

US to review pilot mental health issues after Germanwings crash

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US aviation regulators announced on Wednesday a study of the mental health of US airline pilots in the wake of the Germanwings and Malaysia Airlines disasters.

The Federal Aviation Administration said the study's findings could result in changes to the way [pilots](#) are evaluated for fitness to fly.

"US pilots undergo robust medical screening, but recent accidents in other parts of the world prompted the FAA to take a new look at the important issue of pilot fitness," the FAA said in a statement.

The crash of a Germanwings flight in France in late March, killing all 150 people aboard, apparently was deliberately caused by a co-pilot who had a history of severe depression.

A Malaysia Airlines flight inexplicably went missing in a flight from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing in 2014. No wreckage from the flight, which was carrying 239 people, has been found. But investigators have in part focused on whether deliberate pilot actions were to blame.

The FAA said the research will be conducted by a committee including US and international government and industry aviation experts, as well as specialists in aerospace medicine.

They will be looking at emotional and [mental health](#) issues and the methods used to evaluate them in US pilots, and at barriers to reporting

such issues.

The group's recommendations are expected within six months.

The FAA said that, based on the recommendations, it could consider changes to medical policies, aircraft designs and pilot training and testing.

Under current US aviation regulations, airline pilots undergo a medical exam with an FAA-approved physician every six or 12 months, depending on the pilot's age.

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