



ASSEMBLY — 41ST SESSION

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 14: Aviation Security - Policy

CONTINUED IMPORTANCE OF SECURITY CULTURE AS AIR TRAVEL RECOVERS

(Presented by Singapore and United States)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper highlights the continued importance of Security Culture as global air travel recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic. Singapore and the United States have jointly developed an Information Sheet on Security Culture (see Appendix), which can be used by all stakeholders to promote the importance of Security Culture and to supplement other ICAO-supported Security Culture resources.

Action: The Assembly is invited to take the actions as set out in paragraph 4.

<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	This working paper relates to the Strategic Objective <i>Security & Facilitation</i>
<i>Financial implications:</i>	None
<i>References:</i>	None

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Last year, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), its Member States and industry designated 2021 as the Year of Security Culture (YOSC). A common theme that arose throughout the year's activities was that Security Culture should be ingrained in every organization, including within the civil aviation eco-system. The YOSC successfully provided opportunities to promote Security Culture through efforts and contributions by ICAO, its Contracting States and industry partners. It was especially pertinent during the recent period, when the international civil aviation community was seriously affected by the global COVID-19 pandemic. By conducting activities to build and maintain a culture of security during a period of low air travel passenger operations, some States have benefited with a smoother recovery because Security Culture was able to be maintained, sustained, and enhanced in time for air travel to resume. However, even though the YOSC has passed, it is crucial that the aviation community remains proactive and sustains efforts to enhance Security Culture.

2. IMPORTANCE OF SUSTAINING EFFORTS ON SECURITY CULTURE

2.1 As many countries and regions are reopening their borders to international travel, civil aviation operations are gradually resuming and increasing back to or above pre-pandemic levels. As an effective Security Culture was needed before and during the pandemic, so too will it play a key role in contributing to the safe and secure recovery of air travel post-pandemic and beyond. For example, the

Insider Risk has been a challenge for the aviation community for some time now and may have also been exacerbated by circumstances brought about by the pandemic. Building and maintaining an effective Security Culture program can help aviation stakeholders to mitigate the Insider Risk and other aviation threats. This can be accomplished through various efforts, such as employee understanding of the prevailing threats, security awareness activities, development of an effective reporting system, and heightened vigilance by staff, to name a few.

2.2 In a recent example of effective culture of security at work, a vigilant Transportation Security Officer at an airport in the United States noticed a pilot “may have been impaired” while completing checkpoint screening and reported the observation to the proper authorities.¹ This successful reporting of suspicious activity resulted in prevention of the pilot from flying while impaired, which could have led to an incident with grave impacts. This is just one example of how Security Culture helps strengthen individuals’ domain awareness and vigilance, which can bolster the security posture of the aviation ecosystem. This example also makes clear why it is important for all in the aviation community to sustain Security Culture efforts after the YOSC and post-pandemic. An effective Security Culture supports the resumption of civil aviation operations back to or above pre-pandemic levels.

3. INFORMATION SHEET ON SECURITY CULTURE

3.1 To emphasize and promote the continued importance of Security Culture, including in an aviation ecosystem recovering from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, Singapore and the United States have jointly developed an “Information Sheet on Security Culture” containing key elements and principles of Security Culture. The aim of this Information Sheet is to complement existing documents, including the ICAO Toolkit on Enhancing Security Culture, by highlighting key areas on this important issue. Additionally, the Information Sheet incorporates information from the experiences of Singapore and the United States on effective Security Culture principles that they have gained both domestically and globally through trainings, events, and activities. The Information Sheet on Security Culture can be found in the Appendix.

4. ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN

4.1 The Assembly is invited to:

- a) Recognise the continued importance of Security Culture, particularly as air travel recovers from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic; and
- b) Support the Information Sheet on Security Culture, jointly developed by Singapore and the United States, as an additional tool that can be used to help promote Security Culture throughout the civil aviation eco-system.

¹ <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/02/nyregion/jetblue-pilot-alcohol.html>

APPENDIX



Information Sheet on Security Culture Jointly Developed by Singapore and the United States of America

What?

Security culture refers to a set of security-related norms, values, attitudes, and assumptions that are inherent in the daily operation of an organisation and are reflected by the actions and behaviours of all entities and personnel within the organisation.

Why?

Security culture can help organisations achieve the following:

- a) As a core organisational value, enhance the security of the operation by enabling the engagement of a workforce that possesses a strong security mindset;
- b) Support organisational goals by becoming an integral part of its operations as well as product offerings; and
- c) Contribute to the resilience of operations and processes, particularly during high risk period.

Who?

Security is not merely the concern and responsibility of security agencies and organisations. Everyone, from members of the public and passengers to employees working at the airport, has a stake in maintaining the security of aircraft and the airport and civil aviation facilities.

Benefits of an effective security culture

An effective security culture can bring the following benefits to an organisation:

- a) Contributes to reducing vulnerability by mitigating security risks;
- b) Provides a sense of ownership to the staff by knowing that their actions create a safer flying experience;
- c) Sets an environment that passengers can expect and rely upon when they travel;
- d) Increases likelihood of staff reporting on suspicious behaviour and/or activities;
- e) Enables swift and appropriate responses to security incidents;
- f) Increases levels of compliance with security requirements;
- g) Enhances security capabilities without the need for large expenditure; and
- h) Facilitates a greater sense of security and responsibility amongst the workforce.

Elements of a Strong Security Culture

A strong security culture is imbued with the following elements:

- a) A positive work environment that influences staff commitment to strive to enhance their organisation's security performance;
- b) Staff equipped with necessary skills, knowledge and understanding on importance of security as well as proper procedure and processes to carry out the requisite tasks;
- c) A clear understanding of the prevailing threats that the organisation is facing and how those threats change over time;
- d) Explicit support from the organisation's management in promoting strong security culture. Management championing the importance of security, establish clear goals as well as setting the tone by being an example and provide support throughout the process;
- e) A high level of vigilance amongst staff in looking out for suspicious behaviour and activities;
- f) Effective reporting systems to enable giving fast attention to incidents and that possess clear reporting procedure and guidelines for staff to adhere to;
- g) A clear incident response plan that not only specifies the roles and responsibilities of all staff in the organisation, but one which is also well-communicated;
- h) A reward system that recognises and promotes positive security attitude displayed by staff;
- i) Strong information security that secures sensitive security information and prevents misuse by unauthorised personnel; and
- j) A system of constant review and monitoring, through measuring staff perceptions on security as well as their understanding of threat and risk, to determine the effectiveness of efforts in promoting strong security culture.

How?

Organisations looking to promote strong security culture may consider the following approaches:

- a) Recruit and hire a capable and diverse team of exceptional individuals to start promoting security culture;
- b) Establish effective communication channels and promote responsiveness, inclusion, and collaboration;
- c) Retain, reward, and promote high performers and define career paths for advancement;
- d) Develop and sustain the systems and infrastructure necessary to support our workforce; and
- e) Foster an environment of continual learning and growth that instills shared organizational values and advances technical, critical thinking, and leadership skills:
 - i. **Insider Risk Awareness Training:** Staff are provided with the definition of an insider threat, indicators, case examples, and reporting mechanisms;
 - ii. **Security Awareness Training:** Provides an overview of how to identify suspicious activity, maintain situational awareness, and what staff need to know when reporting suspicious activity (e.g. "See something say something");
 - iii. **Behavior Awareness Training:** Critical thinking, classroom-based training on establishing the environmental baseline and recognizing deviations, identifying suspicious behaviors, articulating suspicious behaviors, responding to behavioral threats, and reporting suspicious incidents; and
 - iv. **Leadership Training:** Provides staff at all levels leadership fundamentals.

References

Various tools and resources are available to help to develop, maintain and sustain an effective security culture. You may refer to ICAO Toolkit on Enhancing Security Culture to learn more. The link is as follows: <https://www.icao.int/Security/Security-Culture/Pages/ICAO-Resources.aspx>