

Highlights from the first meeting of the Fatigue Safety Action Group

Note: This communique is from the FSAG group and is a short summary of the first FSAG meeting. Given that this is a new group, we are in the process of determining what our communication plan will be, but in the interim we are pleased to provide this summary.

The first meeting of the Fatigue Safety Action Group (FSAG) took place July 8-9, 2019. The Fatigue Safety Action Group (FSAG) exists to improve safety and is responsible for coordinating fatigue management activities at NAV CANADA including the responsibility for gathering, analyzing, and reporting on data that measures fatigue among operational Air Traffic Services employees. The FSAG is also responsible for enhancing the Fatigue Management Program to meet internal and regulatory expectations.

The FSAG membership includes representation from a variety of groups including: CANSA, ATSAC, CATCA, Operations management, Workforce Planning, Labour Relations, Safety & Quality. The current members are Bax Vokey (Chair), Ann Lindeis, Peter Duffey, Marie-Pier Berman, Elizabeth O’Hurley, Sheri King, Jim Walker, Samantha Robertson, Ian Thomson, Tom Hollinger, Blaine Mills, Colin Dow, Eric Titus and Doug Best.

The FSAG reports to a Fatigue Management Steering Committee comprised of Chair; Trevor Johnson, Vice President ATS Service Delivery; Ben Girard, Vice President, Operational Support; Larry Lachance, Vice President, Safety & Quality; and Elizabeth Cameron, Vice President, Labour Relations.

Day 1

The first morning was devoted to a presentation by Clinton Marquart on fatigue science and sleep basics. Clinton is a specialist in human fatigue with a master’s degree in psychology, specializing in behavioral sleep medicine and fatigue. He holds a Registered Polysomnographic Technologist (RPSGT) designation as well. Clinton also provided insights into some of the lessons learned by other transportation organizations in relation to fatigue management.

The afternoon consisted of a briefing by Transport Canada on the results of their Targeted Inspection Report on Fatigue and the associated Finding, TATS18CH001. Transport Canada also indicated “while they were broadly supportive of NAV CANADA’s FSAG approach”, they required a revised proposal of the Corrective Action Plan (CAP) that had been previously submitted.

These revisions required the company to take a more proactive approach that recognizes the immediacy of the fatigue safety risk and delivers concrete and immediate mitigations. Transport Canada recognized that the Finding and required CAP will be extremely challenging for all those involved, but that it is absolutely necessary to minimize the associated risks to safety as well as employee health and well being.

The FSAG spend the remainder of the afternoon discussing the Finding and some of the ways it would impact the different groups identified, (ATC, FSS & ATOS).

Day 2

The second morning included a review of the history of fatigue management at NAV CANADA, dating back to the recommendations made by the Tripartite Steering Committee in 2001.

The group reviewed the FSAG terms of reference and identified a few required changes. The group acknowledged that it was not a decision-making body, but rather that its role was to make recommendations to the Steering Committee. Furthermore, it was understood that under no circumstances should the work of the FSAG be considered as collective bargaining/negotiations.

Any information communicated from FSAG to the steering committee that impacted collective agreements would be discussed external to the group between Labour Relations and the respective bargaining unit prior to any implementation taking place.

The group reviewed several other documents including the project charter and original CAP submitted to Transport Canada for the fatigue finding.

The afternoon was spent reviewing actions underway related to fatigue management including;

- Educational material available on Central
- An analytic tool being developed to analyze fatigue risks in ATS operational schedules
- Research project with McGill University at Gander ACC on controlled napping

The session wrapped up with the team securing dates for future FSAG meetings to meet the milestones for deliverables required to the end of 2019. Some members will meet on July 24th to conduct the Risk Analysis for implementation of the CAP and a full FSAG meeting will take place again on July 29th and 30th.

NAV CANADA will submit the revised CAP to Transport Canada later this week after discussing the proposed contents contained therein with the respective bargaining units.