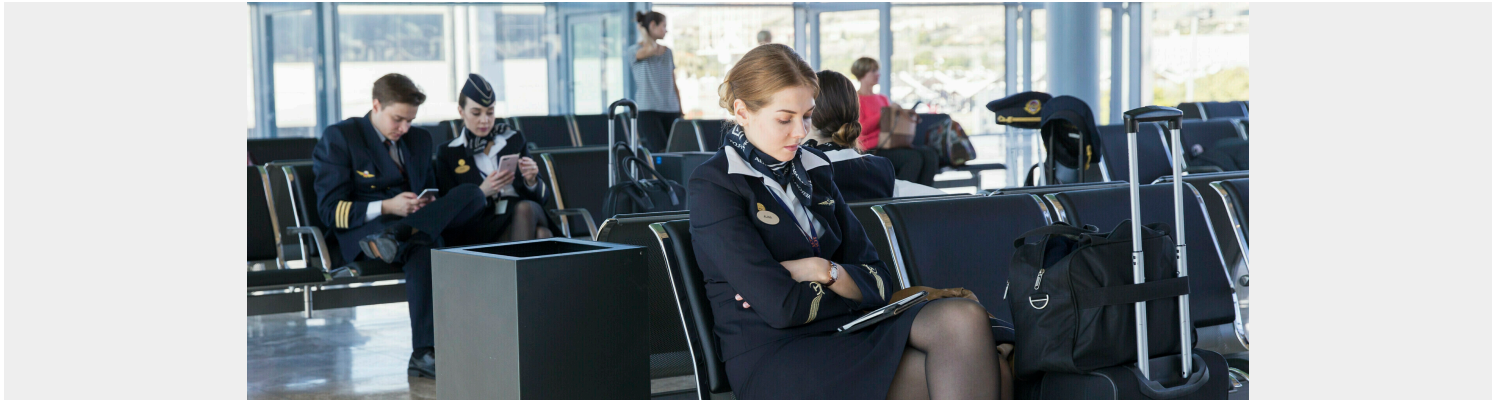


# TOP THREE TROUBLES IN THE CABIN

*Posted on 16.12.2022 by Jennifer Curran*



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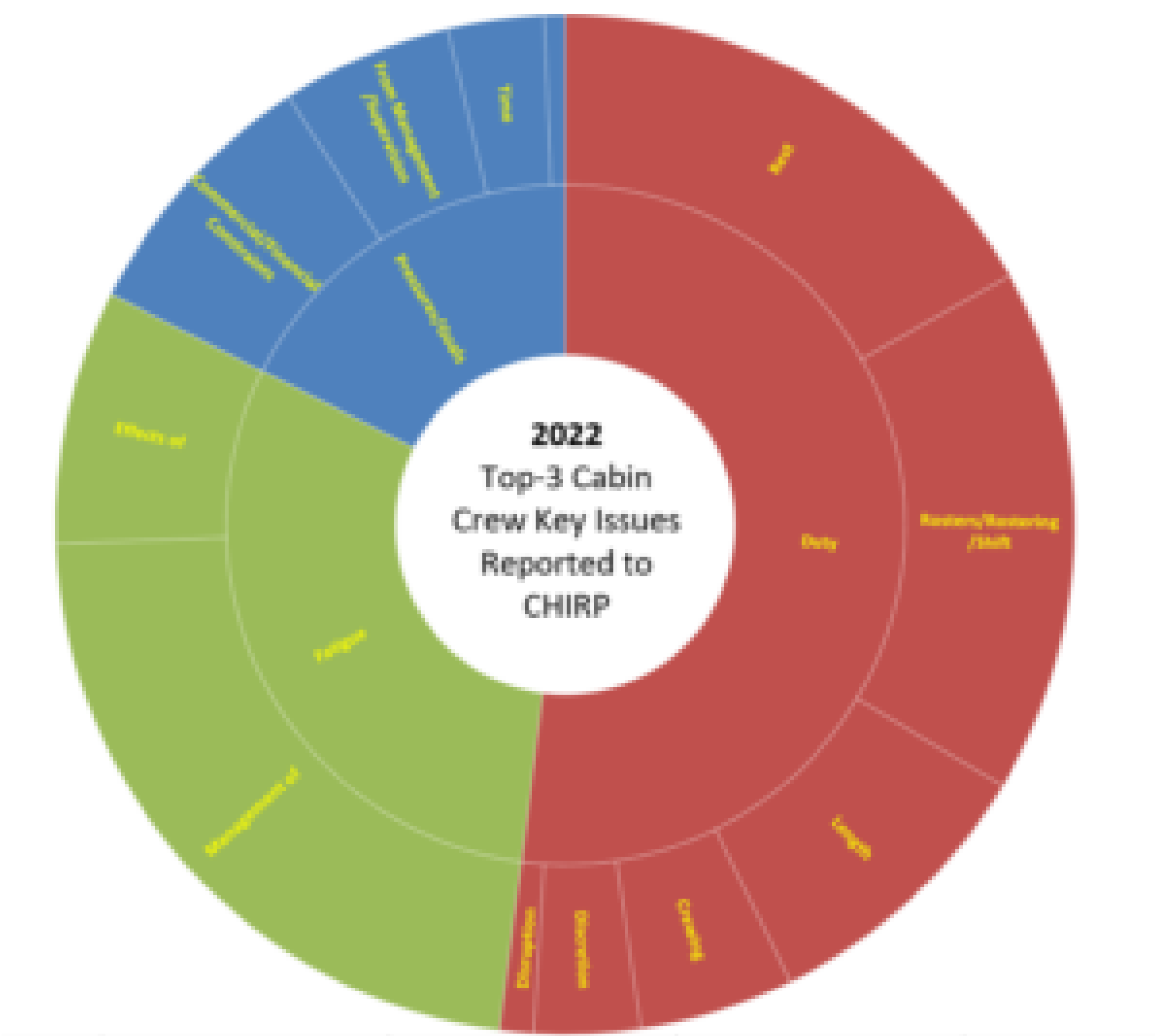
## Duty, fatigue and pressures/goals are main issues out of 367 reports

**The aviation industry, like many other industries, is still seeing resourcing challenges. Summer schedules were packed with customers making the most of the (almost) unrestricted worldwide travel and cabin crew had to adapt back to busy flying schedules whilst life in general was also getting back into full swing. As a member of cabin crew, it is your responsibility to ensure that you report for duty sufficiently rested and fit (alert) to operate your assigned duty. If you are reporting for a duty, you are stating you are fit to operate; if you don't feel able to operate or feel unwell, you should not report as fit and should follow company procedures such as speaking to a manager.**

CHIRP received 367 confidential cabin crew reports during the last 12 months vs 142 during the same period the year before, 32% of these reports were not reported internally. Reporting internally helps an operator identify trends and mitigate a safety concern that could be occurring. CHIRP are completely independent from the operators, this means that operators do not have access to our reports or data for use during their analysis and identifying specific trends. This is why it is important, if you are comfortable in doing so, that you report your safety concerns to your

operator as well as to CHIRP.

Every report that CHIRP receives is triaged and coded, the coding of each report allows for data to be extracted from all of the reports. The top 3 cabin crew key issues reported to CHIRP in 2022 were Duty, Fatigue and Pressures/Goals. These key issues can be further sub-divided into lower level key issues such as those shown in the outer ring of the illustration below.



CHIRP has very robust processes to ensure confidentiality, but we do understand that, for any number of reasons, it may not be an easy decision to submit a report. Once a report has been submitted to CHIRP, we issue a holding response to acknowledge receipt and a formal response is then sent by the most appropriate CHIRP team member. The formal response very often contains specific questions, thereby requiring the reporter to commit more time in order to respond. Sadly, some reporters never reply, it may be that the reporter is just relieved to have got something off their chest, or they simply did not envisage further questions. CHIRP does not contact any other organisations, including your operator, without receiving permission from you, the reporter. Therefore, without responding to our additional questions, reports cannot proceed to a conclusion. This also means that reports cannot be published for the benefit of others and possibly more concerning, could remain a safety issue.

Reports relating to company sickness/absence policies are increasing within CHIRP reporting, with some reporters commenting that they are feeling pressured to operate. Although sickness/absence policies themselves are not a direct safety issue, requirements of the policy may contribute to crew reporting for duty when they are not fit to operate. Other reasons can also be personal pressures to operate, perhaps due to loss of flight pay if a crew member doesn't fly and so the individual feels that they must fly when not fit to do so. The implications of operating as crew when unfit to do so are clear safety concerns. Noting that safety may be being compromised by crews feeling pressured to operate when they are unfit to do so, whatever the reason for this, CHIRP has highlighted its concerns to the UK Civil Aviation Authority. The UK Flight Safety Committee are leading on a piece of work about attendance management within the industry and the CAA are supporting on that. In addition the CAA are doing some wider work with industry on 'Fitness to fly' which we will be able to update on next year. But for now, the important message is that you, as a crew member, must ensure that you only report for duty when fit to do so.

## Commander's Discretion

CHIRP is also seeing an increase in cabin crew reports related to Commander's Discretion. Commander's discretion may be used to modify the limits on the maximum daily FDP (basic or with extension due to in-flight rest), duty and rest periods in the case of **unforeseen circumstances** in flight operations beyond the operator's control, which **start at or after the reporting time**.

Regarding the use of discretion, [UK Retained Regulations \(EU\)965/2012 AMC1 ORO.FTL.2059\(f\)](#) comments on the "...shared responsibility of management, flight and cabin crew..." and that consideration should be taken of "individual conditions of affected crew members...". Regulation does not state how the Captain should consult their crew or whether this should be conducted face-to-face, individually or as a whole crew.

It is the responsibility of *each* crew member to know the maximum FDP that they can operate and they should ensure that the Captain is aware if they think they will exceed this. Also, if any members

of the crew have been called from standby to operate the duty, this information should be relayed to the Captain because this also might affect whether they can continue the duty into discretion.

When calculating your maximum daily hours, the **'Flight duty period' (FDP)** means a period that commences when a crew member is required to report for duty, which includes a sector or a series of sectors, and finishes when the aircraft finally comes to rest and the engines are shut down, at the end of the last sector on which the crew member acts as an operating crew member.

This is different to your **'Duty period'** which means a period which starts when a crew member is required by an operator to report for or to commence a duty and ends when that person is free of all duties, including post-flight duties.

Ultimately, the decision to utilise Commander's Discretion is not made collectively, it is the Captain who decides whether to use discretion or not, having consulted with all the other crew members to note their personal circumstances, to ensure that the flight can be made safely. The consultation could be via the SCCM and not a separate discussion amongst each crew member.

As with any duty, even if it is 'legal' you might still suffer from the effects of tiredness and potentially fatigue. There is a responsibility on each cabin crew member to ensure that should they be suffering from the effects of fatigue, that they report this to their operator.



