

Subject: Minimum Cockpit Occupancy**Revision:**

This SIB revises EASA SIB 2016-09 dated 21 July 2016.

Ref. Publications:

- Commission Regulation (EU) [965/2012](#) of 5 October 2012.
- Dutch Safety Board [Kwartaalrapportage Luchtvaart October-December 2012](#); file number 22012112 dated 21 January 2013.
- Republic of Namibia Ministry of Works And Transport, Directorate of Aircraft Accident Investigation, Civil Aircraft Accident Report [ACCID/112913/1-12](#) dated 30 March 2016.
- Bureau d'enquêtes et d'analyses pour la sécurité de l'aviation civile Final Report [BEA2015-0125](#) dated 13 March 2016.
- Comisión de Investigación de Accidentes e Incidentes de Aviación Civil Technical Report [IN-001/2024](#) dated 27 November 2024.

Applicability:

Commercial air transport (CAT) operators of large aeroplanes equipped with a secure flight crew compartment door.¹

Description:

Over the past fifteen years, several significant occurrences associated with single-pilot occupancy of the flight crew compartment have occurred, including the Transavia incident² (2012), the LAM Mozambique Airlines accident³ (2013), the Germanwings accident⁴ (2015), and the Lufthansa incident⁵ (2024). However, it must be noted that the overall likelihood of pilot incapacitation or intentional acts remains very low. Existing safeguards, including robust medical certification, ongoing psychological support, including peer support programmes, as well as Just Culture frameworks, effectively address risk at its source.

¹ As mandated by ORO.SEC.100 of Annex III to Commission Regulation (EU) No. 965/2012.

² [Kwartaalrapportage Luchtvaart October-December 2012](#)

³ [ACCID/112913/1-12](#)

⁴ [BEA2015-0125](#)

⁵ [IN-001/2024](#)

The action undertaken at EU level in response to the Germanwings accident focused on reinforcing the barriers on mental health and psychological fitness of pilots. However, events in which the remaining pilot experienced an incapacitation episode show that single-piloting periods can result in prolonged unmonitored flight and potential loss of aircraft control, even with modern avionics.

Current operational experience, safety data, and feedback from several aviation authorities and air operators with two-person cockpit policies implemented indicate that such policies have not introduced safety risks that outweigh the risk of a flight crew member locked out of the cockpit. Evidence from both mandatory-policy regions (USA, China, Japan, etc.) and from EU operators that have voluntarily adopted these policies, demonstrates that the implementation of such policies is effective when complemented by appropriate crew selection, training, and procedural safeguards.

In addition, an EU-funded and EASA-implemented research project on the impact of aviation security measures on safety⁶ identified that reinforced cockpit doors, while essential for preventing unlawful interference, may introduce specific safety risks in certain scenarios, particularly in cases of pilot incapacitation. The findings indicated that these risks can be mitigated through the application of procedural safeguards, such as ensuring two-person occupancy of the flight crew compartment.

Originally, EASA issued SIB 2015-04, recommending the presence of two authorised persons in the flight crew compartment at all times. After its publication, EASA sought feedback from affected stakeholders on the implementation of the SIB and decided to revise its content. Consequently, that SIB was superseded by SIB 2016-09, recommending operators to conduct safety and security risk evaluations and decide whether to implement the two authorised persons procedure.

Since SIB 2016-09 was issued, EASA decided to reinstate the recommendation to maintain a two-authorised persons cockpit occupancy policy at all times as the preferred approach. This measure aims to ensure that the incapacitation of a flight crew member, when left alone in the cockpit, does not lead to a potential loss of aircraft control.

For the reason described above, this SIB is revised accordingly. This SIB is revised in its entirety, and no revision bars are used.

At this time, the safety concern described in this SIB does not warrant the issuance of a Safety Directive (SD) under Commission Regulation (EU) [965/2012](#), Annex II, ARO.GEN.135.

Recommendation(s):

CAT.OP.MPA.210 of Regulation (EU) No 965/2012 stipulates that a pilot may not leave the flight crew compartment during take-off and landing. Furthermore, during all other phases of the flight, flight crew members required to be on duty in the flight crew compartment shall remain at the assigned station, unless absence is necessary for the performance of duties in connection with the operations or for physiological needs, provided at least one suitably qualified pilot remains at the controls of the aircraft at all times.

⁶ [Impact of Security Measures on Safety | EASA](#)

This is information only. Recommendations are not mandatory.



EASA recommends that:

Operators implement procedures to ensure that at least two authorised persons are present in the flight crew compartment during flight, with at least one pilot remaining at the controls, in accordance with CAT.OP.MPA.210 of Regulation (EU) No 965/2012.

When adopting the two authorised persons procedure, operators should ensure that:

1. The responsibilities of the authorised person, other than the operating pilot, in the flight crew compartment are clearly defined, and should include at least:
 - a. the operation of the secure door until the flight crew member who left the compartment returns;
 - b. prevention of interference or distractions of the operating pilot and the operation of flight deck switches and controls;
 - c. when and how to notify if any abnormal or emergency arises (from the cockpit to cabin (e.g. pilot incapacitation) and from cabin to cockpit (e.g. cabin fire)).
2. Only suitably qualified flight crew members are allowed to sit in a pilot seat.
3. Safety and security procedures are established for his/her presence in the cockpit (e.g. communication procedures between flight crew and cabin crew, operation of cockpit door, specific procedure for entry and exit, use of a seat other than a flight crew seat⁷, use of oxygen masks, etc.):
 - a. Operators should establish clear procedures to minimise the time the flight crew compartment door remains open, including advance notification of physiological breaks and protocols for a swift crew transition into and out of the cockpit.
 - b. Procedures should define how the cabin crew workload is managed when pilots request an authorised person to enter the flight crew compartment during their temporary absence from the flight crew compartment.
 - c. Entry procedures should specify the use of the flight crew compartment access protocol, including identification, verification and the use of the other-than-pilot-seat or appropriate positioning to avoid inadvertent control inputs.
4. Procedures and training programme are detailed in the Operations Manual and, when relevant, the related security reference documents.
5. Training needs are addressed and identified as appropriate. As a minimum:
 - a. For the person authorised to enter the cockpit:
 - i. When a cabin crew member is assigned to this duty, the cabin crew member should receive Crew Resource Management (CRM) training focusing on the cockpit environment, communication, distraction avoidance, and emergency procedures. It can be integrated during the combined CRM or conducted separately.

⁷ Other than a pilot seat also include observer seats.

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- ii. Training should address cockpit oxygen mask and emergency equipment familiarisation, designated seat(s) and response to obvious pilot incapacitation.
 - b. All pilots should receive instruction on the two authorised persons procedure, including communication and coordination.
 - c. Training records should be maintained.
6. Safety risks stemming from the authorised person leaving the passenger cabin are assessed and mitigated, if necessary (e.g. cabin safety impacts, passenger management, simultaneous emergencies, etc.).
7. The operator should establish:
- a. Criteria for situations in which a pilot should not leave the cockpit (e.g., compulsory reporting points, ATC transfers, clearance limits, etc.).
 - b. Procedure for cockpit setup when there is only one remaining pilot in the cockpit (e.g. use of headsets, use of pilot seat belt with upper torso restraint system⁸, level of automation, like autopilot and auto-thrust, etc.).
8. The authorised person may be:
- a. A cabin crew member with adequate airline experience⁹. Senior cabin crew should not be assigned to this duty to preserve cabin management in case of emergencies.
 - b. Other qualified personnel: A third pilot, flight engineer, supernumerary crew, air marshal, or authorised load master, etc., where appropriate and adequately trained.

The recommendation does not apply:

- during ground operations, taxi, towing, de-icing, etc.
- to ferry flights or maintenance check flights.
- to aircraft with only flight crew seats in the cockpit¹⁰.
- to operations conducted with less than two cabin crew members.

Competent Authorities should ensure that the content of this SIB is taken into account by operators under their oversight.

When reviewing the procedures for admission to the flight crew compartment¹¹, the competent authority may accept that the recommendation of ‘two authorised persons at all times’ is not implemented, provided that the operator demonstrates an equivalent level of safety by means of a documented risk assessment and associated mitigating measures.

Such risk assessment should consider the operational context, the robustness of flight crew compartment entry/exit procedures, the level of cockpit automation and resilience to unintended

⁸ CAT.IDE.A.205 Annex IV Regulation (EU) 965/2012.

⁹ Any cabin crew trained as such and having more than 12 months operational experience as cabin crew with the operator could qualify as an authorised person. This permits multiple cabin crew members to act as authorised persons for a flight

¹⁰ A cockpit without a jump seat/observer seat.

¹¹ CAT.GEN.MPA.135 Annex IV Regulation (EU) 965/2012

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flight control inputs, as well as any additional mitigations deemed relevant by the operator and acceptable to the competent authority.

Contact(s):

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