



USAP-CMA Auditors share their thoughts on Security Culture

Following endorsement by the 40th Session of the ICAO Assembly, the Council of ICAO designated 2021 as the ICAO Year of Security Culture (YOSC). We, in the ICAO Aviation Security Audit Section, took this occasion to interview four of our certified USAP-CMA auditors, to get their perspectives on security culture. **Asmaa Osfour** (Morocco), **Claudia Radtke** (Germany), **Douglas Yeo** (Singapore) and **Salim Msangi** (Tanzania) were asked a series of questions regarding security culture, and the role of ICAO's security audit programme in helping to promote a strong and effective security culture. They share their thoughts with us in this article.

Do you feel that your role as a Universal Security Audit Programme – Continuous Monitoring Approach (USAP-CMA) auditor contributes to promoting security culture? And if so, how?

Salim strongly agrees that his role as a USAP-CMA auditor contributes to promoting a positive security culture. “When promoting a positive security culture, the overall objective is to create awareness and understanding of the nature of threats to civil aviation and to ensure compliance with Annex 17 SARPs, with the ultimate objective being to prevent acts of unlawful interference. During USAP-CMA audits, as ICAO auditors, we look forward to achieving the broad objectives of the audit, which are to promote effective global aviation security through continuous auditing and monitoring of Member States’ aviation security performance, thus enhancing their aviation security compliance and oversight capabilities”.

“During audit missions, we are not only auditors, but we also act as ambassadors for ICAO,” says *Douglas*. “As such, from our interactions and interviews with a State’s aviation stakeholders (regardless of whether they are directly or indirectly involved in AVSEC roles), we have the opportunity to reiterate the narrative, which is to highlight the importance of a strong and effective security culture and how it helps to strengthen processes and measures”.

Asmaa agrees, noting that “the USAP-CMA auditor is a security culture ambassador.” During an audit, auditors enhance both security awareness and security culture. The knowledge and competence that all ICAO USAP-CMA auditors possess through training, and professional experience enable them to assist State personnel and provide an example to follow regarding a positive and effective security culture, throughout the various phases of the audit”.

Salim adds “it is therefore understandable that as we



conduct audits and come up with recommendations, this brings awareness to the State to prioritize areas for improvement within their security system which need to be addressed according to the risk involved. The submission of the State's Corrective Action Plan (CAP) sets out how the findings will be addressed. This process continues, through monitoring the implementation of the CAP, to ensure sustainability of the system. Continuous engagement with regulated entities and close monitoring of implementation of the CAP cultivates security awareness, instills the need for compliance and ultimately promotes security culture. It is therefore worth noting that some States still find it difficult to interpret the requirement of certain Annex 17 – Security Standards, which results in failure of implementation of such standards or that they are implemented in a manner that was not intended. In this situation, the auditor helps to ensure States understand what is required of them and to comply. By providing clarification of Protocol Questions, we allow States to amend and add more clarity to their security programmes and policies for ease of implementation. Hence, we, as auditors, are promoting a positive security culture through the USAP-CMA activities.”

Do you think that the USAP-CMA programme has an impact on security culture? If yes, what is the impact?

In *Claudia's* opinion, ICAO USAP-CMA auditors are able to promote a sustainable security culture worldwide through their participation in audits. Recurring USAP-CMA audits take place in almost every Member State, highlighting the importance that aviation security be seen as a serious and ongoing subject. The results of these audits also provide ICAO with a very good global view of aviation security standards.

The results of each audit and the involvement of the ICAO Regional Offices (accredited to the audited Member States), can also provide target-oriented solutions and support to further strengthen the aviation security landscape.

For *Asmaa*, being audited is motivational for security and non-security personnel. “From screeners to cleaners, from top government officials and industry leaders to frontline workers, and from taxi drivers to those working in the airport, everyone has a vital role during the different phases of the USAP-CMA audit, which will improve their security in aviation operations. **All aviation personnel can, directly or indirectly, have a positive impact on security within their organizations.** It is up to their leadership to guide them in maximizing that impact. It also



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Douglas Yeo is the Senior Deputy Director for Security Policy and Emergency Preparedness with the Ministry of Transport, Singapore.

Douglas led Singapore's effort in developing and implementing an air cargo supply chain security regime and Singapore's national civil aviation security quality control programme. In addition he is the vice-chair of the ICAO Facilitation Panel (FALP) and chairs the ICAO Asia and Pacific Regional Aviation Security Coordination Forum (RASCF).

Douglas graduated in 1993 with a Honours degree in Economics and holds professional qualifications as an AVSEC Professional Manager, ICAO Certified *AVSEC Instructor and ICAO Certified USAP Auditor*.

certainly depends on the level of involvement of the audited State, but it goes without saying that generally the USAP-CMA has a direct impact on security culture at audited airports, and also worldwide".

Douglas further explains that "the evolution of the USAP to a Continuous Monitoring Approach (CMA) has created an incentive to continue to do well, day to day, and not just during the USAP audit. This is because there is a shift in responsibility. Instead of the ICAO Aviation Security Audit Section (ASA) just measuring the health and compliance of a State's AVSEC system during the audit, a snapshot if you will, the Member State now must continue keeping the bar high for compliance with Annex 17 and Annex 9 security-related SARPs every day, because security incidents can happen any time. To continue their efforts to maintain compliance, **Member States have to rally their stakeholders in the aviation eco-system,**

including both government and industry, directly or indirectly involved in AVSEC, and even those with no role in AVSEC, to play their part and do well each and every day. This will only be possible if there is a strong sense of a common purpose with each stakeholder doing their part. This sense of a common purpose enables the germination of a security culture within a State."

As for *Salim*, the entire audit cycle has a direct bearing on promoting a positive security culture in States that have been scheduled for an audit. The preparation phase helps to prepare and shape the State for the audit, to create security awareness and ignites the interest of the State and all entities involved in the implementation of aviation security measures in addition to start making the necessary preparations for the audit. Some States organize a number of "awareness and compliance" meetings with aviation stakeholders to ensure that everyone is familiarized with the planned audit and focuses on addressing areas of weakness in their security systems. States can also use the ICAO protocol questions to conduct self-assessments and determine their level of compliance ahead of USAP-CMA audits. During the actual audit, debriefing meetings are held between the ICAO audit team and officials from the State being audited, and the message delivered during this meeting provides a better understanding of the need to effectively comply with ICAO SARPs. During the reporting phase, the audit report is sent to the State for them to prepare the Corrective Action Plan (CAP), which includes the State's commitment to take actions to address findings in a realistic timeframe. ICAO then continuously follows-up and monitors progress of implementation of the CAP



submitted by the State, and States are kept alert and engaged to ensure compliance on an ongoing basis.

Outside of conducting an audit, do you feel that being a USAP-CMA auditor has contributed to your own security culture? How?

Before he became a USAP-CMA auditor, *Salim* attended several training courses and workshops. Thereafter, he has been involved in ICAO USAP-CMA audit activities of Member States as a team member and has participated in technical support activities as an aviation security expert on behalf of ICAO to assist States to comply with ICAO SARPs. “All these mission activities have contributed greatly to my own understanding of security culture and security awareness. These missions have given me experience and a good understanding of ICAO requirements, exposed me to a wider understanding of the nature of threats to civil aviation and risks associated with non-compliance with established security measures. As an auditor, I understand the benefits of a strong and effective security culture and the need to comply with security measures wherever they are established. Whenever I notice any behaviour or conduct amounting to breach of security procedures, I genuinely feel that I have an obligation to take action to correct the situation immediately, and that is security culture”.

“AVSEC is a never-ending process of analyzing current threat potentials, economic efficiencies from aviation stakeholders as well as different standards and practices,” says *Claudia*. “I highly value the expert exchange with other ICAO USAP-CMA auditors as every country has different aviation security procedures. Our role is to balance the security demand with the economic reality of each Member State. Over the years, I was able to build up a worldwide network, which enables me to discuss security problems and issues outside of ICAO audits. Often, there are already implementation methods in other countries, from whose experience the aviation security authorities in Germany and I personally benefit. One example is that I can use the information and knowledge gained from participating in ICAO audits to improve quality control activities in my own country.”

Asmaa further declares that she has acquired a good understanding of the continuous surveillance method of the USAP which allows her “to have a high level of competence in aviation security, a good understanding of the interpretation of Annex 17 Standards, States’ different regulatory approaches, as well as the different security solution models and different airport configurations, contributing to improve my own



Claudia Radtke is a senior chief inspector at the German Federal Police Headquarters, Section Aviation since 2009. She started to work at the German Federal Police in 2003, and

became a junior inspector at Leipzig - Halle airport in 2006. In 2009 she also acted as document advisor at the European Border and Coast Guard Agency. Claudia is a qualified AVSEC Instructor and screener examiner since 2006. In 2013 she qualified as a national auditor and in 2015 she was certified as an ICAO USAP-CMA auditor.



aviation security knowledge and security culture”.

From your experience as a USAP-CMA auditor, what still needs to be done to improve security culture nationally and globally?

Douglas believes that the promotion of security should start from the top management, leading by example. “Fundamentally, Member States should view AVSEC as something which should be practised every day.” The challenge arises from the competing use of domestic resources for AVSEC, since resources such as manpower and budgets are finite, and a State will have to prioritize how it allocates funding for all its operations. We are taking a step in the right direction by promoting the Year of Security Culture, bringing to the forefront what **benefits a strong security culture** would bring, and organizing workshops on understanding what security culture is and what we can do to enhance it. What more can we do? Perhaps more can be done by documenting and sharing success stories, which would reinforce the positive effect of security culture on the AVSEC system”.

According to *Asmaa*, **States, industry and other organizations and stakeholders should support security culture initiatives**, recognizing their impact on improving civil aviation as a whole. Leaders need to use a variety of methods to build and promote a positive security culture and adhering to high-level policies and procedures that define security and security culture. Nationally, this can include public awareness campaigns, promoting the reporting of suspicious activity immediately, airport vision statements, written communications and staff announcements, as well as activities such as aviation security weeks, seminars and brainstorming with different stakeholders. Globally, aviation security culture can be further promoted through the integration of technical security personnel from Member States into research and development security teams. Furthermore, the development of a program to assess the level of security culture in Member States should be considered, in order to encourage States to raise the level of security.

For *Claudia*, identified deficiencies and initiated corrective actions supplemented by training measures for airport staff, lead to an increase in the aviation security with an improvement of the overall security culture. “Following from this observation, a possible approach to further improve global aviation security could be to increase the number of ICAO audits conducted per year. However, due to the large number of Member States and the available number of staff within ICAO, this cannot be implemented at this time.

According to *Salim*, **developing an effective security culture requires management commitment and setting aside resources**, which could be in the form of equipment, material, additional personnel, time, space, leadership, etc., to facilitate various activities related to the promotion of security culture. “Enough resources will only be availed if the top management understands and appreciates the benefit associated with a positive security culture.” Each employee should be aware of which kind of behaviour promotes security culture, allowing employers to assess and document their performance against this behaviour as part of the appraisal process. Feedback should be provided to staff on their security behaviour, recognition should be given for positive



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develop government owned aerodromes all over Tanzania. He also worked as an officer in the Tanzania Police Force.

Salim holds a Master of Philosophy degree in Public Administration from the University of Bergen-Norway. He is an ICAO certified USAP-CMA auditor and AVSEC Instructor. He has also been involved in a number of assistance missions to States.

promoting a strong and effective aviation security culture. The relevant authorities are planning to implement all the necessary measures to promote and enhance security culture, including, among others: creating flyers, posters, leaflets and advertising material to highlight the importance of specific security measures; promoting exhibitions and workshops that enable all personnel, including management, to better understand the importance and the rationale behind security culture in the organization; providing personnel with information, directly through public speeches, regular briefings and handouts that promote sustained security awareness; training personnel on security culture and providing continuous learning activities, both on an initial and recurring basis; using e-learning tools and digital media that reinforce security culture messages; leveraging internal communication platforms such as intranet articles, newsletters, brochures and videos that promote a positive security culture; and establishing a reporting framework that affords protection for those who report incidents and their sources. All are invited to share with others aviation security culture best practices, using ICAO's Security Culture website for that purpose. For example, the sharing of guidance material, toolkits, e-learning tools, short films, pamphlets and articles that establish and encourage a positive security culture is encouraged."

Claudia responds that Germany is currently working on a national campaign to train as many employees as possible on the subject of insider threats at German airports. They also created a

security behaviour, and consequences or sanctions should be applied for failure to adhere to security requirements. Creating monitoring and evaluation systems will achieve success and guarantee a robust security culture that is capable of raising the profile of aviation security.

In this year of security culture, is your State (organization/agency) planning any activities to promote security culture?

According to *Asmaa*, a transformation in aviation security culture will not be easy. Considerable efforts will be necessary to embed security consciousness within normal operations. **Hard work and leadership commitment will be required for multi-agency approaches for security to become the norm**, necessitating an approach that will focus on aviation security as a whole and not just on specific aspects.

"As a country occupying a strategic position in the world, my state, Morocco, is highly committed to



respective film to highlight the importance of this matter. “This is an active approach to promote security culture and shows that another field of security is being worked on”.

Salim informs us that this year, the United Republic of Tanzania has planned a number of activities, which will ensure a robust security culture is created at airports and capable of raising the profile of aviation security. He indicates that the activities include an official launch of the YOSC campaign by the Minister of Works and Transport, the conduct of security awareness to the parliamentary committee responsible for infrastructure developments, holding awareness training workshops at international airports and major domestic airports to promote the ICAO YOSC initiatives, conducting awareness training courses for airport staff on security culture, preparing flyers and brochures containing awareness messages to the public regarding ICAO YOSC, advising operators to post YOSC signage at airports and operator premises, making YOSC a permanent item on agendas for NCASC and other organizational meetings, publishing YOSC contributions in the newsletters and other media and regular uploading of material to promote YOSC on corporate websites.

While USAP-CMA audits contribute to the continuous improvement of aviation security worldwide, aviation security culture is a key factor for all States to keep improving their results. For more information, please visit the ICAO security culture website here: <https://www.icao.int/Security/Security-Culture/Pages/default.aspx>



The ASA Section thanks

Asmaa, Claudia, Douglas and Salim for taking the time to provide their insight for this article and also thanks all auditors for their participation in the USAP.