

ATC Strike over, but nine Ethiopian Air Traffic Controllers remain in jail

OPSGROUP Team
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5th September, update:

As of this morning, most controllers have **returned to work**. Some concessions made by ECAA. Addis ACC and TWR are again staffed with qualified controllers, so the safety situation, for now, is restored. However, 9 remain in jail. Returning controllers were forced to sign an 'admission' of illegal strike action in return for amnesty. IATA In Flight Broadcast Procedure requirement for Addis FIR remains in place, meaning you must broadcast on 126.9 as in other areas of concern in Africa. Further as we get it.

4th September:

Last week we were one of the first to expose the attempted ATC Strike cover up by the Ethiopian Civil Aviation Authority.

As a reminder, **untrained and uncertified foreign controllers, retired and local non-operational ATC personnel are being used to control air traffic over Ethiopia.**

It is a catastrophic misjudgement, creating a safety risk in the Addis FIR and at Ethiopian Airports for pilots and passengers alike.



Here are some more updates since our last article:

- On August 29, The International Federation of Air Traffic Controllers Association (IFATCA) penned a **letter to the Prime Minister** of Ethiopia. You can read it here.
- The neighbouring controllers in **Kenya** warned that flights in and out of Addis Ababa are not safe. You can view their letter here - specifically they warned that **the ‘possibility of air misses’ is real.**
- The ECAA over the weekend rejected concerns regarding the safety of Ethiopian airspace, specifically calling the claims from Kenya as *“outright lies.”* The ECAA has said that ATC are operating *“in accordance with ICAO Annex 1 provisions.”* They **did not deny** however that foreign and retired ATC are being used.



- The ECAA also outlined that the national carrier, **Ethiopian Airlines**, has “awarded” **veteran** Air Traffic Controllers, who are performing their **“national obligation.”**
- However on Monday, the local state affiliated broadcaster, Fana BC, reported that the Federal Police Commission had detained **nine** individuals on **suspicion** of attempting to disrupt international flights and **coordinating a strike** that began last week. This has been quickly condemned on social media, as many locals called on the government to resolve the issues raised by the ATCs rather than resorting to intimidation.

The ECAA claims that “some” of the striking controllers have returned to work.

Major airlines and uninformed passengers continue to fly into and over Ethiopia and **this continues to be a major safety risk.**

Do you have more to add this story? Please, **let us know!**