

EUROPEAN CORPORATE JUST CULTURE DECLARATION¹

Safety is of paramount importance to the public but also to the aviation industry.

Safety is not only a legal requirement but also a key contributor to sustainable business. Any entity in aviation has therefore a responsibility to maintain and improve safety.

Staff working in the aviation industry, at all levels, have a safety responsibility and are key to a safe system.

A safe aviation system requires events that affect or could affect aviation safety to be reported fully, freely and in a timely manner as needed to facilitate their investigation and the implementation of lessons learnt.

Just Culture lies at the heart of an effective reporting system and such a system is needed in all aviation organisations to maintain and improve aviation safety.

This Declaration supports existing legislation, in particular Regulation (EU) No 376/2014 on the reporting, analysis and follow-up of occurrences in civil aviation, and is fully consistent with applicable rules.

Each organisation should, after consultation with their staff representatives, implement internal rules² that are best suited to its internal and external specificities. These internal rules should be supported by documented processes and applied consistently through the organisation.

This Declaration constitutes a set of key principles that each organisation is encouraged to implement in the context of its Just Culture internal rules.

We, the signatories to this Declaration, will encourage our respective members to implement a Just Culture on the basis of the following key principles referred to in this Declaration.

The signatories agree to continue to work together to develop guidance and industry best practices material to assist Just Culture implementation by organisations in the various aviation sectors.

KEY PRINCIPLES OF A JUST CULTURE

1. Acting safely is a top priority.
2. Staff, at all levels, should be, as a starting point, considered to act in the interest of safety, in a manner commensurate with the training, experience and professional standards that fit their position or function. To achieve this organisations are responsible for providing their staff with the appropriate environment, tools, training and procedures.
3. It is acknowledged that, in an operational aviation industry environment, individuals, despite their training, expertise, experience, abilities and good will, may be faced with situations where the limits of human performance combined with unwanted and unpredictable systemic influences may lead to an undesirable outcome.

¹ This non-legally binding Declaration only considers Just Culture within the context of an organisation and does not address or overrule the judicial rules or proceedings applicable in individual Member States.

² Article 16 (11) of Regulation (EU) No 376/2014 prescribes the presence of 'Just Culture internal rules', supported by internal processes that need to be adopted after consulting the organisation's staff representatives, and implemented in European aviation organisations.

4. Analysis of reported occurrences by organisations should focus on system performance and contributing factors first and not on apportioning blame and/or focus on individual responsibilities, except in the cases foreseen under Regulation (EU) No 376/2014³ and other applicable legislation.
5. When assessing individual responsibility, organisations should focus on determining if actions, omissions or decisions taken were commensurate with experience and training, and not on the outcome of an event.
6. Reporters of safety information, and any other person mentioned in the report, are protected from adverse consequences, in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 376/2014.
7. Whilst acknowledging that adverse events can frequently be the driver for analysis, positive behaviour and actions should be captured and encouraged.
8. Organisations should promote effective implementation of Just Culture principles within the organisation at all levels and with all parties, including their representatives. All should actively foster mutual trust and respect, and promote support and cooperation to build the necessary trust across the organisation. Staff should be educated in Just Culture principles and all relevant documentation should be made available.
9. Just Culture internal rules should include, amongst others, the definition of a process, including the actors involved, to determine an unacceptable behaviour, in accordance with its description in Regulation No 376/2014.
10. Just Culture internal rules should document how safety data is managed, stored, protected and disclosed. It should also document to what extent the organisation intends to share de-identified data for safety learning purposes.
11. Support provided by organisations, in cases where staff are subject to external procedures on the basis of an occurrence they have reported or been involved in, reinforces the mutual trust that is necessary to ensure an effective Just Culture.
12. A consistent and effective Just Culture environment requires going beyond publication of Just Culture internal rules.
13. To effectively implement a Just Culture staff at all levels, as well as top management, should understand and accept their responsibility with regards to Just Culture principles and internal rules and their promotion.
14. Organisations, in cooperation with involved parties, including their competent authority, should define how they intend to continuously promote and stimulate the implementation of Just Culture principles and practices throughout the organisation.
15. Organisations should regularly review and assess the maturity of their Just Culture internal rules and compare it to the Just Culture perception within the organisation. Benchmarking may also be of benefit and may be considered.

SIGNATURES

³ (a) in cases of wilful misconduct; (b) where there has been a manifest, severe and serious disregard of an obvious risk and profound failure of professional responsibility to take such care as is evidently required in the circumstances, causing foreseeable damage to a person or property, or which seriously compromises the level of aviation safety.