

Press Trust of India | New Delhi October 16, 2013 Last Updated at 18:11 IST

## DGCA urged not to sanction CNS facility without adequate staff

Complaining of "gross manpower deficiency" in air traffic management services, an AAI employees' outfit has asked civil aviation regulator DGCA not to allow commission of any new navigation facility without deployment of adequate trained staff.

In a letter to the Directorate General of Civil Aviation, the CNS Officers' Guild -- an association of Communication, Navigation and Surveillance (CNS) personnel-- said "no new or additional facilities should be allowed to be commissioned without trained and adequate CNS manpower to man it."

The Guild also demanded a review of the commissioning of all air traffic management facilities in past three to four years, in wake of "gross deficiency of CNS manpower."

India may have modernised its air traffic management services but lack of adequate manpower was raising major air safety risk, as the present staff were overburdened and were under tremendous stress and fatigue due to long working hours to keep the facilities functioning.

Of the 3,250 sanctioned posts, about 840 posts in the CNS wing of the state-run airport operator the Airports Authority of India (AAI) that provides navigational services, were lying vacant, according to the Guild.

The AAI has installed whole lot of new CNS facilities -- 15 Instrument Landing System ILS, 13 radars, 38 ATS Automation systems, 14 ADS-B, 3 ASMGCS-- since 2009.

"The facilities were being commissioned without taking CNS manpower requirement into account, leading to risky compromise with the operation and maintenance of the air navigation services that is building up Air Safety Hazard," Subit Kobiraj, General Secretary of the Guild wrote to DGCA.

"In recent years, operations and maintenance of CNS-ATM facilities have been adversely affected due to lack of sufficient CNS manpower and in turn has led to compromise with the safety of human lives in air," he said.

The Guild had also made an appeal to the AAI Board to address the manpower shortage in the organisation.

Apart from 840 vacant posts, the Guild said there was a need for around 1,200 additional personnel.

The Guild also sought Civil Aviation Minister Ajit Singh's intervention.

In order to sustain Air Navigation Services in desired manner and to mitigate accruing air safety hazards, additional CNS manpower is most urgently required at all levels - be it at Senior Management level,

Supervisory level or at induction level, Kobiraj said in his letter to the Minister.



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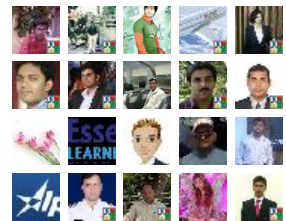
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16/10/13 PTI/Business Standard

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