

Ageing in Air Traffic Control

Update of the IFATCA Andropause/Menopause Workgroup (IAMWG)

Presented by
IAMWG Chair Betsy Beaumont (NATCA USA)**SUMMARY**

IFATCA acknowledges that many member Associations are experiencing an aging workforce, whether due to economic factors or ANSP or State requirements.

To foster a more inclusive and supportive environment and to better understand the physical and psychological changes associated with aging, IFATCA is committed to providing education and resources through the IFATCA Andropause/Menopause Workgroup (IAMWG).

The IAMWG has established a strategy and a workplan. During the Regional Meetings in Fall 2025 a presentation was provided at all the four ERMs.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This information paper provides an update on the establishment, objectives, activities, and future deliverables of the IFATCA Andropause/Menopause Work Group (IAMWG). It outlines progress to date and planned actions through 2026, in support of IFATCA's commitment to fostering an inclusive and supportive working environment for Air Traffic Controllers (ATCOs).

2. DISCUSSION

- 2.1. IFATCA recognizes that many Member Associations are experiencing an aging workforce due to economic factors and State or ANSP requirements. With increasing numbers of ATCOs working later into their careers, there is a growing need to better understand and manage the physical and psychological changes associated with aging, including andropause and menopause. To address this, IFATCA established the IAMWG to provide education, resources, and structured support to Member Associations.
- 2.2. Objectives of the IAMWG
- Develop and deliver general education on menopause and andropause tailored to ATCOs.
 - Provide members with up-to-date research and practical guidance for managing symptoms of andropause/menopause in a demanding 24/7 operational environment.

- Adapt educational materials to accommodate cultural and religious diversity across regions.
- Train regional and local IFATCA Ambassadors on andropause/menopause topics.
- Facilitate roundtables, peer-support groups, and intergenerational discussions.
- Explore opportunities for scientific studies relevant to aviation and operational performance, pertaining to the aging controller.

2.3. Activities to Date

2.3.1. Engagement with existing aviation programs on aging, to learn best practices, including (see annex following this report and overview of the following programs):

- o KLM
- o EUROCONTROL Maastricht
- o NATS
- o Additional planned discussion with AirNav (Ireland)

2.3.2. Article for The Controller magazine (September edition)

2.3.3. Initial call conducted at the Regional Meetings at annual Conference 2025, to gather feedback and assess needs.

2.4. Deliverables for Conference 2027

The Working Group intends to present the following deliverables at Conference 2027:

- IFATCA Guidance Material on Andropause/Menopause
- Proposed Policy
- Education and Training Toolkits
- Communication materials (“Speak Andro-Menopause” resources)
- Scientific publication (if applicable)

2.5. The IAMWG framework is structured pertaining to the following items:

- Medical basics (estrogen, testosterone, menopause, andropause)
- Coping strategies in operational environments
- Guidance material/policy development/best practice guidelines
- Communication and awareness
- Scientific research
- Risk and opportunity assessment, per medical requirements
- Ambassador training and peer-support networks

2.6. Call for Participation

2.6.1. IFATCA continues to seek interested volunteers to contribute to the IAMWG’s work. Members are encouraged to engage through their Regional EVP or contact the Working Group lead.

3. CONCLUSION

3.1. IAMWG has much work that needs to be done. It is still growing and evolving. We look forward to this next year being full of energy and allowing this group to make huge strides. We also desire the work group to be represented adequately throughout all MAs. If you feel interested in this subject or you are asked to represent your MA by your leadership, please be open to the opportunity. IFATCA has the opportunity to be on the forefront of this rapidly expanding subject. IAMWG looks forward to bringing knowledge and experience to ATCOs across the world, at the 2027 conference.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that this working paper is accepted as information material.

5. Annex

5.1. Report: Overview of Menopause and Andropause Programs Organizations covered:

	KLM Royal Dutch Airlines	EUROCONTROL (MUAC – Maastricht Upper Area Control)	NATS Holdings
Regulatory Framework	No	No	Yes
Menopause Program	Yes	Yes	Yes
Andropause policy	e-learning module	No	No
Structure	<p>Embedded within a broader “Health Promotion and Preventive Care Program”.</p> <p>Part of a “Vitality” pillar addressing seven lifestyle themes:</p> <p>Nutrition, Addiction and Sleep Mental, social, and physical wellbeing</p>	<p>Stand-alone program.</p> <p>Focus on awareness, education, and potential policy development.</p> <p>Includes voluntary e-learning module (purchased and adapted internally).</p> <p>Management training on supportive conversations.</p> <p>Small-group sessions (approx. 15 participants) for informal exchange.</p>	<p>Award-winning menopause program (details not specified in the overview).</p>
Support and cost coverage	<p>Individual support available after e-learning and initial consultation.</p> <p>Costs covered to a certain extent.</p>	<p>No formal individual support structure yet.</p> <p>In-house doctor provides assistance.</p>	<p>No details provided.</p>

Target audience	All staff	Operational staff	Not specified
Has medical involvement	Works with medical professionals. Company doctor involved (after e-learning and first discussion). Referral pathway to specialists if needed.	Works with medical/health services (welfare officer and in-house doctor). In-house doctor available for support.	No details provided.
Communication & Engagement	Embedded within vitality and prevention communication streams.	Informal awareness campaign supported by management over approximately 1.5 months.	Not specified.
Duration / Origin	unknown	6 years	unknown
Willingness to collaborate	Willing to present the programme but not to be in the IFATCA initiative	Willing to present the programme and be in the IFATCA initiative	Willing to present the programme

5.2. Program Elements Comparison

5.2.1. KLM – Stepped Care Approach

- E-learning module
- Interactive workshop (1 coach)
- Follow-up upon request
- Health unit consultation before 1:1 support
- Company doctor referral
- External specialist

5.2.2. MUAC – Awareness & Engagement Model

- Voluntary e-learning module
- Management guidance for supportive discussions
- Informal group sessions
- Awareness campaign (approx. 1.5 months) with management support
- HRT unfit-for-work guidance: approximately 2 weeks

5.2.3. NATS

- Identified as award-winning, but operational elements not detailed.

5.3. Key Observations

- 5.3.1. **All three organizations have menopause initiatives**, though maturity and structure differ.
- 5.3.2. **KLM** operates an integrated, health-promotion-based stepped care model.
- 5.3.3. **MUAC** focuses on awareness, education, and cultural change with medical support integration.
- 5.3.4. **NATS** is identified as having an award-winning program, suggesting a potentially advanced model (though further detail is needed).
- 5.3.5. **Andropause remains underdeveloped** across organizations, with only KLM actively developing related materials.
- 5.3.6. **Medical collaboration is a common strength** for KLM and MUAC.

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