



International Civil Aviation Organization

**WORKING PAPER**

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**ASSEMBLY — 41ST SESSION**

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**Agenda Item 14: Aviation Security — Policy**

**AVIATION SECURITY THREAT AND RISK ASSESSMENT**

(Presented by Bahrain)

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This paper highlights the importance of adopting a clear methodology for assessing aviation security threats and risks, enabling states to put in place appropriate and flexible security processes and mitigation measures. The paper further emphasizes the role of ICAO in assisting Member States through the *No Country Left Behind initiative*, offering financial and technical assistance to the Member States in need. Furthermore, Member States are encouraged to report acts of unlawful interference and share their expertise and best practices, thus enabling ICAO to develop essential tools, guidance material and training.

The paper additionally stresses the need for ICAO, through the Working Group on Threat and Risk (WGTR), to update the *Aviation Security Global Risk Context Statement* (Doc 10108) to include risk-based assessments and consider new or amended aviation security measures.

**Action:** The Assembly is invited to:

- a) urge States to report acts of unlawful interference, exchange information and best practices and share their experiences regarding threat and risk assessments to enable ICAO to develop and provide essential tools, guidance material and training on threat assessment and risk management.

<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	This working paper relates to the <i>Security and Facilitation</i> Strategic Objective.
<i>Financial implications:</i>	
<i>References:</i>	Assembly Resolution A40-11: <i>Consolidated Statement on Continuing ICAO Policies Related to Aviation Security</i> Assembly Resolution A39-18: <i>Consolidated Statement on Continuing ICAO Policies Related to Aviation Security</i> Doc 8973, <i>ICAO Aviation Security Manual</i> Doc 10108, <i>Aviation Security Global Risk Context Statement</i> Doc 10118, <i>Global Aviation Security Plan (GASeP)</i>

<sup>1</sup> Arabic version provided by Bahrain.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Civil aviation remains an attractive target for diverse reasons, as terrorists continuously seek to take advantage of actual or perceived vulnerabilities in civil aviation to launch their attacks. Despite the promulgation of new legislation and enhancements to promote aviation security, terrorists are developing new techniques and weapons to circumvent or overcome the mitigation measures. Following some full or partial successes over the recent years, terrorists continue to plan for more direct and targeted attacks.

1.2 Member States can combat terrorist threats most effectively by identifying, understanding and addressing potential risks faced or caused by civil aviation. This must be done by constantly reviewing the nature of threats to civil aviation operations within their respective territories and adapting the relevant elements of their National Civil Aviation Security Programmes (NCASPs).

1.3 Furthermore, an ongoing threat is most efficiently addressed by identifying and countering its underlying risks. It should be stressed, however, that it is impossible to compile a pre-determined list of risks as there are no pre-determined plans that terrorists readily use or implement when needed in a single well-known manner.

1.4 Therefore, correct and reliable information is essential in any aviation security threat and risk assessment system. Another equally important element is that the relevant security authorities must continuously gather information on threats that potentially target civil aviation and provide civil aviation authorities (CAAs) with validated information in due time on any given civil aviation threat while ensuring confidentiality and efficiency.

## 2. DISCUSSION

2.1 ICAO provides the Member States with guidelines on the threats and risks that exist around the world by periodically publishing the *Aviation Security Global Risk Context Statement* (Doc 10108), which presents critical information on global threats, as well as a risk assessment of risks faced by aviation security across the world.

2.2 However, the results and assessments cited in this document are insufficient, as they are limited to the information and reports ICAO receives from Member States and other sources. Even though information sharing continues to be a sensitive issue linked to the sovereignty of States, since most information is classified as confidential by concerned state security authorities, States must play an unequivocally important role by providing ICAO with information on risks threatening civil air aviation operations and joining the Aviation Security Point of Contact Network, which ICAO has established and urged States to participate in, by Resolution A39-18.

2.3 It is to be noted that the level of threats and risks varies from one State and one geographic region to another. The same applies to the resources made available by States to combat threats, as they, too, vary from one state to another. In that regard, ICAO can play a part in minimizing such different capabilities by seeking to offer financial and technical assistance to developing states and states in need of assistance through the *No Country Left Behind* initiative.

2.4 In addition to the requirements of ICAO Standards and Recommended Practises (SARPs) and guidance material on aviation security risk assessment, namely Annex 17 - *Aviation Security*, the ICAO *Aviation Security Manual* (Doc 8973) and the *Aviation Security Global Risk Context Statement* (Doc 10108),

States remain fully responsible for safeguarding their civil aviation sectors against acts of unlawful interference. To do so, they must maintain efficient systems for identifying threats and assessing risks, set up precise and safe mechanisms for processing threat information and disseminate it on a need-to-know basis.

2.5 It is essential to acknowledge some misunderstanding or misconceptions regarding aviation security risk assessments compared to an overall national risk assessment, i.e. the national security of any state. The situation is exacerbated by the lack of clarity in defining the responsibilities and mandates of entities responsible for assessing threats and risks, in addition to any misinterpretation of the role of civil aviation authorities in inspection and oversight of all civil aviation security operations within the territory of a given state. That role should not in any way impact or overlap with the functions of other entities across the aviation security field. Clarifying this ambiguity would require States to clearly identify such mandates and responsibilities in their NCASPs, ensuring there is no overlap in the mandates of different authorities. To do so, they must delineate the various objectives sought by the parties involved and the specific goals of entities dealing with aviation.

2.6 Furthermore, training, awareness, qualification and capacity building are all crucial elements for any civil aviation authority to successfully mainstream such concepts across the sector and recognize that aviation security is a joint responsibility shouldered by all national entities and stakeholders in charge of aviation security, in accordance with their obligations and mandates defined in the National Aviation Security Programme (NASP).

### 3. CONCLUSION

3.1 Assessing and analysing actual risks contributes to obtaining optimal results through continuous intelligence gathering and evaluating all relevant data. Such a methodology will allow for the establishment of flexible and appropriate security measures and procedures to address the various threats targeting civil aviation.

3.2 ICAO can play a critical role in implementing an effective aviation security threat and risk assessment methodology by urging Member States to report acts of unlawful interference within their territories, exchange information on threats, share best practices and promote global cooperation in the field. That, in turn, will assist ICAO in developing relevant tools, guidance material and training on risk assessment, evaluation of threats and the necessary means of addressing them.