

Germanwings 4U9525 accident investigation: IFALPA strongly condemns leaking of CVR data

MONTREAL, Canada – The International Federation of Air Line Pilots' Associations (IFALPA) deplores and condemns yesterday's leaking of certain elements of the Cockpit Voice Recorder (CVR) of the Germanwings flight 4U9525.

Not only do these leaks contravene the internationally agreed principles of accident investigation confidentiality set out in ICAO Annex 13, they are also a breach of trust to all those involved in the investigation and to the families of the victims. Furthermore, leaks of this nature greatly harm flight safety since they invite ill-informed speculation from the media and the general public and discourage co-operation with investigators in future accidents.

IFALPA once again stresses that the sole purpose of a CVR is to aid investigators in determining the factors leading to an accident and not to apportion blame or be used outside of its safety context. CVR details should only be publicly released following a thorough and complete investigation of the events that occurred, and not prematurely during the course of the field portion of the accident investigation, underway for less than 48 hours.

Leaking premature, unanalyzed, and partial CVR recordings, which lack the context of the entire body of factual investigative data, severely interferes with the investigative process, and can only lead to early conclusions on what exactly occurred during the time leading up to the accident. Any other use of CVR data is not only invalid, but is an unacceptable invasion of privacy best described as a search for sensationalism and voyeurism of the worst kind.

It is vital for the investigating body to ensure all information under their control is properly handled until the completion of the investigation.

In this early stage of the investigation, many critical questions remain to be answered, and IFALPA stresses the need for an objective accident investigation process through the collection of all the facts needed to draw an accurate analysis of events. Once again, IFALPA's resources are at the disposal of the Accident Investigation Agencies to achieve these aims.

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Note to Editors: The International Federation of Air Line Pilots' Associations represents in excess of 100,000 pilots in more than 100 countries world-wide. IFALPA's mission is to be the global voice of airline pilots, promoting the highest level of aviation safety and security world-wide and providing services, support and representation to all of its Member Associations.

See the Federation website www.ifalpa.org

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