



Brussels, 25 July 2016

Violeta BULC

European Commission
Commissioner for Transport

By email: violeta.bulc@ec.europa.eu

Dear Commissioner,

The issue of 'minimum services' in the provision of Air Traffic Management through Europe has, once again, recently come back to the front scene when the Commission adopted its Aviation Strategy Action Plan in which it is foreseen to adopt a Guidance document on 'Best practices in minimum service levels in airspace management'.

Europe is a place of democracy and the right to strike is one of the fundamental European trade union rights. As such it has to be preserved in our modern society. ATCEUC and ETF are aware that this issue is not an EU competence as stated in article 153 of the TFEU.

We understand that the Commission is under pressure of airlines on this issue. To us, this issue has to be dealt at national level by Member States and their national social partners, including the trade unions.

As you know, ATCEUC and ETF, together with CANSO have produced a 'Toolbox for successful social dialogue in Air Traffic Management' which may help employers and employees in enabling good social dialogue practices. ATCEUC and ETF will continue to promote this toolbox in order to increase the quality of the social dialogue everywhere in Europe.

Indeed, strikes and/or industrial actions are always the expression of social difficulties and bad social dialogue. ATCEUC and EFT strongly believe that efforts have to be made to find adequate solutions. First and foremost, the performance pillar of the SES has created many difficulties in every ANSP in Europe. It's time now to have strong corrective measures to this performance pillar to prepare the future of ATM. Following the revision of the performance scheme in that direction, it will be the role of the social partners, at national level, to find the best ways to implement it.

In conclusion, ATCEUC and ETF will oppose all the attempts to minimize the right to strike. ATCEUC and ETF see the action undertaken by the Commission on 'Minimum services' as an attempt to reduce this right and demand the Commission to step back on this dossier and to focus on improving the social dialogue at all levels. Indeed, the answer to find solutions to prevent or reduce risks of industrial actions is not to establish guidelines on best practices in minimum services but in social dialogue. Therefore, ATCEUC and ETF jointly decided not to support this initiative and our two organisations will not participate in the study that the Commission is launching in the ATM sector.

As trade unions have a central role to pave the way towards a successful European ATM system, ATCEUC and ETF shall continue their active role to achieve this goal.

ATCEUC and ETF are available to meet with you to explain our concerns and proposals in more details if needed.

Yours sincerely,



Volker Dick
ATCEUC President



Charles-André Quesnel
ETF ATMC President