



*"[air navigation control, [...] is a task involving the exercise of public authority and is not of an economic nature, since that activity constitutes a service in the public interest which is intended to protect both the users of air transport and the populations affected by aircraft flying over them".*  
(Extract of decision C.364/92 of the European Court of Justice).

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## Press Release

### ATCEUC: "Swiss Prosecutors are endangering the safety of European Aviation"

Brussels, December 16<sup>th</sup>, 2018

*"It is with extreme sadness and unease that ATCEUC, the Air Traffic Controllers European Unions Coordination, addresses the recent decision from the Swiss Prosecutors of charging an Air Traffic Controller in the aftermath of an aviation incident where no injuries or damages were observed and after that the event having been properly investigated by the aviation authorities. It is the second time it has happened in Switzerland in less than one year."* **Says Volker Dick, President of ATCEUC.**

*"ATCEUC", he continues, "since 2010, after the introduction of Just Culture through Reg. 691, and together with the other ATM Social Partners, has been working in a common effort to promote this Culture not only in the whole aviation domain but in all the High Consequence Industries."*

*"Now this joint effort risks to be completely frustrated by the decision of Swiss Prosecutors".*

*"The aim of the Just Culture is not to give to ATCOs and other ATM Professionals the freedom to do, during their job, what they want, it is the opposite!"* **says Jean-Denis Larrere, Vice President of ATCEUC;**

*"A Just Culture is to give them the certainty they will not be punished for their honest mistakes because only after a deep analysis of those mistakes, shortcomings and inconsistencies of the rules can be identified and amended, whilst if neglected, they can lead to tragic consequences. This goal can be reached only if every Professional is encouraged to report any safety related issues she/he might commit, observe or predict".*

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*"By acting in this way, Swiss Prosecutors are endangering not only the whole Swiss ATCOs community but the safety of Aviation across the European continent"*

ATCEUC while expressing the maximum solidarity and broader support for the involved ATCO and all their Swiss colleagues, is informing the European Commission of this risk.

At the same time, ATCEUC urges the Swiss Legislators to quickly review their national approach in similar cases, implementing the "Just Culture" principles in accordance with the highest international standards already ongoing in other States.

End of the Press Release

For questions or further information, please contact Jean-Denis LARRERE, [secretariat@atceuc.org](mailto:secretariat@atceuc.org)

Air Traffic Controllers European Unions Coordination (ATCEUC) was created in 1989 and is currently composed of 33 professional and autonomous trade unions representing more than 14000 Air Traffic Controllers and Air Traffic Safety Engineering Personnel throughout Europe. ATCEUC is part of the "European Union Sectoral Social Dialogue - Civil Aviation" in the air traffic management field and it is recognised as a full member of the ICB. ATCEUC with its experts participates in every work group where the voice of its Members can and have to be expressed: SESAR JU, TSG, EGH, EASA STeB, EASC, ASPReT, ATM Partners and other workshops or programmes within the framework of EUROCONTROL and the European Commission.