



Behind the Scenes – Committees at Work

Committees drive policy, innovation and leadership

Welcome to the third article in a four-part Regional News series from Jean-François (JF) Lepage, Team Supervisor at Montréal ACC and current Deputy President of IFATCA. A former commercial pilot who became a controller at age 20, JF has spent nearly two decades combining operational expertise with leadership in global aviation.

This series reflects outcomes from the 64th IFATCA Annual Conference in Abu Dhabi, where international leaders addressed staffing, sustainability, training innovation and collaboration across regions. Through JF's perspective, we'll explore how Canadian voices are helping shape the future of air traffic control under a shared vision: One Sky, One Voice.

At the heart of the IFATCA Conference are the committees – the driving force behind governance, technical, and professional progress. This year's sessions reflected a renewed spirit of collaboration and diversity, with record participation from across all IFATCA regions.

Committee A (Governance, Finance, Constitution & Administration)

Chaired by Jules Ogilvie (Switzerland) and Brittney Armbrust (USA), Committee A reviewed reports from all IFATCA Officers and confirmed several key appointments. The Finance Committee and Constitution and Administration Committee presented important updates, including refined financial tools and enhanced representation structures. Uganda was selected to host the 2027 Annual Conference following a competitive bid against Türkiye.



Committee A presenting its work

Committee B (Operational & Technical)

Led by Alex Schwassman (Germany) and Olivia May (UK), this committee tackled 14 reports and debated seven technical working papers. Topics included communication failure procedures, GNSS jamming, and mixed-mode operations. IFATCA's Technical and Operations Committee (TOC) attracted record interest, with 15 candidates for nine seats – a strong signal of global engagement.



Committee B presenting its work

Committee C (Legal & Professional)

Chaired by Sten Verpalen (Netherlands) with Nyamgerel Dashdolgor (Mongolia) as co-chair, the committee addressed 13 working papers focusing on safety culture, staffing, and professional standards. Highlights included new policy on Just Culture and the rejection of “restricted endorsements” as a staffing solution. Donna Field (Australia) was elected as the new PLC Chair.



Committee C presenting its work

Together, these committees ensure IFATCA remains not only a voice for controllers but a proactive force in global aviation governance.

Up next

Stay tuned for the fourth and final article on the Regional News hub where JF reflects on the closing of the IFATCA conference and how impactful these sessions were.