



Open Letter to EU Transport Ministers

EU Air Accident Investigations Must Promote Safety

Brussels, 10 June 2010

Dear Ministers,

The signatory organisations from the air transport sector are fully committed to the highest levels of aviation safety in Europe and beyond. One of the key tools for improving safety is aviation safety investigations, allowing the industry to learn from past accidents and prevent future ones.

The current legislative process on a new EU Accident Investigation Regulation¹ is a unique opportunity to strengthen this tool, building independent accident investigations into a cornerstone of Europe's aviation safety architecture.

The European Parliament Transport Committee vote on 1 June 2010 recognises the importance of such investigations, calling for accident safety investigations to be separate and independent from judicial ones, and for safety data to be protected.

The Transport Council's General Approach (11 March 2010), however, would give the judicial investigation primacy over the safety investigation. We reiterate our concern – as expressed

¹ Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on investigation and prevention of accidents and incidents in civil aviation COM(2009) 611 final

in our joint Declaration of 26 April 2010 (attached) – that this would jeopardise the ability of accident investigators to obtain in confidence the information necessary to discover all the factors, which contribute to accidents. It would prevent them from making well-informed safety recommendations needed to improve aviation safety and avoid future accidents, which would not be in the interest of Europe’s flying public.

The signatory organisations therefore call upon each Minister of the European Transport Council to recognise the European Parliament’s safety-oriented approach. We urge the Council to work closely with the Parliament and European Commission to establish a robust legal framework ensuring that the safety and judicial investigations work independently from each other, and that safety data is adequately protected.

We are certain you share our commitment to aviation safety and that you will do your utmost to ensure safety investigations fulfil their role – in the interest of Europe’s citizens.

Yours respectfully,



Olivier Jankovec,
ACI Europe
Director General



Ulrich Schulte-Strathaus,
AEA Secretary General



Dick Volker,
ATCEUC President



Brian Humphries,
EBAA President and CEO



Martin Chalk
ECA President



Dr Ing Vittorio Morassi,
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Mike A. Ambrose,
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Antonio Avenoso,
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William R. Voss,
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Koen Vermeir,
IACA Director Aeropolitical
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Martin Robinson,
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Captain Carlos Limón,
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Alexis Brathwaite,
IFATCA President