

## “Fatigue in Aviation: a Guide to staying Awake at the Stick”

By John A. Caldwell, Jr. and J. Lynn Caldwell

Book review by Amrita Bose

“Realizing he had to get his planes on the ground before the aircraft (and the pilots) all ran out of gas, Gary fought through the haze of fatigue and devised a plan to split for the ILS and use the IRADS (Infra Red Acquisition and Detection System – a bombing sensor, not an instrument approach aid) to find the runway, make the landing, deploy the drag chutes, and hit the brakes.” (p.4). This might seem like a scene from an action film, nonetheless this is part of the introduction into the topic of fatigue used to illustrate the seriousness of the issue of fatigue in aviation.

The authors address fatigue in both military and civil aviation, thereby succeeding to argue as to why fatigue deserves attention. Advanced technologies, economic and societal factors enable us to live in a 24-hour economy, however we tend to forget that technical advancement of working when the sun had already set, started only just over a century ago by the invention of the light bulb. By means of practical examples, some very lively, the scientific jargon surrounding the issue of fatigue becomes very familiar to the reader.

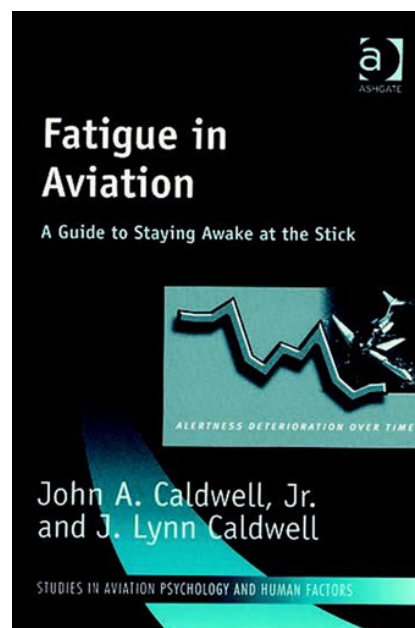
The book is divided into three parts, discussing the problem, the causes and the countermeasures of fatigue. Although I recommend to read all three parts, if you have a lack of time, the third part discussing the countermeasures is clear enough to be read on its own. Many examples are given to illustrate the issues discussed and there are several references to papers or internet sites for more information on the specific issue.

Every chapter ends with a summary of top ten points of the discussed issue throughout the book.

Of course part of the title of the book is to keep pilots ‘awake at the stick’, however the content is also of interest for those working in (night-) shifts in other working areas. And actually the part discussing the causes of fatigue is interesting for anyone to get some insight in sleep and how sleep deprivation affects daily performance. In fact there is a sleepiness self-evaluation at the end of chapter two. The authors started out by discussing that fatigue is a serious issue, in the end they compare sleep-deprivation to drinking and driving, which was socially accepted years ago and is now ‘politically incorrect’. After reading this book you will have more understanding as to why a sleep-deprived pilot, maybe just like a drunken driver, puts everybody’s life at risk on board and that sleep-deprived workaholics should not be applauded.

At first glance, I could not have imagined to enjoy reading a book discussing an issue like fatigue that much, however the topic proved to be very interesting. And of course the fact that these authors know how to

keep their readers awake by lively examples, a self-evaluation and illustrations, does give the topic it’s well-deserved attention.



### About the authors

“John A. Caldwell, Jr., Principal Research Psychologist, and J. Lynn Caldwell, Senior Research Psychologist, both work for the Warfighter Fatigue Countermeasures Program in the U.S. Air Force. They are Consultants for Fatigue-Management in Military Aviation, Commercial/Civilian Air Operations, and Emergency Air-Ambulance Services.” ([www.Ashgate.com](http://www.Ashgate.com))

### About the reviewer

Amrita Bose has been a general editor for Airlines since September 2001 and was a board member of Aeries in the academic year 2002 - 2003. Amrita Bose graduated from the University of Amsterdam in September 2003 and holds a Master of Science in International Communication. Also see <http://www.aerlines.nl/bios/abose.htm>

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