

# FC5327

Posted on 22.04.2024 by Steve Forward

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

**Report Title** Interpretation of FTLs

## Initial Report

I filed a Fatigue Report because the OM-A minimum Table 6 Recovery was not allocated between a rotation crossing 4 or more Time Zones and simulator duties. The report was closed and I was advised that simulators could be scheduled in rest periods because they were ground duties to which FTLs do not apply. I believe this is incorrect under the definition of "Duty" from our OM-A Chapter 7:

*"Duty" means any task that a crew member performs for the operator, including flight duty, administrative work, giving or receiving training and checking, positioning, and some elements of standby;"*

The operator is already rostering close to minimum Table 6 Recovery Days and this interpretation is further limiting crews' recovery opportunities.

The crux of my concern is not the Table 6 recovery periods themselves, but more their interactions with other duties. My understanding is that Table 6 recovery must be "free of all duties" but the response to my Fatigue Report was that I could be rostered a sim duty during Table 6 Recovery which I would suggest is not within the definitions of Recovery, Rest and Duty.

## Comment

The report contained specifics that required interpretation within the company FRMS but the key issue was whether rest should be considered as rest, or whether the company could schedule simulators within that 'rest period'. The CAA comments are clear in that no duties should be rostered until the required number of local nights have been achieved so that peoples' body clocks can acclimatise to local time. Philosophically, companies are at risk of undermining the value and quality of the simulator task and any associated recurrent training if they schedule simulators within rest periods because the point of rest periods is to ensure that crews are sufficiently recovered from previous flight duties to operate effectively. By definition, they would not be considered 'sufficiently recovered' to fly until the end of the rest period and so scheduling a simulator in a rest period thereby asks crews to conduct simulated flight operations when not rested. Since they are not 'rested' how can crews be expected to perform to the required 'flying'

standard in the simulator? Taken to extremis, people are in the simulator to demonstrate their flying ability or be trained and so, what if a simulator assessment was failed by a crew member who was not properly rested? Arguably, simulator flights are more demanding than normal flying due to, for example, the injection of emergencies and poor-weather conditions and so they demand even greater levels of alertness and ability to perform.

The fundamental question is whether 'rest periods' should be free of all duties including simulators (see ORO.FTL.105 para (21) definition below) or are simply a device to ensure that crews have sufficient local nights in bed to recover from flying rosters and so crews can be allocated duties when not in bed. The CAA's answer is unequivocally that rest periods should be free of all duties until the required number of local nights has been achieved.

As background context, relevant definitions from [ORO.FTL.105](#) are below. Note that the definition of 'rest period' at (21) makes no distinction between flying and ground duties, and requires that the 'rest period' should be "...*free of all duties...*", with 'duty' defined at (10) as "...*any task...*".

(10) 'duty' means any task that a crew member performs for the operator, including flight duty, administrative work, giving or receiving training and checking, positioning, and some elements of standby;

(11) 'duty period' 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 duty;

(21) 'rest period' means a continuous, uninterrupted and defined period of time, following duty or prior to duty, during which a crew member is free of all duties, standby and reserve;

(22) 'rotation' is a duty or a series of duties, including at least one flight duty, and rest periods out of home base, starting at home base and ending when returning to home base for a rest period where the operator is no longer responsible for the accommodation of the crew member;

[ORO.FTL.235](#) covers rest periods, specifying at its para (d):

(d) Recurrent extended recovery rest periods Flight time specification schemes shall specify recurrent extended recovery rest periods to compensate for cumulative fatigue. The minimum recurrent extended recovery rest period shall be 36 hours, including 2 local nights, and in any case the time between the end of one recurrent extended recovery rest period and the start of the next extended recovery rest period shall not be more than 168 hours. The recurrent extended recovery rest period shall be increased to 2 local days twice every month.

[CS FTL.1.235](#) also covers rest periods with respect to time zone differences and this is the source of 'Table 6' in the company OM-A as referred to by the reporter. Its para (b) states:

**(b) Time zone differences**

(1) For the purpose of ORO.FTL.235(e)(1), 'rotation' is a series of duties, including at least one flight duty, and rest period out of home base, starting at home base and ending when returning to home base for a rest period where the operator is no longer responsible for the accommodation of the crew member.

(2) The operator monitors rotations and combinations of rotations in terms of their effect on crew member fatigue, and adapts the rosters as necessary.

(3) Time zone differences are compensated by additional rest, as follows:

(i) At home base, if a rotation involves a 4 hour time difference or more, the minimum rest is as specified in the following table.

Minimum local nights of rest at home base to compensate for time zone differences

Maximum time difference (h) between reference time and local time where a crew member rests during a rotation	Time elapsed (h) since reporting for the first FDP in a rotation involving at least 4 hour time difference to the reference time			
	< 48	48 – 71:59	72 – 95:59	≥96
≤6	2	2	3	3
≤9	2	3	3	4
≤12	2	3	4	5

(ii) Away from home base, if an FDP involves a 4-hour time difference or more, the minimum rest following that FDP is at least as long as the preceding duty period, or 14 hours, whichever is greater. By way of derogation from point (b)(3)(i) and only once between 2 recurrent extended recovery rest periods as specified in ORO.FTL.235(d), the minimum rest provided under this point (b)(3)(ii) may also apply to home base if the operator provides suitable accommodation to the crew member.

(4) In case of an Eastward-Westward or Westward-Eastward transition, at least 3 local nights of rest at home base are provided between alternating rotations.



