



**EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR
AVIATION PSYCHOLOGY**



**The British
Psychological Society**

December 2017

Pilot and Aviation Personnel Mental Health and Wellbeing

Dear colleague

We are writing to share an advanced copy of the British Psychological Society's new report, which gives a psychological perspective on the unique working environment of airline pilots and other aviation personnel and looks at factors that may increase their risk of developing mental health conditions.

Although the report covers the British situation in the first place, the EAAP board takes it as an important contribution in assuring pilot and aviation personnel mental health and wellbeing in the whole of Europe. The report was written by a group of expert aviation psychologists individually invited by the BPS Professional Practice Board. Several of these experts are members of the European Association for Aviation Psychology EAAP.

Aviation personnel work in a unique environment and endure a range of stressors that may place them at increased risk of developing mental health issues. The incidence of mental health conditions in aviation workers is difficult to determine as for example pilots are reluctant to disclose problems for fear of losing their licence to fly.

Regulatory body records suggest mental health conditions are second only to cardiovascular disease as a reason for loss of licence, so the application of psychology and use of qualified psychologists should be an integral part of the aviation industry's investment in the wellbeing of their staff. The report calls for airlines to bring in policies for the psychological upskilling of pilots and the wider aviation workforce to promote optimum wellbeing. They should insist on high-quality psychological assessment throughout a pilot's career, while pilots should be encouraged to understand their own mental health.

We would welcome your support in driving forward the key recommendations from this report and in improving the psychological wellbeing of pilots and other aviation personnel. To this end, if you are so minded, we would appreciate any endorsements of the document or its messages. We would also welcome the opportunity to discuss any mutual concerns and identify areas for collaborative working.

If you have any queries in relation to the document, would like a paper copy or wish to discuss any aspects in more detail, please contact Hannah Farndon, Policy Advisor (Professional Practice) - Hannah.farndon@bps.org.uk or Michaela Schwarz secretarygeneral@eaap.net.

On behalf of the EAAP and the BPS,

Sincerely,

Drs Ir André Droog
President EAAP

Professor Robert Bor
Chair, BPS Aviation Psychology Group