

**ICAO GLOBAL AIR TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT FORUM
ON CIVIL/MILITARY COOPERATION
(19 -21 OCTOBER 2009)**

**BUILDING UNDERSTANDING AND RELATIONSHIPS AS A
VEHICLE FOR COOPERATION**

PRESENTATION BY GHANA

INTRODUCTION

1. Right from its inception, ICAO recognized the different operating requirements for civil and military aircraft. Basically, ICAO recommended and standard practices are set out in various Annexes to the ICAO conventions. In trying to rationalize problems associated with civil and military air operation, it is essential to note the different roles played by the two institutions. While civil aircraft operations lay emphasis on safety, orderly and expeditious flow of traffic, the military operators emphasize tactical freedom and flexibility in all weather conditions. Of course, the military pilot is equally concerned for his own safety and that of his equipment just as his civilian counterpart.

2. Common interest in the aviation industry dictates that the civil and military authorities not only coordinate their activities but also cooperate to promote their mutual interests. It must be emphasized that the level of cooperation will vary from country to country depending on a number of factors viz: History, Political and Security environment, National Policies, Available Resources and even interpersonal relations at the various levels of management. May it be emphasized that there is no standard military air operation or requirement. These vary from state to state. As such, the level of cooperation will vary from place to place. It is on this understanding that we will discuss civil/military operation in Ghana.

3. Presentation Outline

In discussing civil/military cooperation in Ghana the following will be covered:

- a. National Culture
- b. Airspace Use
- c. Interpersonal Relations at Management Levels
- d. Training (Local/External)
- e. Working Relationship between the civil and military
- f. Social integration/cooperation programmes
- g. National Policy on Search and Rescue

4. National Culture

Ghana's National Culture engenders integration in many areas of society. The social and political environment promotes cohesion at all levels thereby laying the foundation for cooperation.

5. **Airspace Use.** (The Accra FIR which is under the responsibility of Ghana, cover the territorial airspace of Ghana, Togo and Benin a large area of the Atlantic Ocean up to Latitude 9 degrees south. The Centre of the World lies within the Accra FIR where the Prime Meridian Long 000 meets the Equator Latitude 000 degrees). Ghana Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA) has responsibility for providing Air Navigation Services in the Accra FIR. Much as the airspace looks big; (national sovereignty and military considerations naturally necessitate controlled access to the airspace).

There is therefore the need to use the available airspace judiciously. An Operator has to apply for over-flight clearance 48 hours before entry. Applications are processed expeditiously. In the case of Ghana, permanent designation of areas as Special Use Airspace for the exclusive use by the military does not apply. Designated airspaces for military training are activated for military use either by the issuance of NOTAM or filing of flight plans covering specific periods. For the rest of the period, civil aircraft is at liberty to use the airspace.

6. **Personnel Relationships.** Historically, Ghana has been fortunate to have retired military officers serving on GCAA management either as Directors or Chief Executives. The commonality of their professional qualifications has offered many retired officers from the Air Force to be employed at GCAA. This employment opportunity covers operational as well as middle and senior management positions. The military has also had a history of recruiting some young civilian air traffic controllers. This fact, though very rare, is testimony of the strength of Civil/Military Cooperation in Ghana. By virtue of the military background of a sizeable number of personnel at GCAA, it is easier to discuss issues of common interest between the civil and military authorities.

6. **Training.** GCAA employees and personnel of the Ghana Air Force have trained together in many fields over the years. The two organizations have different training facilities from which they train each other. The School of Trade Training at Air Force Base, Accra trains technical personnel for GCAA. Likewise, Aviation Training School (ATC) at GCAA provides avenue for training ATC officers for the Air Force. The Air Force also trains on GCAA simulators and has opened its doors for civilian air traffic controllers to have flying exposure in the GAF Flight simulators. The military and civil aviation cooperate in training of firemen. This is very essential for the standardization of their practices and operational readiness.

As we speak, there is a fire station being built by GCAA on the Air Force side of the Kotoka International Airport. This will be manned by both Civil and Military personnel thus demonstrating practical pooling of resources and optimum utilisation of existing capacity.

Annually, Ghana Air Force organizes Aviation Safety Seminar. Personnel of GCAA are always invited to participate as both resource personnel and participants. Cooperation in the field of training does not end with local training. To promote standardization, GCAA, from time to time sponsor ATC officers from the Air Force to train in the same schools that their personnel train in outside Ghana. I am a beneficiary of one of such sponsorships.

7. **Working Relations.** Civil/Military cooperation among airspace users in Ghana is greatly enhanced by operating together at aerodromes. This does not only promote formal relationships but interpersonal friendships are also cultivated. GCAA personnel have been operating together with the Military at Tamale since the airport was opened.

ATC and Rescue Fire Fighting Service (RFFS) personnel operate side by side. This has allowed them to know how to operate each other's equipment. As a result, flexibility was introduced into their annual leave system. It must be stressed here that GCAA and the Air Force on their own do not have sufficient personnel to efficiently man the facilities. .

It is normal for Ghana Air Force to fly GCAA personnel round the country for airfield inspections and management meetings on gratis. My presence here was sponsored by GCAA. Ghana Air Force also sponsors programmes such as forums which are organised by the Ghana Air Traffic Controllers Association.

The mutual support had thus promoted efficiency. The relationship we cultivated with my counterparts at GCAA when we were working together at ATC has enabled us to approach them for assistance at any time we need to. Formal procedures are side stepped thus saving a lot of time. The same is reciprocated when they need my assistance. I must say that working together is not forced by a national policy but by the cordial relationships which exist among the two entities right from management level to the operational man in the field.

Direct Communication

Both military and civil authorities maintain direct mobile phone coordination with one another whilst hotline communication exists between Control Tower and Ghana Air Force Operations. Ghana Civil Aviation Authority is invited to all GAF official and social functions. Most civil and military personnel address one another by the first name; underscoring the closeness our interpersonal working relationships.

There are annual fun games between the GAF and GCAA which the two alternate to host.

There is not a dedicated Civil/Military manual but there are regular meetings between GAF and GCAA to discuss all issues of concern to both parties. Agreements which are agreed at such meetings are incorporated in the Operational Manuals and Letters of Procedures.

8. **National Policy.** No country has the resources to equip the Civil Aviation Authority with all the resources and personnel required to carry out SAR operations. Either all or parts of their Armed Forces are tasked as a matter of policy to conduct SAR operations within their airspace. The case of Ghana is not different. The Ghana Armed Forces led by the Air Force has been tasked to put their equipment and personnel at the disposal of GCAA in time of Search and Rescue. While GCAA retains the RCC, the Military are put in the

field when there is the need for SAR. Coordination is done from the RCC which is manned by both civilian and military officers.

9. CONCLUSION

Civil/Military coordination in Ghana as far as airspace use is concerned has been taken a step further than that recommended by ICAO in Annex 2. National Culture has fostered a good working relationship between management at GCAA and the Armed Forces. This has percolated down to the individual worker in the field. Training in the same institution and working together at various stations have generated special working relationship among the civil and military personnel. Currently GCAA hosts the RCC but the military provide equipment and personnel for SAR in Ghana's airspace. This has worked well for Ghana.

The GAF and GCAA believe that Civil/Military cooperation is neither an act nor event but a consistent and conscious determination to continuously build understanding and relationship as a vehicle to achieving mutual objectives.

10. Looking Ahead

Consider the publication of a dedicated Civil/Military Manual and Letters of Procedures.

Thank you! Merci! Me Da Ase!