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ITALIAN AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS' ASSOCIATION
MEMBER OF IFATCA
INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS'
ASSOCIATIONS



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The Italian Air Traffic Controllers' Association (ANACNA) is deeply concerned by the recent rulings issued by Swiss judges against two fellow Air Traffic Controllers, for operational incidents which occurred during their duty.

In both cases, the Air Traffic Controllers reported the events themselves: this is common practice in the current aviation system, where occurrence reports are used to maintain the overall level of safety to the highest standards, to determine which corrective measures should be taken (also at system-level) and to disseminate the lessons learnt across the whole aviation professionals community.

On the other hand, criminal prosecution of aviation occurrences is useless in improving aviation safety and is, in fact, detrimental to the learning process which originates from the occurrence reporting policies.

There is clearly no incentive in reporting an event, if the same report could be used to start a criminal investigation against the front-end operator. A professional kept under the constant threat of criminal prosecution will be much less likely to report operational events, and the community as a whole will therefore miss the opportunity to learn from the countless items of *safety intelligence* generated by the occurrence reports.

The recent decisions taken by the Swiss judges don't seem to be driven by an effort towards aviation safety, and are certainly in strong contrast with the Just Culture principles stated in the EU legislation. According to these principles, front-line operators should not be punished *"for actions, omissions or decisions taken by them that are commensurate with their experience and training, but in which gross negligence, wilful violations and destructive acts are not tolerated"* (Article 2, EU Regulation 376/2014).

The Italian Air Traffic Controllers' Association would like to express its full support to the Swiss colleagues affected by these rulings, and strongly endorses the IFATCA/ECA position on this matter.

ANACNA (Associazione Nazionale Assistenti e Controllori della Navigazione Aerea) is the Italian professional association of Air Traffic Controllers and Flight Information Service Officers, representing more than 1100 ATM professionals, both civil and military, employed all across the country. ANACNA is a member of IFATCA, the International Federation of Air Traffic Controllers Associations, and collaborates with national and international stakeholders to promote air navigation safety and the technical training of all ATM professionals.