

FC5223/FC5229

Posted on 19.04.2023 by Steve Forward

Category: [Flight Crew \(Commercial\)](#)

Report Title Punitive and unsafe sickness policy

Initial Report

The CHIRP Comments below refer to a number of reports about sickness policy.

Comment

An airline recently changed its sickness policy for both flight and cabin crew such that if they reported sick even for one day their salary was reduced by salary/260 for each day of sickness (there being 260 days reckoned available for work in any 12-month period). This was compounded by the fact that the salary represented approximately 50% of their pay for the lost day with the other element (variable pay) also being lost completely. As a result, crews were being induced to fly when they were unfit to do so due to financial pressures despite legally being required not to operate. For periods of sickness up to 3 days, no pay was received; Statutory Sick Pay (£19.87 per day) was then being paid from the 4th day onwards.

CHIRP received a number of reports about this issue which we could not publish due to problems disidentifying the reporters. As a result, we engaged with the CAA to ask them to review the company's absence policies and their suitability in respect of sickness payments. We're pleased to report that, following this engagement with the company, the Airline have since changed these financial arrangements within their absence management policy. The safety implications of the previous financial measures were obvious and we are grateful to the CAA for taking up the case on our behalf, and for the company in subsequently understanding the dilemma to which it was placing its workforce. This absolutely highlights the value of reporting; without having done so it is unlikely that anything would have changed until circumstances conspired to bring about a serious incident involving someone who was unfit to operate.



