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Press release: European (Aviation) Psychologists and the crash of Germanwings flight 9525

[http://www.efpa.eu/news/european-\(aviation\)-psychologists-react-to-crash-german-wings-flight-4u-9525-](http://www.efpa.eu/news/european-(aviation)-psychologists-react-to-crash-german-wings-flight-4u-9525-)

Recurrent mental health evaluation essential complement to psychological selection of pilots

In a response to the crash of the Germanwings flight 9525, the European Federation of Psychologists' Associations (EFPA) and the European Association for Aviation Psychology (EAAP) express their condolences to the relatives of the victims, and their support for air passengers and colleagues of the crew.

The information suggesting that the co-pilot has deliberately crashed the plane is shocking to all. Yet, it is important to await a full investigation into the actual circumstances of the crash and the precise course of events.

EFPA and EAAP underline that psychological assessment and human factors training are among the elements that make aviation the safest form of transport around the world. Together with technical and operational measures they ensure that catastrophic events, like the crash of flight 4U 9525, are highly exceptional. Also, the selection of pilots in Germany, as conducted by DLR (Deutsches Zentrum für Luft-und Raumfahrt), meets the highest professional standards.

Psychological assessment before entry to flight training and before admission to active service by an airline can help to select pilots who are mentally and emotionally prepared for the work and who can handle stressors effectively.

However, it cannot forecast the life events and mental health problems occurring in the life of each individual pilot and the unique way he or she will cope with these.

EFPA and EAAP emphasize the importance of recurrent evaluation of pilots' mental health both in the context of the periodic medical examination (JAR-FCL-3) and of well-accepted airline policies and procedures to ensure fitness to fly. They point out that psychologists are at all times ready to provide specialist expertise.

In the aftermath of the disaster priority should be given to psychological help for relatives and friends of victims. Psychologists are already involved in providing assistance as members of national and airline crisis intervention teams. It is equally important to support flight crews in overcoming the impact of this tragic event.

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European Federation of Psychologists' Associations EFPA (www.efpa.eu)

EFPA is the leading Federation of National Psychology Associations and provides a forum for European cooperation in a wide range of fields of academic training, psychology practice and research. 36 member associations of EFPA representing about 300,000 psychologists. The member organizations of EFPA are concerned with promoting and improving psychology as a profession and as a discipline, particularly, though not exclusively, in applied settings and with emphasis on the training and research associated with such practice.

European Association for Aviation Psychology EAAP (www.eaap.net)

European Association for Aviation Psychology (EAAP) provides a forum for professionals working in the various domains of aviation psychology and human factors. With more than 400 members from 50 European and non-European countries they facilitate - from a European perspective - a professional network to encourage the successful management of human performance in aviation.