

(English version)

**Priority question for written answer P-000057/26  
to the Commission  
Elena Kountoura (The Left)  
(12 January 2026)**

**Subject:** Disruption of radio communications in the Athens FIR, collapse of air traffic, impact on flight safety and compliance with EU law

On 4 January 2026, there was a major interruption of air-to-ground radio communications (VHF) <sup>(1)</sup>, leading to a complete suspension of air traffic within the Athens FIR with all flights suspended, highlighting once again the very serious issue of flight safety and the outdatedness/vulnerability of existing surveillance and communication equipment <sup>(2)</sup>.

What is particularly concerning is that, eight days after the incident and although air traffic was restored, the Greek authorities have not provided any explanation as to the exact causes of the incident, the circumstances in which it occurred or how system operations were restored <sup>(3)</sup>. Therefore, they cannot guarantee that it will not happen again.

Given the seriousness of the incident, which demonstrates major infringements of EU law, can the Commission say:

1. Has it asked the Greek authorities for information on the circumstances of the incident and its impact on aviation safety?
2. Is it looking into whether the requirements of EU law concerning in-flight communications and air traffic control systems were complied with in terms of availability, backup and business continuity under Implementing Regulation (EU) 2017/373 <sup>(4)</sup>, and whether the incident was reported, assessed and is being dealt with in accordance with EU law on the investigation of civil aviation incidents <sup>(5)</sup>?
3. Does it intend to provide operational, technical and regulatory assistance to the Greek authorities and the national investigation body for railway and air transport accidents (EODASAAM) <sup>(6)</sup> in order to establish the causes, ascertain the adequacy of the existing systems, ensure full compliance with the EU legal framework and prevent similar incidents in the future?

Submitted: 12.1.2026

**Answer given by Mr Tzitzikostas on behalf of the European Commission  
(12 February 2026)**

The Commission and the European Organisation for the Safety of Air Navigation (EUROCONTROL) were timely informed by the Greek authorities about the serious incident and that the closure of the Greek airspace most likely was caused by a failure in voice communications systems.

Civil aviation flights operate under common EU aviation safety rules. The Hellenic Civil Aviation Authority (H-CAA) is the national supervisory authority responsible for the enforcement of EU legislation on Air Traffic Management in Greece including the Implementing Regulation (EU) 2017/373 on the common requirements for providers of air traffic management and air navigation services <sup>(1)</sup>.

The European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) supervises the H-CAA oversight tasks by conducting regular standardisation visits and monitoring their safety oversight to assess compliance with EU regulations.

According to official sources, the Greek Safety Investigation Authority will conduct an independent safety investigation according to its mandate under the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) Annex 13 and Regulation (EU) No 996/2010 on aviation safety investigation of accidents and incidents <sup>(2)</sup>.

The investigation aims to determine the root cause of the outage, contributing factors of the incident, and develop recommendations to prevent future occurrences, without apportioning blaming.

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<sup>1</sup> VHF frequencies were affected by 'noise' in the form of continuous unintentional emissions, leading to a sudden loss of communication between air traffic controllers and pilots. It should be noted that the backup systems did not work either.

<sup>2</sup> Although the Greek Air Traffic Controllers Association has repeatedly pointed out the problems faced by the critical air traffic sector, the government does not seem to be taking any effective steps to fix them.

<sup>3</sup> The cause of the incident remains unknown and operations seem to have inexplicably resumed.

<sup>4</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32017R0373>.

<sup>5</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:32014R0376>.

<sup>6</sup> Using technical teams from DG MOVE, EUROCONTROL, EASA and the SESAR Joint Undertaking.

<sup>(1)</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/impl/2017/373/oj/eng>.

<sup>(2)</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2010/996/oj/eng>.

EASA has appointed a technical advisor to the investigator in charge and stands ready for supporting the Greek Safety Investigation Authority.

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