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Posted on 27.03.2024 by Jennifer Curran

Category: [Cabin Crew](#)

Report Title Fatigue induced sleep whilst manning door

Initial Report

I operated two busy and long sectors. On outbound flight; arrived for duty 2 hours before report time. Commute to work was by car, taking approx. 1hr 30mins. After our flight briefing, we made our way to the gate but were informed aircraft was still disembarking pax and our crew boarding would be delayed by 1hr due to the late arrival of the aircraft. Arrived on time and got to the hotel at around 5pm local. Slept down route between 9pm and 1am local and could not gain more sleep despite efforts. I remained in my hotel room down route due to tiredness and the need to be rested and fit for duty on the return flight. However, on wake-up call, I felt like I had brain fog due to fatigue from poor sleep gained. I also felt anxiety at having to perform crew duty on another busy long sector flight, I did not feel adequately rested.

We left the hotel the next day at 3pm local. My position involved being responsible for a door on both sectors, we operated with one crew member less than the full-service complement. Both sectors were passenger flights with 80-95% pax load. On both sectors I had over 2 hours inflight rest taken in a bunk, both flights turbulent and no sleep gained. No other break periods taken due to busy pax services and demands.

On arrival back to UK airspace we were in a hold approach and I was sat on my jump seat for an extended period. I found myself fighting to not fall asleep. After landing we were stuck on the tarmac for 30 minutes due to a plane blocking our entry to the gate. During this wait I fell asleep on my jump seat, I estimate this was for a few minutes. My fellow crew members noticed and woke me up. This is the first time I have fallen asleep whilst manning a door in my 15+yrs career. It has shocked and concerned me in relation to failing in my duties around safety and security.

I believe and express in these reports that now pax numbers have increased since the pandemic, the airline is failing in a duty of care to ensure I am able to adequately rest and sleep. I do not feel the time given down route is sufficient. I report this every time. I have also included my anxiety around this and the increased demands this is having on my mental and physical health over time. I have previously stood myself down (once) citing cumulative fatigue after flights of this nature. On my return to duty the airline, whilst having to be supportive and non-punitive, have openly questioned me on my knowledge around my understanding of tiredness compared to fatigue. This induced a fear factor in myself making me less likely to call in unfit for duty due to fatigue on future

flights. On reflection, I did not feel fit for duty on this return sector but feared standing myself down and impacting on the operation of the flight leaving them short of crew. I had a fear of reprisals from the company from this.

Comment

CHIRP frequently receives reports regarding fatigue and we empathise with the crew as some duties can be very tiring. We are all unique and resting methods before a flight, down route and post flight will differ from crew member to crew member. It is the crew member's responsibility to make best use of opportunities and facilities provided for rest, it is also their responsibility to plan and use rest periods properly to minimise fatigue. Cabin crew should not be operating when they are unfit to do so.

Despite a crew member reporting for duty well rested, this report discusses common scenarios in which a crew member may get tired/fatigued whilst on duty.

If you do find yourself feeling tired onboard, simple activities such as taking a walk through the cabin, having something to eat, or sparking up a conversation with a passenger or colleague may help. Some people believe that a strong coffee or sweet food/drink can assist.

There is no universal definition of tiredness/fatigue, and its experience and perception are subjective. Please remember to report any incidents of fatigue back to your company, a Just Culture should promote continuous learning, including lessons learnt from fatigue reporting and crew should not feel that they are unable to report fatigue or any other safety concerns internally. If crew don't report their fatigue (or any other safety concerns) then the data won't be there to highlight any concerns and provide the company with accurate information when reviewing rosters, routes and schedules.



