



ECA Piloting
Safety
European Cockpit Association



PRESS RELEASE

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Global Pilot Leaders Unite to Keep Two Pilots on the Flight Deck

IFALPA, ECA, ALPA Join Forces against a new threat to safety –
Reduced Crew Operations

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MONTREAL, BRUSSELS, WASHINGTON, D.C. —Leaders of the world’s largest pilot organizations today announced a global coalition to prevent airlines and manufacturers from pushing ahead with plans to remove pilots from the flight deck, a profit-driven scheme that poses a significant safety risk. Pilot representatives from the International Federation of Air Line Pilots’ Associations (IFALPA), the European Cockpit Association (ECA), and Air Line Pilots Association, Int’l (ALPA) vowed to take collective action to protect the flying public and counter an aggressive corporate-led lobbying campaign targeting regulators around the world, including the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

“Whether you depart from New York, San Francisco, or Atlanta bound for London, Paris, or Tokyo, a crew of at least two qualified, experienced, trained, and rested airline pilots is at the controls on the flight deck of your plane. Every aspect of your flight—the aircraft, its systems, the regulations, and standards that apply to the flight, and the procedures that pilots follow—is deliberately designed for a team working together on the flight deck,” [wrote ALPA President Capt. Jason Ambrosi, IFALPA President Capt. Jack Netskar, and ECA President Capt. Otjan de Bruijn in a recent opinion piece.](#)

A 2017 [study by NASA and the Federal Aviation Administration](#) identified unacceptable safety risks posed by single-pilot flight operations, especially during abnormal events and emergencies. Yet, some airlines and aircraft manufacturers are [currently pressuring international aviation bodies](#) to put profits first and introduce an unacceptable level of safety risk to commercial aviation. Professional pilots embrace and support new technology on the flight deck that enhances safety; however, they unanimously agree that removing skilled aviators from the flight deck—so-called reduced-crew operations—will increase risk and compromise safety.

Despite developments in automation and improved technologies on the flight deck, two pilots at the controls remain the most important safety features of an aircraft. Pilots eliminate system-failure scenarios and act as a critical onboard backup for failed systems, bridge technology gaps, and adapt in real-time and in the real environment to unanticipated situations and emergencies. Technology, no matter how sophisticated, is not a replacement for pilots on the flight deck.

The global pilot community, including the Associations of Star Alliance Pilots, the Oneworld Cockpit Crew Coalition, and the SkyTeam Pilots Association, are united in the fight against reduced-crew operations and will do everything in their power to ensure the current standards that have made aviation the safest form of transportation in the world will not be eroded. For more information on these collective efforts, visit <https://safetystartswith2.com/>.

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IFALPA Media Contact:

Emily Bitting, Senior Communications Specialist, emilybitting@ifalpa.org

The International Federation of Air Line Pilots' Associations represents more than 150,000 pilots in nearly 100 countries. The mission of [IFALPA](https://www.ifalpa.org/) is to promote the highest level of aviation safety worldwide and to be the global advocate of the piloting profession, providing representation, services, and support to both our members and the aviation industry. Visit [IFALPA.org](https://www.ifalpa.org/) for more information.

The European Cockpit Association is the representative body of over 40,000 pilots from across Europe, striving for the highest levels of aviation safety and fostering social rights and quality employment for pilots in Europe. For further information, please visit the [Media Room](#).

Founded in 1931, ALPA is the largest airline pilot union in the world and represents more than 67,000 pilots at 39 U.S. and Canadian airlines. Visit [ALPA.org](https://www.alpa.org/) or follow us on Twitter [@ALPAPilots](https://twitter.com/ALPAPilots).

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