

FC5258

Posted on 31.10.2023 by Steve Forward

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

Report Title Call from standby

Initial Report

I would like to seek advice regarding FTLs and standby duties. My first question is regarding early morning shifts. I set my alarm at night based on the flight I'm doing the following morning. Recently I have woken up to a change of duty and now rostered to operate an earlier flight which was changed as I was asleep. Sometimes this is 20/30 mins earlier than my original report. This immediately then makes me rush getting ready. Can you clarify if changing duties like this and giving crew earlier report times which they are not aware of until the wake up is legal? Secondly, regarding early standbys, often our employer will not call us but rather just send a text if we are required to operate. I then find myself having to wake up on my standby to check my iPad to see if I have any notifications. Whereas if they called, I could remain asleep and be woken up with my phone going off. Can you confirm if sending notifications are an acceptable method of being called off standby when it is assumed that the person will be asleep?

Comment

With regard to changing report times during sleep periods, provided that the change is within a reasonable period then it's very much down to the circumstances pertaining at the time. If the change is during the time that a person would reasonably be expected to be awake anyway (90mins prior to their original report for example) then the change is realistic (depending on the person's individual FTL and previous duties etc) but companies should accept that the later they leave the change, or the later a person might realistically discover the change, will affect their ability to report in a timely manner, especially depending on what their commute situation might be. If you do not feel that you can report for the earlier duty in a reasonable state of preparedness then the duty should be declined as not being feasible.

As for how changes are notified, it appears that there is no formal guidance for how crews should be called from Standby; when the regulations were devised, the assumption was probably that it would be a phone call but things have moved on since then with the introduction of other messaging means. Although a pre-warning notification of a duty by text/iPad/tablet is probably ok, it is not a realistic way of actually calling people from Standby if they are required for an early duty because it implies that crews will be awake and monitoring their device rather than being woken or

alerted by a physical phone call that must be answered to acknowledge the call-out. If the duty was for later in the day and the crew member was not required to read the message until normal awake periods then that would also probably be viable, but clear guidance needs to be given as to what methods of notification will be made, and when crews are required to be monitoring messaging systems. Even so, text messages can be notoriously delayed in receipt, sometimes not arrive at all, and can be easily missed if the device is set to silent or in intermittent signal coverage so their use is fraught with problems compared to a physical call and acknowledgment by phone. If messages are used for call outs then unless ground-rules are set for when devices should be checked, crews could justifiably claim to be awake from the start of the standby period due to the need to monitor their devices and this is not a sensible use of time. Whilst it may be realistic if the standby period starts in normal awake hours, if the standby starts in the normal sleeping period then companies could be penalising themselves because crews could then invoke the 18-hr 'rule' for combined standby/FDP awake time.



