

UK Police Education Program at London Heathrow

IFALPA has been advised by BALPA that the UK police have started an education program at London Heathrow concerning drinking and flying. Some crews operating into LHR can expect the police to board the crew bus after disembarkation and brief them about the issues surrounding drinking & flying, and associated UK regulations.

The relevant extracts of UK CAA CAP 789 “Requirements and Guidance Material for Operators”, Chapter 6, are reproduced below, for information.

1.1 Crew members must not be under the influence of alcohol, drugs or medication during flying duty periods..... Operators are to issue instructions for crews as to their personal responsibilities. They should include clear guidance on abstention from alcoholic drinks for a suitable period prior to duty. The minimum acceptable period will be eight hours but may need to be longer depending upon the amount of alcohol consumed.

4.11 Humans absorb and excrete alcohol at very different rates. These depend on factors such as sex, body weight, tolerance to alcohol, and the presence of food. It is therefore impossible to construct any meaningful chart that an individual can use to predict a future alcohol level after a period of drinking. Flight crew and cabin crew should not commence duty for at least eight hours after taking small amounts of alcohol, and proportionally longer if larger amounts are consumed. It is likely, but cannot be guaranteed, that if a person consumes a maximum of five units of alcohol dispersed over some hours before the eight-hour ban, then his blood alcohol level will be zero at the end of the ban (half a pint of ordinary strength beer (3-3.5%) contains one unit of alcohol).