



"[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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53rd ATCEUC GENERAL ASSEMBLY - 2018 FINAL COMMUNIQUE

The 53rd ATCEUC Assembly was held in Maastricht on April 18-20 to give controllers from all across Europe an opportunity to meet and discuss their common issues and to formulate a common response to the pressures they have to contend with from falling staff numbers, fatigue and the unrealistic targets set by the EU in RP1 and RP2 of the Single European Sky programme.

The Assembly heard from the SES unit of DG MOVE and from the PRB who both expressed a desire for closer cooperation with ATCEUC with the intention of avoiding the pitfalls of RP1 and RP2 when setting the targets for RP3. This was seen as broadly as a positive position for the EU to take as no one understands our business like we understand it, if the EU is willing to accept and implement our input instead of just hearing us then we will achieve positive changes that benefit ATCOs, the flying public and the Airlines.

The Assembly also heard from its own expert on Fatigue Risk Management as well as other experts in the FRM field from EASA and EUROCONTROL. From EASA, the Assembly heard of the regulatory approach to Fatigue Management and how upcoming regulation will influence roster construction to mitigate fatigue but, disappointingly, did not make any suggestions about maximum working hours. EUROCONTROL experts gave practical advice on how to recognise and mitigate fatigue in yourself or in another colleague. Advice was given on how to prevent fatigue build up and on how to decompress after becoming fatigued.

Fatigue is one of the greatest safety issues in ATC and years of staff shortages, pressure on rosters and ATCOs to perform on a daily basis not to mention the long-term health consequences requires further research with the goal of setting maximum working hours and Health Impact Assessments for the Ageing European ATCO.

Finally, ATCEUC is delighted to welcome GDF of Germany as members and LATCA of Lithuania as observers. The new members increase the numbers of ATCOs represented by ATCEUC and strengthen the hand of the Executive Board when defending the rights of ATCOs and the safety of the flying public.

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