



AEROCONTROL SWITZERLAND
Air Traffic Controllers' Association

Appeal of air traffic controller accepted by the federal court

Zurich-Airport November 8, 2019 - Today the federal court (Bundesgericht) - the highest judicial institution in Switzerland - has accepted the appeal of an air traffic controller against a verdict of the high court (Obergericht) in Zurich. The conviction for negligent disruption of public transport goes back to an incident that occurred in 2011 at Zurich Airport. Aerocontrol is pleased with this verdict in a judicial case that dragged on for over 8 years. We are especially pleased for the concerned air traffic controller that this difficult time has finally come to a happy ending.

The incident happened on the 15th of March, 2011, when two aircraft, one shortly after the other, got clearance to take off from crossing runways 16 and 28. The aircraft on runway 16 took off as planned, while the aircraft on runway 28 aborted its take-off. There were neither injuries nor material damages caused by the incident.

The district court (Bezirksgericht) in Bülach acquitted the air traffic controller. The prosecutor then filed an appeal against the verdict to the Zurich high court, which ruled differently and declared the controller guilty in December 2018. The air traffic controller subsequently filed an appeal against this ruling which has hereby been accepted.

In July of this year the federal court had, for the first time, convicted another air traffic controller for an incident that had also resulted in no damages and, with this, created a completely new legal situation. To what measure today's ruling might affect this situation is currently unclear.

Aerocontrol is waiting for the written statement of the federal court in order to analyse it; especially in relation to what the verdict means for a Just Culture in Switzerland.

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Aerocontrol Switzerland vertritt nahezu 230 FlugverkehrsleiterInnen in Zürich. Der Berufsverband setzt sich für die Gewährleistung eines sicheren und effizienten Luftverkehrs im vom schweizerischen Flugsicherungsunternehmen skyguide kontrollierten Luftraum und auf den unter dessen Kontrolle liegenden Flugplätzen ein. Er wahrt zudem die beruflichen und sozialen Interessen der durch ihn vertretenen FlugverkehrsleiterInnen und pflegt eine enge Zusammenarbeit mit nationalen und internationalen Organisationen und Interessenvertretungen.