



FEDERATION OF INDIAN PILOTS

FIP/DGCA/26-18

15 September 2026

To,

The Director General
Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA),
Sri Aurobindo Marg,
New Delhi - 110003

**URGENT NEED FOR FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF FDTL REGULATIONS,
STRENGTHENING OF FRMS OVERSIGHT AND INDEPENDENT
INVESTIGATION INTO RECENT PILOT FATALITIES**

Respected Sir,

- 1) Reference is made to our letter no's FIP/DGCA/26-11 and FIP/DGCA/26-15, dated 09 Jul 26 and 21 Aug 26 respectively. Also, refer email dated 23 Aug 26.
- 2) The Federation of Indian Pilots (FIP) wishes to draw the attention of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) to the growing concerns regarding pilot fatigue, pilot health, and aviation safety in India.
- 3) This representation is being submitted in continuation of our earlier communications regarding Flight Duty Time Limitations (FDTL), Fatigue Risk Management Systems (FRMS), pilot well-being, and the need for evidence-based fatigue management across Indian Aviation Operations.
- 4) Recent pilot fatalities occurring during operational duty cycles, training activities, and crew rest periods have intensified concerns within the pilot community regarding cumulative fatigue, circadian disruption, recovery opportunities, and long-term health consequences associated with current operational practices. Reports indicate that in April 2026, Capt. Tarundeep Singh of Air India died during a scheduled layover rest period in Bali, while Capt. Arjun Naidu of Akasa Air passed away during a training session in Bengaluru. These incidents led pilot associations and public representatives to call for urgent implementation of fatigue mitigation measures and **stricter enforcement of FDTL provisions**. There is a need to immediately **withdraw all FDTL dispensations** granted to airlines in the **interest of Air Safety**.



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5) Publicly Reported Indian Airline Pilot Deaths While on Duty / During Duty-Related Activities (2023–2026)

Date	Pilot	Airline	Circumstances
Nov 2023	Air India pilot (37 years old)	Air India	Died at Delhi Airport Terminal 3 during Boeing 777 training activities; suspected cardiac arrest.
Feb 2024*	Senior pilot travelling as operating crew member	Qatar Airways (Indian pilot reported in Indian media)	Became ill on a flight from Delhi to Doha and later died despite diversion to Dubai.
29 Apr 2026	Capt. Tarundeep Singh	Air India	Died of a heart attack during a scheduled layover/rest period in Bali after operating a Delhi–Denpasar flight.
30 Apr 2026	Capt. Arjun Naidu (44)	Akasa Air	Died after suffering a heart attack during a ground training session in Bengaluru. ALPA India described the death as occurring in the line of duty.
24 Feb 2026	Savraj Deep Singh (30)	Air ambulance operator	Killed when a medical evacuation aircraft crashed after departure from Ranchi.
11 Sep 2026	Capt. Sunny Asladekar	Air India	Found dead in a Delhi hotel during Boeing 787 conversion training and layover period. Cause of death under investigation; cardiac arrest suspected.

6) FIP wishes to clarify that no direct causal relationship between fatigue and these individual fatalities has been established through any official investigation. However, the occurrence of multiple untimely pilot deaths among relatively young and medically certified flight crew **warrants a comprehensive regulatory review of fatigue exposure, rostering practices, recovery opportunities, medical surveillance, and FRMS effectiveness.**



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- 7) The objective of **FDTL regulations** is not merely regulatory compliance but the prevention of **cumulative fatigue and the preservation of pilot fitness** for duty. The revised FDTL framework was specifically developed to provide enhanced rest opportunities, increase weekly rest provisions, reduce excessive fatigue exposure, and align Indian aviation with contemporary scientific understanding of fatigue risk. The DGCA has previously acknowledged that revised FDTL provisions include enhanced weekly rest requirements and reduced workload limitations.
- 8) FIP is concerned that repeated **operator-specific variations** and deferred implementation of certain provisions may reduce the effectiveness of the intended fatigue mitigation framework. Several industry stakeholders have similarly expressed concerns that temporary exemptions have become prolonged operational practices, potentially undermining the objectives of **Fatigue Management**.
- 9) International aviation experience consistently demonstrates that fatigue-related risks cannot be effectively controlled through prescriptive duty limitations alone. Modern safety systems require **robust Fatigue Risk Management Systems (FRMS)** supported by scientific data collection, confidential reporting, trend analysis, biomathematical assessment, and independent regulatory oversight.
- 10) **FIP respectfully submits the following observations:**
 - a) **Pilot fatigue** remains significantly under-reported due to concerns regarding roster disruption, operational pressures, and perceived career consequences.
 - b) **Existing fatigue** reporting mechanisms require greater transparency and stronger protection of reporting pilots.
 - c) There is **inadequate public availability** of fatigue-reporting statistics, fatigue-event investigations, and FRMS performance indicators.
 - d) Current **oversight mechanisms** focus primarily on regulatory compliance rather than demonstrated fatigue-risk outcomes.
 - e) Pilot health surveillance should include periodic analysis of fatigue-related medical trends, cardiovascular events, sleep disorders, and operational stress indicators.
 - f) **Fatigue** should be addressed as a systemic aviation safety issue rather than solely as an individual wellness concern.
- 11) In view of the above, FIP respectfully **recommends:**
 - a) Immediate and uniform implementation of all approved FDTL provisions across Indian operators without further dilution except where safety-based evidence



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justifies a temporary variation.

- b) Establishment of a **DGCA-led National FRMS Oversight Programme** involving regulators, airlines, pilot associations, medical specialists, sleep scientists, and human factors experts.
 - c) **Mandatory quarterly submission by Operators of:**
 - Fatigue reports received;
 - Fatigue reports accepted and rejected;
 - Corrective actions taken;
 - FRMS performance indicators;
 - Fatigue-related operational occurrences.
 - d) **Annual publication** of anonymized industry fatigue statistics by DGCA to facilitate transparent safety monitoring.
 - e) **Independent scientific review** of pilot health trends from 2023–2026, including cardiovascular events, sudden incapacitation cases, and duty-cycle-related health occurrences.
 - f) **Review of roster construction practices**, standby utilization, reserve duty allocation, ultra-long-range operations, and circadian disruption exposure.
 - g) Formal participation of recognized pilot representative bodies, including FIP, in all future deliberations concerning **FDTL, FRMS, pilot fatigue, and aviation safety policy**.
 - h) **Development of a national aviation fatigue research programme** in partnership with medical institutions and aviation universities.
12. FIP believes that aviation safety is best served through proactive intervention rather than reactive response following accidents or serious incidents. Fatigue rarely manifests as a single identifiable event; rather, it develops cumulatively through repeated exposure to operational stressors, circadian disruption, inadequate recovery, and organizational pressures.
13. The recent pilot fatalities, irrespective of their eventual medical findings, should serve as an opportunity for the Indian aviation system to strengthen **fatigue-risk governance**, improve pilot health monitoring, and reinforce the foundational principle that safety must remain the overriding consideration in Civil Aviation.



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14. The Federation of Indian Pilots remains available to assist DGCA through technical inputs, operational experience, fatigue-related data, and participation in stakeholder consultations aimed at enhancing aviation safety in India.

Yours faithfully,

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

Encls:

1. FIP/DGCA/26-11 dated 09 Jul 26.
2. FIP/DGCA/26-15 dated 21 Aug 26.
3. Email Copy dated 23 Aug 2026.

Copy to:

1. Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation, Rajiv Gandhi Bhavan, New Delhi-110003.
2. Hon'ble Minister of Civil Aviation, Rajiv Gandhi Bhavan, New Delhi-110003.
3. Chairman, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture, Rajya Sabha Secretariat, New Delhi.
4. Chairman Public Accounts Committee, Lok Sabha Secretariat, New Delhi.
5. Principal Secretary, PMO Office, Seva Teerth, South Block, New Delhi-110011.
6. DG, AAIB, Udaan Bhavan, New Delhi-110003.