

NEWSLETTER

November 2014 - February 2015

Issue 5

Dear Members,

During the Italian Presidency of the EU, SES II+ was partly improved, after the decision to allow the unbundling of support services to remain voluntary. Although we fought hard for this and we welcome the outcome, our work is not complete. Like its predecessor, the new European Commission continues the same rhetoric of unreasonable comparisons and unrealistic targets. We must remain vigilant every step of the way.

The first half of 2015 proves to be challenging, with the Latvian EU Presidency seeking to “continue the work on strengthening the Single Market [...] and promote industrial competitiveness”. In other words, SES II+ lives on.

Many of our members are still being attacked, be it on social conditions (Italy, The Netherlands, Belgium), or in court (Switzerland). The situation in Poland was also of concern for us. Upon the request of ZZKRL, ATCEUC sent a strong letter to the Polish Prime Minister that caused considerable repercussions. Several investigations and audits were set off and hopefully the outcome will improve the working conditions of our Polish colleagues.

Our Belgian colleagues participated in a general strike in December to show their opposition to the government changing their pension scheme. With the EU population getting older, pensions are and will increasingly continue to be a very hot topic. Pension schemes and retirement age are starting to be challenged all over Europe and the Belgian strike was a clear sign that we must respond immediately and decisively to counter these attempts. Our future is equally important as our present. Enough with trying to jeopardise our future to meet cost cutting targets! The threat is common to us all. To succeed we must remain united.

Seeing that Just Culture (JC) is widely ignored around Europe and beyond, and that ATCO criminalization gains ground even in countries like Switzerland, the coming ATCEUC Committee Meeting in Rome will include presentations and speeches on JC. Respected professionals from the judiciary, academia and ATM will share their knowledge with us and hopefully the discussion will provide to all new insight on actions to be taken to protect JC, ATCOs and our profession.



The new Executive Board held several meetings via videoconferencing and also met in Rome on 8 January 2015. Having 9 members instead of 7 increases the need of coordination but also allows us to tackle more issues more efficiently.

For comments, opinions and suggestions regarding this Newsletter please send an email to board@atceuc.org

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Just Culture

Last year, a new regulation (Reg. n° 376/2014) was published on the reporting, analysis and follow-up of occurrences in civil aviation. This new Regulation replaces the previous Directive and Regulations and aims at improving aviation safety by ensuring that relevant information relating to civil aviation is reported, collected, stored, protected, exchanged, disseminated and analyzed. Although the entry into force was just 20 days after the publication in the Official Journal, it shall only apply from November 15th, 2015.

In the meantime, the European Commission is planning to prepare additional material such as a list classifying occurrences, a common European risk classification scheme, guidelines for supporting the implementation of the regulation, requirements for compatibility with ECCAIRS software and ADREP taxonomy. It will also organize workshops to develop an industry internal Just Culture policy model and prepare communication and promotion material.

ATCEUC has already asked to be involved in this process and had a meeting with the European Commission along with other social partners and professional organizations. As a result of this approach, ATCEUC will participate in the workshops to develop an industry internal Just Culture policy model.

A confidential, non-punitive safety reporting system, where willful acts of misconduct are not permitted, is fundamental to establish the facts and identify any cause or causes to prevent further occurrences. But it is also fundamental to trust the system and this is why it is of the utmost importance to establish a Just Culture Policy Model for the stakeholders to implement according to their own structure and experience. ATCEUC is now going to be involved in drafting those guidelines.

Remotely Operated Towers

In SESAR, new concepts, like Remote TWRs, are being discussed. 'Luckily' we are following this concept as experts (where and when we are allowed to be there) for the Social Dialogue and in EASA in the Rule Making Group.

We tried to slow down this concept, supported also by other Professional Staff Organizations (PSOs) that share our concerns and are involved in the process, like IFATCA, IFATSEA and ECA; but industries and ANSPs pushed it forward, so that at the end of 2014, the Swedish Transport Agency granted operational approval to LFV for the Sundsvall Remote Tower Centre. Now, we are trying to set solid rules, because although the concept could be useful for contingencies or in smaller airports, we particularly do not agree on Multiple Remote TWRs and we pointed out more than once ICAO DOC 4444 where it is stated that an ATCO must have continuous watch of the Maneuvering Area.

ATCEUC has produced a position paper to be published soon on RoT to share our doubts and concerns on: liability, reliability, cyber security, licensing, training, safety assessment, contingency and so on, and, obviously, the impact on personnel. ATCEUC is also thinking about coordinating a common position paper with all PSOs. This must be evaluated according to appropriate policies.



The next Committee Meeting will be held in Rome on 25-27 March 2015. Have a pleasant end of winter and see you all there.