



MACEDONIAN AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS' ASSOCIATION

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Skopje, 09.05.2025

LETTER OF SUPPORT TO OUR COLLEAGUES INVOLVED IN THE HANEDA ACCIDENT



To Whom It May Concern,

Our association, MATCA, recently became aware of the ongoing legal proceedings involving our Japanese colleagues in connection with the Haneda accident. We understand that, under Japanese judicial processes, individuals involved in industrial accidents may face criminal charges of professional negligence resulting in injury or loss of life.

While we extend our deepest condolences to the families who have lost loved ones in the tragic Haneda accident on January 2nd, 2024, we wish to express our solidarity and support for our Japanese colleagues involved in this difficult time.

Every aviation accident offers an unfortunate opportunity to learn valuable lessons and improve safety systems. As extensively studied over the years, it is rarely a single individual's mistake. This understanding is what led to the development of the "Swiss cheese model" of accident causation, which recognizes multiple layers of defense that can be compromised.

Air traffic controllers are highly trained professionals operating in accordance with the highest aviation standards. However, it is essential to acknowledge that human error is always a possibility, even among the most skilled and experienced ATCOs. This is precisely why IFATCA has championed the principle of **Just Culture** — a non-blaming approach that encourages reporting errors and incidents without fear of sanctions, thus fostering a safer environment for both personnel and passengers.

Just culture means a culture in which front-line operators or other persons are not punished for actions, omissions or decisions taken by them that are commensurate with their experience and training, but in which gross negligence, willful violations and destructive acts are not tolerated.

One key to the successful implementation of Regulation (EU) 376/2014 is to attain a **just culture** reporting environment within aviation organizations, regulators and investigation authorities. This effective reporting culture depends on how those organizations handle blame and punishment.





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As an EU compliant country, the Republic of North Macedonia has implemented this principle and we are pleased to note that **Just Culture** has been incorporated into the Macedonian Aviation Institutions.

We support the notion that one person, an active ATCO on the frequency working live traffic, cannot compensate for all the anomalies and faults that stretch out through the national aviation institutional hierarchy.

In conclusion, we reaffirm our support for our Japanese colleagues and emphasize the importance of adopting a culture of transparency and learning rather than one of blame and punishment.

Sincerely,



Natasha Mijat Krstevska

President of the Macedonian
Air Traffic Controllers' Association
- MATCA

