



INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS' ASSOCIATIONS

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PRESS RELEASE

Air traffic controllers in many regions of the world face a turbulent future as several governments and air navigation service provider enact policies and measures that will hamper the air traffic control professions highest goals to maintain a safe, orderly and efficient service provision. The apparent lack of oversight of air navigation service providers and states may have serious detrimental effects on the future development of the profession.

This reality was one of the conclusions of the 49th Annual Conference of the International Federation of Air Traffic Controllers' Associations that was attended by 70 member countries; and several international organisations such as ICAO, IFALPA, EUROCONTROL, IATA, and ITF, among others.

"This federation was founded to ensure that the voice of air traffic controllers is given due consideration in the development of air traffic management and so it is important that we provide constructive, but critical input to projects such as NEXTGEN and SESAR," said new President and CEO, Alexis Brathwaite. "The Federation will continue to support its members as we strive to ensure that the core principles that results in safety and efficiency are not eroded", he added.

Controllers are facing a new reality - in the backdrop of a continuing worldwide shortage of air traffic controllers that will be exacerbated as the conference was told that approximately 10% of the world controllers are eligible to retire in the next two years. The standard response to this shortage by many ANSP's is to resort to overtime and to unilaterally increase the retirement age. Both of these practices reduce the safety of the aviation system.

Despite having to face these challenges, IFATCA will continue to focus on its core objectives of ensuring aviation safety and will now issue, as required, Safety Bulletins to its members to provide safety critical information. The first Safety Bulletin, issued at the start of the annual conference, deals with "Problems when displaying TCAS RAs at Controller Working Positions". The full text is available from the IFATCA web site.

The conference approved several policies that will enhance safety and efficiency, in areas such as Go-Around Procedures during Visual Approaches; Incorrect Flight Identification, Route Clearance requirements, reducing voice communication workload and the use of level restrictions during departures and arrivals."

The Icelandic volcano eruption has dramatically demonstrated our dependence on air travel. A solution to manage aviation can only be pursued through enlightened self-interest in which all stakeholders work collaboratively with pragmatism and compromise. IFATCA was founded with this objective. IFATCA welcomes the input of air navigation service providers and is open to discuss possible solutions for the benefit of the flying public.

IFATCA is the worldwide organization representing more than fifty thousand air traffic controllers in 134 countries. Amongst its goals are the promotion of safety, efficiency and regularity in international air navigation and the protection and safeguarding of the interests of the air traffic control profession. www.ifatca.org