

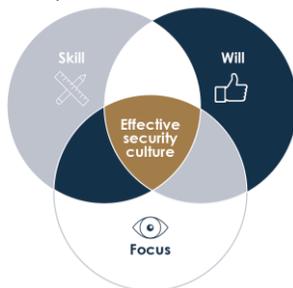
Security Culture - Aligning Skill, Will and Focus

In identifying 2021 as the Year of Security Culture, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) has recognised the most significant factor influencing the effectiveness of security measures applied to protect civil aviation. Culture in an organisational context, put simply, can be defined as 'the way we do things around here'¹; the key word being 'we' - the people who are responsible for ensuring the security of the travelling public and their colleagues.

Security measures contained within Annex 17 and the associated guidance in the ICAO Aviation Security Manual, Doc 8973, (Restricted) have evolved in-line with the threat to civil aviation. This evolution has seen the continual development of policies, procedures and technology necessary to mitigate the ever evolving threat. However, at its core, it is the commitment and diligence of the individuals applying the security measures that is the key driver of effective security.

As one of the ICAO recognised Aviation Security Training Centres (ASTC)², ASTC Doncaster, Redline Assured Security, has had the privilege of delivering the full suite of ICAO Aviation Security Training Packages and Workshops to delegates visiting us at the National Security Training Centre and overseas, with our Certified Instructors undertaking short term missions on behalf of ICAO Implementation Support and Development Section – Security (ISD-SEC)³. In our experience⁴, effective security is dependent upon three key components, 'skill', 'will' and 'focus'. A weakness in any one of these areas reduces the effectiveness of security, no matter how strong the other components are.

Structured training will ensure delegates are equipped with the knowledge, competence and confidence (skill) to fulfil their duties. However, in order to be effective, they require the necessary 'will' and 'focus'. The culture in which they operate must acknowledge that a qualification and certification is the start of the journey to excellence, not the endpoint.



¹ Schein, E

² [Aviation Security Training Centre \(ASTC\) Network \(icao.int\)](https://www.icao.int/aviation-security/astc-network/)

³ [ISD-SEC](#)

⁴ Redline specialises in delivering market leading security Training, Consultancy, Quality Assurance and Software solutions globally www.trustredline.co.uk

The impact of an effective mentoring programme focused on the transference of skills in the training environment into operational practice should not be underestimated and will, delivered well, ensure competence and confidence. However, we have witnessed first-hand security staff who, having proven their knowledge and competence to be at the highest level when under training and the scrutiny of the instructor, subsequently lapse and fail to apply the very same knowledge and competence in the operational environment. Invariably, this is due to a combination of a lack of 'will' and 'focus'. Their motivation and pride is diminished due to operational factors, e.g., their immediate supervision or organisational leadership does not encourage the same standards, or they lack the resources necessary to focus their attention effectively.

Both 'will' and 'focus' are crucial to developing a security culture. 'Will' can be best defined as the desire to be effective and is influenced significantly by the standards of the organisation in which an individual operates. Supervisory and management oversight and engagement is crucial in supporting and motivating people to apply and develop their knowledge and skills. This approach has to be cascaded down from the highest tiers of an organisation's leadership. Leaders must uphold the very same standards they expect from their people, they must 'walk the walk'. Aviation security managerial training focuses predominantly on roles and responsibilities; however, broader development in the art of supervision and management is essential for those directly responsible for the operational implementation of security if the 'will' is to be nurtured and developed within their teams.

'Focus' is best maintained through creating the right environment for people to perform, this spans the physical through to the mental. Do they have the necessary equipment, are they rotated through tasks, are they provided with appropriate rest breaks? In short, are they given the best opportunity to apply their skills effectively. Whilst 'will' is heavily influenced by an individual's chain of supervision and management, 'focus' is heavily reliant upon the organisational response to security, i.e., the systems, practices and processes designed to enable the effective application of security measures. The 'organisation' (leadership, managers and supervisors) must have a clear appreciation of the challenges staff face in striving to do their task well, and seek to alleviate and mitigate those as far as reasonably practicable.

Structured training in accordance with a state's National Civil Aviation Security Training Programme is essential to the effective implementation of security. However, it is the organisational attention to 'skill', 'will' and 'focus' that enables individuals to perform effectively, contribute to, and take ownership of, their security responsibilities. It forms the building blocks of a culture where security is everyone's responsibility.

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