


# Qantas trials new fatigue system

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Qantas has been given the go-ahead by the Civil Aviation Safety Authority for a 12-month trial of a new fatigue risk management system.

The trial will make Qantas the first commercial airline in the country to overhaul their fatigue risk management system, well ahead of the September deadline.

CASA expects to have a new suite of fatigue risk management regulations in place by then, following exhaustive consultation with industry.

Although pilot groups have expressed their concern that the proposed CASA regulations put commercial interests ahead of safety, Qantas chief pilot Richard Tobiano said the trial was an important step towards developing a new system.

“Given the nature of our long-haul network, we already have a mature fatigue management system in place,” said Captain - Tobiano.

“The trial is essentially formalising a lot of what we are already doing alongside the existing regulations.

“It will allow us to evolve, mature and improve our current fatigue management system, based on modern fatigue science.”

The new system is to some extent built around the capabilities of new-generation aircraft which are quieter and have crew rest facilities with dedicated bunks and seats for pilots to sleep and rest.

Aeroplanes such as the Boeing 787-9s and the Airbus A350-900ULRs also have the capacity for ultra-long-range flying, creating the need for a new approach to fatigue risk management.

To that end, Qantas is continuing to work with a research team at Monash University to better understand the relationship between fatigue and ultra-long-haul routes, such as Perth-London.

However, Qantas recognises that fatigue is not exclusive to long haul flying, with short haul operations also involving fatigue problems.

For those reasons, Qantas encourages flight crew to report on fatigue in line with the airlines’ “safety first” mantra.

Captain Tobiano said CASA would continue to have oversight of the fatigue risk management system during and after the trial.

CASA spokesman Peter Gibson said the authority welcomed the Qantas trial.

“This is another important development in the modernisation of the approach to fatigue in Australian aviation,” Mr Gibson said.

A recent survey by the Australian Transport Safety Bureau found 17 per cent of pilots reported having less than 12 hours of sleep in the 48 hours before their last flight.