



**ECA**  
Piloting Safety



## PRESS RELEASE

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### EU Ministers take a step back on preventing air accidents

**A new informal agreement by EU Transport Ministers waters down a proposal by the EU Commission for better prevention of aviation incidents and accidents.**

In a Council meeting on 10 June, Transport Ministers discussed the Commission proposal on Occurrence Reporting in the EU. The proposed regulation sets a comprehensive framework for collection and analysis of aviation incident data, which is critical to identifying the pertinent safety risks in aviation. Yet, the Ministers have weakened the original proposal on several key issues, including the provisions for non-punitive mandatory and voluntary reporting, and the obligations of EU Member States to ensure adequate safety oversight.

“The best approach to prevent accidents is one that encourages learning from mistakes. To do this, pilots, air traffic controllers and all other safety-professionals in the aviation industry must be able to talk openly about safety incidents, mishaps or honest mistakes in a confidential environment, one which neither entails reprisals on company level nor leads to unfounded legal prosecution”, says ECA President Nico Voorbach. “Yet, EU Transport Ministers are weakening significantly the provisions for such reporting within a confidential, ‘Just Culture’ environment.

“The Ministers are also taking a step back when it comes to *voluntary* reporting of incidents, which is essential to allow safety professionals to report beyond what is legally required”, states Alexis Braithwaite, IFATCA President. “Less stringent requirements are a setback which will significantly reduce our ability to identify further potential hazards.”

“Some changes also seem to be motivated by the desire to reduce the costs that the proposed reporting and analysis requirements will entail”, says ECA Secretary General Philip von Schöppenthau. “Such a focus on costs will however not help improve aviation safety.”

ECA and IFATCA strongly encourage the EU Parliament to strengthen the ‘Just Culture’ provisions and not allow Member States to escape from their responsibilities or to limit their oversight on safety incidents that happens at company and organisational level.

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*Note to editors:* ECA is the representative body of European pilot associations, representing over 38.000 pilots from across Europe. Website: [www.eurocockpit.be](http://www.eurocockpit.be)

IFATCA is a worldwide organisation representing more than fifty thousand air traffic controllers in 134 countries. Website IFATCA: <http://www.ifatca.org/>