



European Cockpit Association  
'Piloting Safety'



INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF AIR  
TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS' ASSOCIATIONS

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **EU Air Accident Investigation: Safety Professionals' Expectations Are Not Met**

**European pilots and air traffic controllers regret that the Council of Ministers' legalistic position prevented the European Parliament from obtaining a more far reaching and safety-oriented Accident Investigation Regulation.**

**The first-Reading compromise text adopted by Parliament, today, contains some good new elements. But it fails to provide for strict independence of accident investigations from judicial ones and to protect sensitive safety information – two crucial preconditions for preventing accidents and loss of life in future.**

"It takes two to tango. Unfortunately, EU Member States were unwilling to dance with the European Parliament to the 'safety-first' tune. As a result, the new Regulation will be far from ideal. Without a strict independence of the safety investigation and protection of safety information, it will be much harder to learn safety lessons from previous accidents to prevent future ones" states Capt. Martin Chalk, ECA President. "However, the pilots' community is ready to make the most of the available tools, in particular the creation of 'Advance Arrangements' between the Accident Investigation body and the judiciary authorities in each Member State".

"Our message is strong and unambiguous: the sole objective of any accident investigation should be to understand what happened and why, in order to improve aviation safety, without apportioning blame or liability, as stated in Annex 13 of the Chicago Convention" stresses IFATCA President Alexis Brathwaite. "From this standpoint, the newly-adopted regulation provides some positive elements, such as the recognition of the 'just culture' principle, but we are still far away from a robust legal framework to prevent aviation from being criminalised".

"We praise the excellent work of Mrs de Veyrac and her fellow- Parliamentarians who pushed for a more ambitious safety agenda than the Council. A lot remains to be done, and increasing mutual understanding between aviation professionals and judicial authorities is the next major challenge in front of us!" adds Philip von Schöppenthau, ECA Secretary General.

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See also: <http://www.eurocockpit.be/pages/accident-investigation>