

BALPA has just updated and expanded its laser attack advice.

Advice to Pilots Exposed to Laser Attack

- Shield the eyes from the light source with a hand or a hand-held object and avoid looking directly into the beam. It is possible that a laser successfully aimed at the flight deck will be presaged by unsuccessful attempts to do so; these will be seen as extremely bright flashes coming from the ground and/or visible in the sky near the aircraft. Treat these flashes as a warning you are about to be targeted and prepare to shield the eyes. Do not look in the direction of any suspicious light.
- Do not rub the eyes.
- Alert the other crew member(s) to determine whether they have suffered any laser-related effects. If the other front seat pilot has not been affected, he or she should immediately assume or maintain control of the aircraft.
- Manoeuvre to block the laser, if possible and subject to ATC . If on approach, consider a go-around.
- Engage the autopilot.
- After regaining vision, check flight instruments for proper flight status.
- Turn flight deck lighting to maximum brightness to minimise any further illumination effects.
- Immediately report the laser incident to ATC, including the direction and location of the laser source, beam colour and length of exposure (flash, pulsed and/or intentional tracking). Do not look directly into the beam to locate the source.
- As soon as flight safety allows, check for dark/disturbed areas in vision, one eye at a time.
- If incapacitated, contact ATC for priority/emergency handling. Consider autoland.
- If symptoms persist, obtain an eye examination as soon as practicable. SEE NOTE BELOW
- File an MOR. In the UK, ATC will notify the Police. When possible, write down all details for the Police.
- If rostered for further flight sectors, consider whether you are physically and psychologically still fit to fly.

NB1 If warned in advance by ATC or other aircraft of laser activity, consider requesting a different runway, holding until it is resolved, or diverting.

NB2 Your company advice always remains the primary source of reference.

NOTE:

Laser illumination can result in minor and transient visual impairment, such as a retinal after-image remaining visible and/or camera flash-type blindness. Usually these symptoms subside after a period of time provided the individual does not look at the beam. If any visual symptoms persist after landing, then obtain an ophthalmologic examination. Advise the specialist that the evaluation should include ophthalmoscopy, visual acuity testing and central visual field testing with the Amsler Grid. After this evaluation, consult your employer's Aeromedical Department, your AME or the CAA Medical Department before returning to duty. If the visual effects remain, do not drive or fly as crew.

(Updated/Reviewed 29.02.12)