



SECOND HIGH-LEVEL CONFERENCE ON AVIATION SECURITY (HLCAS/2)

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Agenda Item 4: Achieving better synergies with other areas

JOINT APPROACH TO BORDER AND AVIATION SECURITY THREATS AT AIRPORTS

(Presented by Airports Council International and the International Air Transport Association)

SUMMARY

Airports can be platforms for a range of illicit activities, from smuggling and fraud to terrorism. A number of agencies operate at airports to prevent, detect or deter these activities. Initiatives put in place by one agency may be beneficial to another agency, but these are seldom coordinated. Overlaps waste scarce airport resources, government funds and passengers' time. This paper suggests a framework for multi-agency partnerships to address the range of security threats occurring at airports and achieve a more efficient use of resources.

Action by the High-level Conference on Aviation Security is in paragraph 5.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Airports are the starting point for many meaningful journeys and interactions, and a meeting point for families and friends. Unfortunately, airports also provide a platform for persons of ill intent to conduct unlawful activities such as crime, smuggling and terrorism.

1.2 Recent events have highlighted the potential for overlap between national security, border security and aviation security mandates. UN Security Council Resolution 2178 (2014) also recognizes that border control initiatives such as the collection of API and PNR data can help in the fight against terrorism by detecting the movement of foreign fighters.

1.3 In addition, the air transport industry is getting involved by virtue of playing a role in the fight against the trafficking of persons and illegal wildlife, recognizing the important role staff can play in identifying and reporting suspicious activities.

1.4 These developments indicate that there is progress in breaking down silos between aviation security (covered under Annex 17) and border security (partly covered under ICAO Annex 9). Indeed, there is merit in authorities sharing information and intelligence on a range of threats. Some studies have shown a possible link, or “nexus”, between organized crime and terrorism. However, areas

¹ English, Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian, and Spanish versions provided by ACI and IATA.

of synergy and the framework for cooperation have not been clearly defined. This creates pressures and duplications at national and airport level.

2. **DUPLICATIVE EFFORTS CREATE A STRAIN ON RESOURCES AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

2.1 Multiple agencies work at airports under different mandates: this includes law enforcement, customs, immigration, health/quarantine as well as aviation security. Resources, efforts and equipment are often duplicated to address different needs. For instance, x-ray equipment may be in place in the departure, transfer and arrival areas of airports, to identify different items of interest. Behaviour recognition officers may operate at different points of the journey to monitor different types of behaviour.

2.2 Such duplications create challenges for authorities (costs for taxpayers to deploy personnel and detection equipment), airports (space needed for various controls), for airlines and passengers (additional processing times at the border). Cost implications are likely to be present for all stakeholders. These challenges will only increase as air traffic grows strongly in the next years.

2.3 Where collaborative efforts are not in place, the situation may create additional pressures on a single point. For instance, transfer security screening checkpoints may be asked to help identify objects outside of their scope of work, such as detecting narcotics or illegal wildlife. These requests can affect screeners' ability to concentrate on detecting improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and aviation security prohibited items.

3. **CERTAIN MEASURES HELP ADDRESS BOTH BORDER AND AVIATION SECURITY THREATS**

3.1 ACI and IATA propose that States adopt more ambitious frameworks for cooperation between aviation security and border security. These frameworks should recognize that certain measures in place at airports can help address both border and aviation security needs. These include:

- **Intelligence and threat information sharing:** this layer of security can help identify a range of persons of interest. ICAO and its Member States should implement the new Annex 17 standard 3.1.4 (Amendment 16) and continue to promote the sharing of information, between agencies and with industry, about persons of interest and new modus operandi.
- **Behaviour analysis and surveillance:** ACI member airports have reported successes when introducing behaviour analysis programmes. However, most cases are linked to criminal activities such as fraud, theft, smuggling or money laundering. Detection of suspicious behaviours should not be limited to those indicating an aviation security threat (such as in Annex 17 Recommended Practice 4.1.3) and the system can be strengthened by cooperation between agencies and stakeholders deploying such programmes. Behaviour analysis programmes should be run in cooperation by border agencies, aviation security and law enforcement/police.
- **Awareness training and security culture:** the promotion of a strong security culture at airports is a powerful tool, that can help detect suspicious activities. This includes training and campaigns to report possible unlawful activities by insiders as well as passengers and visitors. Since indicators may point to different types of activities, security culture initiatives should be run in cooperation by border agencies, aviation security and law enforcement/police.

- **Security screening and sharing of images:** the emergence of Remote or Central Image Processing and the multiplexing of x-ray images is opening opportunities for x-ray images to be shared with other interested parties, such as border control or airports of transfer. Such sharing would ensure that aviation security screeners can focus on their core mandate (identifying IEDs and other prohibited items) while allowing other authorized parties to look for other threats, such as illegal wildlife or narcotics. ACI is moderating a session at the ICAO Aviation Security Symposium Industry Engagement Day that will explore these innovative concepts.
- **Data about persons and cargo:** ICAO Annex 9 already includes two Recommended Practices encouraging States to create a Single Window² that facilitates the lodging of cargo and passenger data (API and PNR) through one central point, before distribution to all relevant agencies – usually customs and immigration. Cooperation and sharing of data with other government agencies including aviation security authorities should be sought to allow for the risk-based screening of passengers and cargo. Additionally, the adoption of interactive API systems would enable appropriate steps to be taken prior to the flight departure.

4. **A PARTNERSHIP APPROACH TO DELIVERING MULTI-AGENCY INITIATIVES AT AIRPORTS**

4.1 ICAO Annex 9 Standard 8.19 requires that States establish a National Air Transport Facilitation Committee and Airport Facilitation Committees to coordinate facilitation activities between departments, agencies and other organizations of the State, as well as with airport and aircraft operators. While such coordinating bodies are useful, the practice when they exist is that they meet rarely and only provide a platform for sharing of information.

4.2 ACI and IATA suggest that States set up partnerships between government agencies, airports and industry stakeholders to agree on initiatives of mutual interest and deliver them jointly. The framework for such partnerships should clarify the funding for joint initiatives. Their goal should be to enhance national security while achieving a more efficient use of airport space, government resources and passengers' time at airports.

4.3 One example of a possible enhancement that will directly assist industry in successfully managing forecasted passenger growth is the concept of an integrated departure security and immigration checkpoint. Configuring both controls in this way enhances the opportunity for appropriate authorities to apply risk-based security to the physical and identity clearance of departing passengers, as well as an efficient use of airport real estate where infrastructure challenges exist.

4.4 In this context, ICAO could consider bringing its border security and aviation security activities closer together, and assess potential synergies between relevant provisions contained in Annex 9 and Annex 17 for enablement of new solutions.

4.5 These concepts could be further studied by a joint ICAO Working Group on Aviation and Border Security, which would be made up of experts from the Facilitation and Aviation Security Panels.

² Annex 9, Edition 15, R.P. 4.17.1 (single window for cargo data) and R.P. 9.1 (single window for passenger data)

5. **ACTION BY THE HIGH-LEVEL CONFERENCE**

5.1 The High-level Conference on Aviation Security is invited to:

- a) encourage States to consider multi-agency partnerships to address jointly the range of border and aviation security threats happening at airports and on-board airlines;
- b) request that ICAO puts forward proposals to bring its border and aviation security activities closer together.

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