



"[air navigation control, [...] is a task involving the exercise of public authority and is not of an economic nature, since that activity constitutes a service in the public interest which is intended to protect both the users of air transport and the populations affected by aircraft flying over them".
(Extract of decision C.364/92 of the European Court of Justice).

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PRESS RELEASE

ATCEUC expresses solidarity with U.S. Air Traffic Controllers following Washington National Airport tragedy

Brussels, 31 January 2025 – The Air Traffic Controllers European Unions Coordination (ATCEUC) extends its heartfelt condolences to the victims and their families affected by the tragic accident at Washington National Airport. Our thoughts are also with the colleagues of the National Air Traffic Controllers Association (NATCA) and the entire U.S. air traffic control community as they navigate this incredibly difficult time.

ATCEUC stands in full solidarity with the air traffic controllers at Washington National Tower, Potomac TRACON, and across the United States. We acknowledge the immense challenges they face in the wake of such events and recognize their unwavering professionalism in maintaining the highest levels of aviation safety.

This tragedy serves as a stark reminder of the complexity and responsibility inherent in the air traffic control profession. It highlights the critical need for continuous support, adequate resources, and fair working conditions to enable controllers to perform their duties under optimal conditions.

ATCEUC also reaffirms its commitment to the **Just Culture principles**, which remains a cornerstone of aviation safety. Protecting and strengthening these principles is essential for fostering an environment where professionals can report safety concerns without fear, ultimately enhancing the safety of the entire aviation system.

A thorough and independent investigation is fundamental to understanding the circumstances of this accident. ATCEUC fully trusts the U.S. authorities to conduct an impartial inquiry, free from any political or

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media pressure, that upholds the integrity of aviation safety. Ensuring transparency and a fact-based analysis will reinforce confidence in the system and contribute to future improvements.

We have complete confidence in the dedication, expertise, and professionalism of our American air traffic controller colleagues. ATCEUC stands ready to offer full support to NATCA and the entire U.S. air traffic control community in any way possible.

For media inquiries, please contact:
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Air Traffic Controllers European Unions Coordination (ATCEUC) was created in 1989 and is currently composed of 33 professional and autonomous trade unions representing more than 14000 Air Traffic Controllers (ATCOs) and Air Traffic Safety Electronics Personnel (ATSEPs) throughout Europe. ATCEUC is part of the "European Union Sectoral Social Dialogue - Civil Aviation" in the air traffic management field and it is recognised as a full member of the ICB. ATCEUC with its experts participates in every work group where the voice of its Members can and have to be expressed: SESAR JU, TSG, CEGHD, EASA STeB, EASC, ASPReT, JCTF, ATM Partners and other workshops or programmes within the framework of EUROCONTROL and the European Commission.