

Award of Merit Proposal for Raf Vigorita EGATS**Presented by IATCA - The Irish Air Traffic Controllers Association****SUMMARY**

IATCA, The Irish Air Traffic Controllers Association proposes the nomination of Raf Vigorita for the IFATCA Award of Merit in recognition of his exceptional contributions to the aviation industry, both at the national level with his professional association, EGATS, and at the international level with IFATCA, over the course of more than 20 years. His outstanding leadership, dedication, and service have been integral to the success of both his national and international roles.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Raf Vigorita has demonstrated unparalleled dedication and commitment to his professional association, EGATS (the Eurocontrol Guild of Air Traffic Services), and to the broader global aviation community. Over the past two decades, he has played a key role in shaping the direction of his association and has been a prominent advocate for the interests of air traffic controllers at international forums, including IFATCA.
- 1.2. Raf's consistent and outstanding contributions to the field of air traffic management, his leadership at EGATS, and his active involvement with IFATCA have been instrumental in advancing the goals and objectives of both his national and international organizations.

2. DISCUSSION

- 2.1. Raf's work with EGATS has spanned over 20 years. He has served in various leadership positions, including as President of EGATS and IFATCA Liaison Officer, demonstrating his dedication to strengthening the association and promoting the interests of air traffic controllers across Europe.
- 2.2. As President of EGATS, Raf was instrumental in driving EGATS' initiatives and fostering cooperation between the professional association and MUAC (Maastricht Upper Area Control Centre) management. Always advocating for safety and smooth operations, Raf ensured that the professional relationship was based on mutual respect and collaboration. He embraced the importance of openness to advancement and innovation, helping MUAC remain one of the best-performing Air Navigation Service Providers (ANSPs) worldwide.

- 2.3. In his role as IFATCA Liaison Officer, Raf was pivotal in maintaining and enhancing the relationship between EGATS and IFATCA. His work helped ensure that the European controllers were represented and their voices heard at the global level, furthering the Federation's mission of improving global air traffic control standards.
- 2.4. Beyond his national contributions, Raf has been a key figure within IFATCA, where he has represented the interests of EGATS on an international stage. His contributions to IFATCA's mission of improving global air traffic control standards have been invaluable.
- 2.5. Raf has consistently advocated for policies that prioritize the safety and well-being of air traffic controllers and has worked diligently to ensure that the voices of European controllers are heard and considered in global aviation discussions.
- 2.6. The 2021 ERM was the first post Covid ERM. This held its own challenges in both its organisation, which was done fully remotely, and the holding of the meeting. Raf's leadership and dedication were particularly evident. He played a crucial role as part of the Organizing Committee. Especially as he had poached IATCA's Ciara O'Donoghue for assistance following IATCA's successful hosting of the 2018 ERM in Dublin. Despite the unprecedented challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic including organising the ERM when the OC were never able to meet in person, Raf and the OC helped bring together 25 Member Associations, navigating the limitations and restrictions imposed by the global health crisis, the first steps to returning to in person meetings.
- 2.7. This achievement demonstrated Raf's unwavering commitment to the Federation's values of teamwork, collaboration, and resilience. The successful organization of this meeting, despite the obstacles, reflects his exceptional ability to work under pressure, maintain a strong sense of unity within the Federation, and deliver results even in the most difficult circumstances.
- 2.8. Raf has contributed to the discussions that affected ATCO's through involvement in the European Reps Group. He has always contributed to the discussions at both a regional level and IFATCA world Conference level. Throughout the last 20 years EGATS members have consistently held high office in IFATCA, Raf had not sought out high office so as to leave opportunity for other associations to contribute at the higher levels of the federation. This goes to show his commitment to involve the widest range of associations in the work of the federation.

3. CONCLUSION

- 3.1. Raf Vigorita's dedication, leadership, and tireless work at both the national and international levels make him an exemplary candidate for the IFATCA Award of Merit. His contributions over the past 20 years, along with his instrumental role in organizing the 2021 European Regional Meeting under difficult conditions, have had a profound and positive impact on the aviation community.

This award would be a fitting recognition of his long-standing service and unwavering commitment to the values of IFATCA.

- 3.2. IATCA strongly supports this nomination and believes that Raf's exceptional achievements and service to the aviation community make him highly deserving of the IFATCA Award of Merit.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1. That IFATCA award the IFATCA Award of Merit to Raf Vigorita.

5. REFERENCES

- 5.1. IFATCA Administrative Manual V69 Aug 2024, Part 2 Administrative Policy (Bye-Laws), Chapter 10. Miscellaneous, Section 3 IFATCA Awards.

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