

ATMC

AIR TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT CIRCULAR NO. 7 of 2011

Stress/Fatigue Mitigation of ATCOs – Rest & relief

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Air traffic controllers (ATCs) are generally considered one of the working groups having to deal with a highly demanding job. In fact, it entails a complex set of tasks requiring very high levels of knowledge and expertise, as well as the practical application of specific skills pertaining to cognitive domains (e.g. perception, information processing, logic reasoning, decision making), communicative aspects and human relations.
- 1.2 Fatigue is defined as a mental weariness resulting from exertion. Fatigue can be mental or physical and can manifest as either somnolence (decreased wakefulness) or as a general decrease in attention. Fatigue can cause problems for individuals who perform tasks that require constant concentration, such as air traffic control. Additionally, the nature of air traffic control requires shift work, which can exacerbate fatigue because it often requires individuals to work at times when they would normally be sleeping or sleep at times when they would normally be awake.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 Purpose of this ATMC is to introduce the mandatory relief and rest for ATCOs in six airports (Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Bengaluru and Shamshabad) and introduce stress/fatigue mitigation measures.

3. Scope

- 1.1 This ATMC is applicable to all air traffic controllers working at ATC centres/ATC units of Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Bengaluru and Shamshabad airport.



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4. Rest & Relief

- 4.1 Each station should ensure provision of adequate rest and relief mechanisms which need to be standardized including size of the rest room, number of beds to be made available, facilities such as television, water dispensers with provision of both hot and cold water, refrigerators, microwave ovens, massage chairs, reclining chairs, Library facilities with both aviation subject and general materials, a well equipped gym, individual storage locker facility etc.
- 4.2 The period on operational position (ATC Channel) should be adjusted to avoid the performance degradation considering the volume and complexity. WSO/ Supervisors of units shall ensure proper relief of the controllers who are working on channel.
- 4.3 No operational duty shall exceed a period of two hours without there being taken at the end of that period a break/relief of 30 minutes except for supervisory positions and non ATC positions viz., EEP, DEP, ARO, FIC, AIS etc.
- 4.4 Periods of operational duty between 2300 hrs IST to 0600 hrs IST during night shift may be extended to a maximum of four hours before relief is provided. This relief period may of longer duration.
- 4.5 The duty period along with relief period of ATCOs shall be mentioned in the roster by ATS in-charge.

5. Position Rotation

- 5.1 All airports/ATC centres to establish procedures to rotate controllers through challenging and less demanding positions during each shift to mitigate the potential for fatigue to occur.

6. Interval between Period of Duty

- 6.1 There shall be an interval of not less than 12 hours between the conclusion of one period of duty and the commencement of the next period of duty.

7. Other Stress/Fatigue relieving measures

- 7.1 Arrangement may be made for controllers to be trained in stress relieving mechanisms such as Yoga, Meditation etc at regular interval by station in-charge.



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8. Queries

8.1 Any queries or further guidance required on the contents of this ATMC should be addressed to:

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9. Validity

9.1 This ATMC will remain in force until further notice.

[JYOTI PRASAD]
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR [ATM]
AIRPORTS AUTHORITY OF INDIA
Dated: 09-09-2011