

A project come true

Since December 2010, Spanish air traffic controllers have been involuntarily set in the public eye, both nationally and internationally. IFATCA reacted fast and generously and supported their Spanish colleagues. It was in the Jordan Conference, back in 2011, when the Spanish team, Ignacio Baca and Jesús Gómez Lera, started the process to convince the IFATCA community that Spain was also ready to contribute deeply within the Federation and give back some of the support received, and that we would formally apply to hold the Annual Conference in our country. Three years later, after a great amount of work, that dream is now a reality, and Gran Canaria is holding the 53 IFATCA Conference.

Text: **Guadalupe Cortés**
APROCTA vice-president

Spain became a formal member of the Professional and Legal Committee (PLC) and of the Technical and Operational one (TOC), presenting important working papers at the Nepal and Bali Conferences. Ignacio Baca, our representative in the TOC, was distinguished with the honour of becoming the Chairman of that Committee, a role that he has performed professionally and thoroughly. Personally, as the formal representative of Spain at the PLC from 2011 until 2013, I had the chance to present the situation of English Language Proficiency in Spain and some other countries in Europe, and the process of privatization of air traffic control. That work gave me the privilege to represent IFATCA as English Language Proficiency Subject Matter Expert at ICAO, and also to attend as an observer to the 6th Air Transport Conference at Montreal.

We worked hard, and Spain was re-elected as a member of the PLC for the next period, and the Spanish team received letters of support from the president of IFATCA, and public recognition at the last Conference. The Spanish team is a solid one. María Serrano, our liaison officer to IFATCA, has greatly contributed to build our networking, becoming the official

public relations expert. She has made a great effort in order to maintain the Federation informed about our country, and acted as a wonderful host for the Executive Board visit and official meeting at Castelldefels, Barcelona, last September. Alfonso Guerrero, as the director of the Delegation, has represented Spain and taken all the

important decisions at Committee A, being in charge of writing and supervising all reports, among other tasks. Both María and Alfonso are part of the Organising Committee for this Conference. And of course, behind all the representatives, it is the work of the whole team of Spanish volunteers, including the SESAR team.





the professional interests of our air traffic controllers summoned to court. Nowadays, more than 20 court sentences support the honour and professionalism of Spanish ATCOs.

Scott Shallies, as the Executive vice-president professional, who has always showed a great sensitivity about the Spanish situation and has helped us deeply, and of course, to Jez Pigden, as the chairman of PLC, who is always ready to help and care about all new members.

Philippe Domogala, for guiding the Organising Committee and for his work as editor of *The Controller Magazine*, together with Philip Marien.

To Paul Neering, for the important role he develops at Eurocontrol, and for always having the right word for the right moment.

But I would like to thank, specially, to Zeljko Oreski, IFATCA Executive vice-president for Europe, who has followed in detail the liberalization process for air traffic control towers in Spain, and has made the difference covering and including all the facts at his last year report at the Annual Conference.

Although Spain would have never settle at the international scene, without the guidance and expertise of Marc Baumgartner, our mentor, a brilliant air traffic controller and a brilliant brain. Spanish air traffic controllers owe you very much, for all that it can be published and for all that it will never be.

IFATCA opened their eyes in October 1961, and more than 50 years later, is the global professional voice of over 50,000 air traffic controllers in 134 countries, and is granted an observer status to ICAO. This is a reality built on the foundations of individual and volunteer air traffic controllers working for one shared objective: "One sky, One Voice".

To all air traffic controllers that have contributed with IFATCA throughout the years, which have made possible that today, air traffic controllers all over the world share some common goals, thank you. 📧



This Conference would have not been possible without the vision of Jesús Gómez at 2011 and the support of Camilo Cela, but of course, it would have not been possible without the tremendous and continuous work and effort of the whole Organising Committee for this Conference, whose Chairman is Miguel Ángel Serra. A great number of volunteer air traffic controllers all over Spain, and specially local ones, are always «ready for action», contributing for the success of this event.

And now, on behalf of Spain, it is a high time to thank IFATCA, and to thank the whole IFATCA Executive Board, including Tatiana Lavorskaia, the soul of the Federation.

I would like to thank Patrick Forrey as former executive vice-president technical, who highly contributed to develop a technical report with regard to a professional and legal issue, affecting Spanish ATCOs at Santiago. That report, finished in less than two months, was a key factor to defend