

PRACTICAL STEPS UNDERTAKEN BY THE ICAO EUROPEAN AND NORTH ATLANTIC AVIATION SECURITY GROUP TO PROMOTE THE YEAR OF SECURITY CULTURE

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The ICAO European and North Atlantic Aviation Security Group (ENAVSECG) bases its efforts to promote the ICAO Year of Security Culture (YOSC) 2021 on the Security Culture Campaign ‘Starter Pack’¹ developed by ICAO. The group also focuses on the Global Aviation Security Plan² (GASeP) key priority action of “developing security culture and human capability”. ENAVSECG began discussing security culture aspects in 2019, following endorsement of the regional GASeP roadmap.

Additionally, in order to prevent acts of unlawful interference (AUI) in civil aviation, ENAVSECG endeavours to adhere to the major principles for developing effective and sustainable security culture, such as:

1. Developing GASeP implementation plans;
2. Ensuring support of the GASeP at all levels of governance;
3. Enhancing personnel and public awareness on the risks and threats pertaining to acts of unlawful interference;
4. Involving personnel in identifying and preventing acts of unlawful interference;
5. Supporting a sustainable security culture in aviation;
6. Developing technological communications in the field of aviation security;
7. Improving response to suspicious activity and incidents;
8. Conducting continuous monitoring of GASeP implementation and supporting an effective security culture.

ICAO recommendations and best practices on establishing and maintaining effective security behaviours in all personnel and of the public is of utmost importance and is instrumental to ensure the security of international civil aviation.

DEVELOPMENT OF YOSC IMPLEMENTATION PLANS

Practical examples of security culture implementation plans and best practices, developed by State-members of ENAVSECG (e.g. Luxembourg, Portugal, the Russian Federation, Switzerland, Sweden and the United Kingdom) are published on the ICAO Security Culture Website³.

¹ www.icao.int/Security/Security-Culture/Pages/ICAO-Resources.aspx

² www.icao.int/Security/Documents/GLOBAL%20AVIATION%20SECURITY%20PLAN%20EN.pdf

³ www.icao.int/Security/Security-Culture/Pages/default.aspx

As a rule, such plans contain measures for the implementation of an effective security culture in aviation as recommended by ICAO guidance material, as well as other more targeted aviation security objectives. The need to address those objectives is reflected in the ICAO State Letter and questionnaire regarding support for YOSC in 2021 (SL AS8/23-20/125 dated 13 November 2020).

Activity plans frequently include a whole range of significant streams and objectives of YOSC implementation by States, from high-level approval of policies and procedures defining the targeted level of security culture to self-assessment mechanisms to evaluate achievements.

SUPPORT OF THE YOSC ON ALL LEVELS

We consider States' efforts to implement an effective security culture of utmost importance, and welcome this political commitment, be it legislative or under any other form.

It is evident that ENAVSECG should more actively include YOSC support in its programme, and it invites managers at various levels to demonstrate their support of YOSC and their commitment to promoting and enhancing security culture.

It is of an utmost importance that our decisions reflect the fact that it is vital that managers publicly demonstrate their unconditional commitment and compliance with aviation security requirements, demonstrate the reliability of aviation security systems, and reward personnel who apply an effective security culture.

RAISING RISK AWARENESS OF PERSONNEL AND OF THE PUBLIC

First of all, as part of ENAVSECG activities, we must exchange best practices on ensuring that all personnel are aware that the global threat to aviation is real and can manifest itself as various risks. It is extremely important to find a way to ensure that personnel understand that an incident can occur anywhere and at any time, and that themselves, their colleagues and the public (crews and passengers) can be the target of an attack or be affected by it.

It is also important to ensure the preparedness and ability of personnel to protect aviation infrastructure and aircrafts from new types of threats, such as cyber threats, the use of UAS and dangerous chemical and biological agents.

In doing so, we take into account that raising awareness on threats to aviation security, including likelihood, vulnerability, consequences and the resulting level of risk, is built on a multi-layered basis.

At the global level, this information comes from ICAO Headquarters and from the ICAO Aviation Security Panel of Experts (AVSECP), and from exchanges within the ICAO AVSEC Points of Contact (PoC) system.

At the regional level, this information comes from the ICAO EUR/NAT Regional Office, from the ENAVSECG, and from exchanges between regional organizations and government agencies involved in aviation security.

At the State level, this information comes from the relevant security and law enforcement agencies, the Coordination Centers for Control and Oversight of Transport Security, and the Unified State Information Systems for Security. Particular attention should be paid to information shared with and between national aviation security inspectors.

Recently, the exchange of information in the aviation security field has been actively developed via various online forums, conferences, expert round tables, seminars and workshops.

At the industry level, this information comes from the Airport Aviation Security and Facilitation Committees, Airport Security Operations Centers, and official and voluntary information from personnel and from the public.

Public information systems at airports and onboard aircraft, on airline and airport websites, and on various other media platforms, including television, are also rapidly developing in order to better inform the public on security.

The importance of periodic specialized training on security culture and transport security for students and teachers at educational institutions in the transport field is being successfully promoted.

Public discussions on enforcement practices based on the results of quality control and oversight activities conducted to verify compliance with the requirements of national legislation and ICAO standards and recommended practices are held regularly.

It is recommended that ENAVSECG facilitate the exchange of best practices by communicating important security information to personnel and to the public using various platforms, such as:

- e-mail and internal computer networks;
- posters and newsletters;
- staff briefings;
- briefings upon receipt of Airport ID Cards;
- job descriptions;
- performance appraisal of personnel;
- announcements and public messages;
- SMS messaging systems for reporting of suspicious activity;
- educational videos.

INVOLVING PERSONNEL IN IDENTIFICATION OF ACTS OF UNLAWFUL INTERFERENCE

Practice shows that personnel who are not directly involved in screening operations may underestimate the risks, believing that they do not make a significant contribution to security.

Facts show that it was the attentiveness, active role and rapid execution of security instructions by all personnel that prevented the potentially grave consequences of a number of acts of unlawful interference and terrorist threats.

It must be continually emphasized that every airport employee, regardless of their position or job function, plays a vital role in ensuring aviation security at the airport and in the adjacent areas.

It is advisable for ENAVSECG to focus on encouraging staff actions such as:

- identifying security issues and vulnerabilities;
- appearing vigilant and actively ensuring the security of crews, passengers, colleagues, the public and themselves;
- immediately reporting any suspicious activity or security threats.

Educational experience and training should be shared between national training institutions and ICAO aviation security training centers, and should contain methods to conduct exercises on regular basis. This will allow the development of practical skills and the ability of each employee to identify security threats and to take action to prevent them.

SUSTAINABILITY AND SUPPORT OF SECURITY CULTURE

Considering that the cause of 80-85% of accidents in transport happen due to human factors, it is of utmost importance that personnel and the public consciously apply and fulfill all national and international security requirements and rules without exception. It must be impossible to violate security requirements under any circumstances, despite the special measures applied to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

The security manager plays a key role in maintaining a strong and sustainable security culture. The security manager should lead by example, and demonstrate the importance of reporting all security threats and actions taken by staff. At the same time, it is very important to build a clear system of mandatory incentives (rewards) for employees who have distinguished themselves by their vigilance and ability to prevent acts of unlawful interference.

In order to create a positive image of aviation and transport security personnel within society, it is recommended that States dedicate an annual celebration day e.g. the Day of Counter-Terrorism Solidarity as a show of support for the continued implementation of security best practices. The day should also commemorate security staff who have demonstrated heroism and skill in performing their official duties to protect the life and health of the public from acts of unlawful interference and terrorist threats.

Chairpersons of ENAVSECG are in favour of the establishment of an Aviation Security Day by ICAO, which will give new impetus to the promotion of Annex 17, adopted on March 22, 1974, "Security Protection of International Civil Aviation from Acts of Unlawful Interference" at the Convention on International Civil Aviation.

It is also advised to consider highlighting a number of ENAVSECG's achievements to promote an effective security culture and to begin planning various solemn events in preparation of the 50th anniversary of the adoption of Annex 17 in 2024.

DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES IN THE FIELD OF AVIATION SECURITY

It is recommended to continue developing security awareness communications among personnel, both at the interstate domestic levels, as well as directly in aviation entities.

The most important platform for regional communication in the field of aviation security culture remains the annual meeting of the ENAVSECG.

The next meeting of ENAVSECG/09, scheduled for December 2021, plans to dedicate an agenda item to exchanging best practices on creating and implementing an effective and sustainable aviation security culture in States and at aviation infrastructure facilities.

From 30 June to 1 July 2021, the ICAO Regional Office conducted by videoconference the Security Culture Seminar dedicated to the YOSC.

The seminar allowed ENAVSECG members to participate and exchange security culture experiences and best practices. It also included practical exercises to assess the achieved level of security culture in aviation and the use of modern visualization technologies for the development of security culture.

The 24-hour Aviation Security Point of Contact Network (ICAO PoC/ANSECNET), regularly tested by the ICAO EUR/NAT Regional Office, is of great importance for the operational interaction between States.

We believe that we are still not using this communication mechanism efficiently enough, and we hope to be actively involved in supporting its expansion in the near future.

Another important area of improvement is the development of cooperation between national aviation security coordinators for ICAO USAP-CMA and national aviation security inspectors on the ENAVSECG platform. These persons constitute the backbone of the system for promoting an effective security culture in aviation and, therefore, facilitating their effective communication is one of our key tasks.

The introduction of an effective security culture among personnel at all levels within aviation entities should be based on continuous education and training of personnel with the unconditional provision of the triune objectives - providing knowledge, skills and the ability to communicate in the context of actions to identify and suppress Acts of Unlawful Interference.

IMPROVING INCIDENT AND SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY RESPONSE SYSTEMS

Proper personnel response to suspicious activity and incidents is an integral part of security culture.

ENAVSECG will continue to discuss and analyze best practices for improving various response systems and options for reporting suspicious activity through phone calls, text messages, and anonymous or face-to-face communications.

Ensuring personnel's preparedness to accept and respond appropriately to reported security incidents, including means to reward successful responses, must also be considered.

Staff training programs should contain practical training on how to identify and assess information about security threats and to respond to suspicious activities and incidents.

In order to improve personnel actions in emergencies (including the receipt of threat information) "emergency cards" should be developed and exchanged. This could be a short Guide for personnel to respond to the typical situations involving suspicious activity, threats, incidents, Acts of Unlawful Interference and terrorist attacks etc.

CONTINUOUS MONITORING OF YOSC IMPLEMENTATION AND MAINTENANCE OF AVIATION SECURITY CULTURE

Practical tools that can be used to assess progress in building security culture in aviation, in both States and specific airports, can be found in ICAO guidance material on the ICAO Security Culture website:

- Questions to assess progress in building security culture;
- Model checklists to test personnel's knowledge of security culture;
- Model questionnaires on security at the entrance to restricted areas;
- Key performance indicators of security culture implementation.

During the regional seminar conducted from June 30 to July 1, 2021, continuous monitoring of the implementation of the YOSC at State and Industry levels was discussed.

Security culture as the basis for the effectiveness of States' aviation security management systems requires a high level of performance from everyone. From policymakers, the national AVSEC inspectors, law enforcement officers, airline and airport personnel, ANSPs, developers and manufacturers of screening equipment and the personnel of educational institutions.

The advantage of a strong risk-based aviation security culture oriented to integrate security culture into the daily activities of civil aviation will allow us to proactively and significantly reduce the risks of possible acts of unlawful interference and terrorist threats, as well as eliminate potential operational, financial and reputational damage.