



INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS' ASSOCIATIONS

360 St. Jacques, Suite 2002, Montreal, Quebec H2Y 1P5 CANADA
Tel.: +1.514.866.7040, Fax: +1.514.866.7612, Email: office@ifatca.org

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Essential infrastructure calls for essential dialogue

The International Federation of Air Traffic Controllers' Associations (IFATCA) is extremely concerned with the latest developments that have been brought to our attention on the situation in Albania.

IFATCA would like to remind the relevant Albanian authorities that they have an obligation to ensure the safety of air traffic. **The safety of the travelling public is not something that should be subject to national political arguments, nor electoral interference.**

IFATCA denounces **the arrest and questioning by prosecutors of Air Traffic Controllers** which is blatantly against European dialogue and Human rights practices. **The ATM community is appalled at the misinformation** given to the general public given by Albanian authorities. These actions only exacerbate the stress on the operational personnel. It is clear that **safety has been deferred in the interest of political posturing.**

All States, particularly those in the European community, and all airlines planning to land or overfly the territory of Albania should be aware of a **heightened risk of degraded services** due to a severe conflict between the local ATC staff and their government.

Air Traffic Control is a reliable and essential infrastructure that runs relentlessly when all actors come to sound and stable agreements. Tensions do arise but must be resolved in a professional manner with the safety of the public in mind. In order to guarantee the level quality needed to operate safe air traffic, Air Traffic Controllers (ATCOs) **must be free of unnecessary stress.**

Stress contributes to fatigue and can cloud judgement and could lead to poor decisions. It is therefore important that air traffic controllers are able to determine when their personal physical and psychological situation does not allow them to safely perform the responsibility they have towards the flying public. In EASA/ICAO documentation **'being fit for work' is clearly left seen as a personal assessment by the Air Traffic Controller** to avoid undue pressure from management to perform safety critical tasks when unfit for duty.

- 60 Years of Professional Involvement -

IFATCA has been representing air traffic controllers since 1961, with more than 50,000 members in over 130 countries.

A blame culture in Air Traffic Control is contradictory to EASA regulations and the international standards under the Chicago Convention.

The Federation calls upon all parties involved to take their responsibilities for upholding a safe aviation infrastructure seriously. The airspace in Albania is part of the European and global Network and is critical to the recovery from the pandemic. All parties must start working on **repairing the broken trust and restore proper working conditions** for operational staff to support them to fulfil their safety critical tasks.

IFATCA will continue to monitor the situation with the closest attention and will provide support to its members concerned.

Sincerely,



Duncan Auld
President and CEO
IFATCA



Frédéric Deleau
Acting Executive Vice President Europe
IFATCA