



INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION

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and Spanish only¹

ASSEMBLY – 35TH SESSION

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 14: Aviation security

AVIATION SECURITY

(Presented by Airports Council International)

SUMMARY

ACI welcomes the action taken by ICAO to improve aviation security and reflect the changing nature of the threats to aviation. Seventeen new Standards were added to Annex 17 in less than 10 months after the events of September 11, 2001 and a worldwide security audit system rapidly implemented, demonstrating ICAO's ability to act decisively and swiftly in a crisis situation.

As to funding, ACI and its industry partners have repeatedly emphasized that terrorism targets States, not civil aviation, and therefore that States should fund all countermeasures against terrorism and implement such measures as elements of national defence, in close consultation with the industry.

Suggested Assembly action is presented in paragraph 8.

INTRODUCTION

1. ACI welcomes recent steps taken by ICAO and its Contracting States to raise the global aviation security baseline. Indeed, much of the 33rd ICAO Assembly in late September/October 2001 was focused on aviation security, culminating in the decision to convene, in February 2002, the High-level Ministerial Conference on Aviation Security. That Conference underscored that the highest priority was being placed on aviation security with over 700 participants attending from 154 States and 24 international organizations. The recommendations of the High-level Ministerial Conference, including strengthening of Annex 17 and creating an ICAO Universal Security Audit Programme, have already been implemented through extraordinary cooperation between the ICAO Secretariat, Contracting States and international organizations such as ACI, IATA, IFALPA, IBAC, together with other industry partners.

¹ English French and Spanish versions provided by ACI

2. ACI has provided its own input to the ICAO security process as an observer on the ICAO AVSEC Panel, and it has also joined forces with its industry partners through positions adopted jointly through GASAG (the Global Aviation Security Action Group) and ACI endorses the industry positions described in WP/71 submitted by IATA. ACI has been joined by its GASAG partners in emphasizing that terrorism against civil aviation is targets States, and that it is States which must fund the countermeasures to combat terrorism. Moreover, such countermeasures should be threat-based and should be developed in close consultation with the industry. In the same way, the industry needs access to intelligence on the evolving threat situation, and airport operators and other stakeholders must be fully briefed on the most current intelligence assessments of potential threats.

ANNEX 17: AMENDMENT 10

3. Amendment 10 to Annex 17 was exceptional in a number of ways. First and foremost, the new amendment introduced 17 new Standards, a number unprecedented in ICAO history. One notable Standard made Annex 17 applicable to domestic, as well as to international flights, recognizing the need for a uniform high level of security to prevent terrorists and criminals from entering the global network at a weak point. Also of critical importance were Standards requiring hardening of the cockpit door and 100 percent checked baggage screening by the end of 2006. Also noteworthy was the fast-track process which ICAO used to bring Amendment 10 to Annex 17 into force in July 2002, less than ten months after the events of 9/11.

STATISTICAL EVIDENCE OF PROGRESS

4. ICAO's most recent statistics on acts of unlawful interference against civil aviation would indicate that the global security baseline has indeed been raised. The number of acts of unlawful seizure of aircraft was just two in 2002 and three in 2003, the lowest numbers of such acts in recent years (the average had been over 16 such acts per year since 1970). While it is still early to determine if this data marks a trend, ACI is cautiously optimistic that Annex 17 will continue to have a powerful deterrent effect on those who would disrupt civil aviation operations.

UNIVERSAL SECURITY AUDIT PROGRAMME (USAP)

5. Another remarkable achievement was the rapid implementation of the USAP audit programme which, by 31 July, 2004, had already audited national security plans and airport implementation of Annex 17 in 40 States. A large number of auditors were trained and certified to ensure the highest standards of audit. It is expected that some 60 audits will have been conducted by the end of 2004 and an additional 40 audits will be conducted per year until all 188 Contracting States have been audited by the end of 2007.

ISSUES OF PRIMARY CONCERN FOR AIRPORTS

6. ACI and its 1550 member airports have made aviation security their top priority over the past three years. Airports also recognized that good aviation security was a pre-condition for industry recovery, which ACI statistics now confirm is well under way. The past several months have seen passenger traffic rebound strongly as ICAO, States, airport operators and airlines worked to overcome first the "fear of flying" syndrome, which depressed traffic after 9/11, and later, the "hassle factor", as the industry struggled initially to implement more stringent security without the time or resources to integrate new systems seamlessly. During this transition period, airports, airlines and the traveling public bore a disproportionate share of the funding for security enhancements at the very time the industry was impacted by lower traffic volumes and revenues. Moreover, the industry also had to deal with inconsistent and sometimes conflicting security regulations adopted by States.

7. ACI is concerned that priority be given to three main points and invites the Assembly to recognize these, as presented in paragraph 8 below.

ACTION BY THE ASSEMBLY

8. The Assembly is invited to:

- a) recognize that terrorism is directed at States and national security, and that countermeasures against terrorism must be financed by States;
- b) recognize that global security challenges must be met by globally harmonized ICAO Standards, which ICAO is well equipped to develop and audit globally, not piecemeal unilateral efforts by States which can confuse the industry and passengers ;
and
- c) recognize that the aviation industry must be consulted at each step of the global harmonization process to ensure that new Standards are effective, sustainable, and consistent with quality service for the traveling public.

— END —