolonged lean-manpower strategy and lack of operational preparedness** despite the two-year notice period for full compliance of the scientifically made CAR on FDTL by the DGCA.

3. Request: NO Dispensations to FDTL Norms

3.1. FDTL norms exist solely to prevent crew fatigue, enhance safety and are **non-negotiable**. We have reiterated our stand in the meeting in DGCA on 24 Nov and again in today's meeting. It is shocking that Indigo that **FDTL CAR has been held in abeyance for Indigo till 10 Feb 2026**. It may be pertinent to note that all other airlines in the country have complied to current FDTL CAR.

3.2. Granting any relaxation or waiver in FDTL would:

- a) Endanger passenger safety.
- b) Encourage non-compliance culture.



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- c) Undermine judicial mandate.
- d) Penalize responsible operators.

3.3. It is noted that certain operators are attempting post-facto exemptions through fleet expansion schedules which must be firmly rejected.

4. Cancellation of IndiGo's 7% Winter Schedule Expansion

4.1. Despite being aware of staffing inadequacy, IndiGo has aggressively expanded its Winter Schedule by 7% which was duly approved by DGCA. All summer and winter schedules are submitted well in advance to the DGCA and are based on the availability of the aircrews, infrastructure, slots, aircraft and other manpower. **Based on the facts the DGCA approves the summer/winter schedule.**

4.2. The current disruptions **prove** that IndiGo does not possess the manpower capacity to operate this expanded schedule reliably under FDTL compliance even after committing in DGCA the compliance to the implementation of the new FDTL CAR on 01 July and 01 Nov 25.

4.3. MoCA/DGCA must therefore:

- a) **Immediately cancel the approval** of IndiGo's **7%** winter schedule increase.
- b) **Stop any more inductions of new aircraft by Indigo.**
- c) Prevent similar expansions until adequate workforce is demonstrated.
- d) Scrutinize whether network planning and operational responsibility principles were followed.
- e) Proper rostering of pilots and network planning.
- f) Check availability of total manpower at every station as the present crisis has been shameful.
- g) Increased oversight by DGCA on weekly basis to check utilization of their crews. Spot checks to be done additionally.

4.4. The priority during the peak **fog and holiday season** must be operational certainty and not commercial expansion at the cost of safety and pax inconvenience.

5. Reallocation of Slots to Responsible Carriers

5.1. To protect passengers and ensure aviation reliability, it is recommended that:



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- a) DGCA may **reallocate IndiGo's unused/cancelled slots**.
- b) Immediately cap fares on all sectors by all airlines and Indigo should not be allowed to take any fresh bookings till the mess is sought out.
- c) Slots may be offered to airlines such as Air India, Akasa Air, and others.
- d) Operators must first demonstrate adequate pilot strength, infrastructure, slots and other manpower under then FDTL CAR and thereafter allows new induction of aircraft or increase in the schedules.

5.2. This approach ensures that available capacity nationwide is **utilized effectively** and **equitably**.

6. Concerns Regarding Management Practices

6.1. IndiGo's incorrect past decisions of mismanagement must be checked and investigated thoroughly. Some of the highlighted points of consideration are as follows:

- a) Extremely poor network planning.
- b) Extremely poor operational scheduling of crews.
- c) Hiring freeze.
- d) Restriction and buy-back of leave.
- e) Delayed training and upgrades
- f) Pay stagnation and morale erosion.
- g) Shortage of ground staff and check in counters.

6.2. We are concerned that **flight cancellations are being used as pressure tactics** to seek regulatory concessions which sets a dangerous precedent in the world and jeopardizes safety.

7. Conclusion

7.1. The current situation was entirely avoidable and stems from inefficiencies in **workforce planning** and not from FDTL norms intended to protect safety. In the world such a situation of pax inconvenience due to poor planning by airline is really unpardonable and involves **VERY STRICT ACTIONS by THE GOI so as to set examples for other airlines and avoid reoccurrences in future**.

7.2. FIP requests MoCA and DGCA to take decisive regulatory actions against IndiGo that prioritize:



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- a) Thoroughly investigate the fiasco created by IndiGo by Very High Level Enquiry made to public.
- b) Senior Management personnel to be prosecuted.
- c) Extremely high fines of thousands of crores so as to set an example so that passengers are not inconvenienced or harassed in future.
- d) No aircraft to be inducted in the airline without having sufficient crews, a/c, slots, infrastructure and other manpower.
- e) No increase in the schedule approvals until the airline has sufficient crews, a/c, slots, infrastructure and other manpower.**
- f) Cancellation of increased winter schedule of 7%.**
- g) Passenger Facilitation needs to be done by the airline in terms of refunds with penalties and accommodation reimbursements.
- h) Passenger Rights and harassment also needs compensation.
- i) Regulatory Compliance.
- j) Crew Welfare & Fatigue Management.

7.3. India's aviation leadership must set an example that safety and workforce sustainability cannot be sacrificed for short-term cost savings. It was unfortunate that rather than airline being summoned it was awarded suitably by giving dispensation of FDTL which is essential tool of Flight Safety.

We remain available for any further submission, data analysis, expert input, or participation in stakeholder consultations on fatigue-risk and safe-operations.

With Warmest Respects,

(Capt. CS Randhawa)
President
Federation Of Indian Pilots (FIP)

Encls: As Stated

Copy To:

1. PMO's Office, South Block, New Delhi-110011
2. Secretary Civil Aviation, MOCA, Rajiv Gandhi Bhavan, New Delhi-110003
3. DG, DGCA, Opp Safdarjung Airport, New Delhi-110003