

General Aviation – Matching Security to the Threat

Presented by
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Introduction

Good morning ladies and gentleman. I very much appreciate the invitation to be with you at this AVSEC World 2002 Conference.

A little over one year ago the critical importance of aviation security was thrust in front of our eyes in the worst possible way. We will never forget those vivid images.

We have also come to accept that air transportation will never again be the same. Although the images have focused attention on large commercial airline aircraft, the impact is also being felt by the world's general aviation community. This is partly an inadvertent application of large aircraft regulations, and partly because of legitimate concerns for general aviation security.

We should not ignore the potential security threat, albeit relatively small, inherent in general aviation and in aerial work. Yet we must also ensure threats are correctly identified and our responses to the threats are right. Security in general aviation must be effective and it must be realistic. Provisions must match the threat. Our challenge is to determine how.

We must not blindly impose ineffective rules that are costly to our nations and damaging to the future of our respective aviation systems. General aviation represents the grass roots of our air transportation systems, and without it, civil aviation as a whole will suffer.

There seems little doubt that security regulators worldwide have been scratching their heads over the past year, trying to determine how best to handle GA security. The

answers are not obvious for many reasons, not the least being the widely diverse nature of general aviation and also the very significant differences around the world in acceptance of general aviation and its socio-economic benefits.

The need for good communications has never been as important. Good communications for aviation safety has been our focus for years and we have also become quite good at it. We now have considerable work ahead in ensuring establishment of similar communication networks in the world of aviation security.

We all know that rules not adequately consulted are usually bad rules. We cannot afford to make more mistakes and we strongly encourage security authorities to establish communication and consultation programs equivalent to those now so successful for aviation safety in many of our nations.

This morning I will explore with you the world of general aviation security and hopefully provide some answers. Although I represent the interests of the business aviation community, and will put considerable emphasis on security in business aviation, I will not ignore the interests of small recreational aircraft operators. I will paint a broad picture of general aviation so that we mutually understand who we are talking about. I will describe the actions taken by our community to assess the threat and I will describe the proposals for general aviation security that we presented to the International Civil Aviation Organization.

One Size Does Not Fit All

The principal of establishing security to match the threat should be universal. In commercial aviation, the threat related to large commercial aircraft operated from JFK, Charles de Gaulle or Heathrow, is not the same as the security threat for a small Part 135 air taxi operation in the Australian Outback. Nor is it the same for aerial work or air tanker fire suppression operations. The threat is different and security provisions should be different.

Matching security provisions to the threat in general aviation is made particularly perplexing because of the vast differences in operations. General aviation is non-commercial civil aviation. Characteristics are that:

- it is not publicly available –seats are not for sale;
- it is not for public hire;
- passengers are almost always known and are usually family or company members;
- aircraft range from small recreational vehicles, such as ultralights, to large corporate jets;

- aircraft operate to and from a vast number of airports small and large, as there are generally 10 GA airports for every commercial airport; and
- small aircraft do not necessarily have to operate from airports as they can operate from a farmer's field or a small lake.

Purposes can include leisure recreational flights, adventure flying, pilot training, and business operations. One common denominator is that all operations are private.

Security in this environment, to be effective, cannot be applied as one size fits all. Security in general aviation should be tailored to the threat and should take account of the realities of the operation.

Business Aviation

The International Business Aviation Council [IBAC] has been wrestling for the past year with the problem of finding the right balance for security. Business Aviation, a component of General Aviation, today operates more than 20,000 turbine aircraft, with over 13,000 companies worldwide operating their own aircraft for business purposes. Aircraft range from the small businessman operated Beech Baron to large executive aircraft such as the Boeing Business Jet or Airbus Corporate Jet. Business aviation, however, is primarily corporate aircraft, with professional crew employed to fly the aircraft, and with flight departments managing operations.

Business aircraft operate only about 500 hours per year. They are flown on non-scheduled routes, to every corner of the world. Passengers are either company employees, who fly day-in and day-out on the same aircraft, or they are clients well known to the company.

One significant characteristic of business aviation is the security that companies have self-imposed. Many corporations operate aircraft for security reasons – either to protect valuable employee resources or for protection of corporate industrial intelligence. Corporations often employ highly trained security staff, who also have responsibility for flight department security.

How often do you see a company name on the side of corporate aircraft? How many of you are aware that there are more business aircraft than airline aircraft? How many of you know about all of those dedicated corporate aviation facilities at airports around the world? The answers are inherent in the security of corporate aviation. Discreetness is a key component. Private corporations have always been diligent in protecting their valuable resources.

Security Threat Assessment

The challenge has been to determine what should be done to enhance security standards of the International Civil Aviation Organization. ICAO's Standards and Recommended Practices are requirements upon which nations worldwide should establish their rules.

Annex 17, the ICAO security standard, has a problem in that there is no applicability provision, and although the consensus is that this was inadvertent, the fact is that all operator requirements apply to both small and large aircraft, commercial and private, operating anywhere – even from a remote farm or lake. Does it make sense to require electronic screening by a certified screener when boarding your family, on your own and Cessna 172, for a site-seeing trip around your small town.

Our concerns were expressed at the ICAO High Level Ministerial Conference on Aviation Security, and the Ministers agreed that different security provisions were needed. The challenge was given to the ICAO Aviation Security Panel to determine how.

The Security Panel in turn discovered the complexity of finding a balanced solution, so the Panel turned to the International Business Aviation Council [IBAC] and the International Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association [IAOPA] for help. It was agreed that a Security Threat Assessment was necessary if effective standards were to be designed. IBAC agreed to conduct an assessment for corporate aviation and IAOPA for small general aviation and aerial work.

IBAC chose to do the Security Threat Assessment using recognized risk assessment methodologies, applying an Expert Panel process to baseline the exercise. The Expert Panel consisted of personnel with a broad range of backgrounds and expertise including: corporate aircraft operations; airport security; company security; Fixed Based Operations; policing agencies; security authorities; and the ICAO Security Panel.

The Expert Panel met over two days in New York in June and conducted a variation of a 'cause–consequence' analysis. Key top events, including hijacking, commandeering and sabotage of corporate aircraft, were identified and fault trees used to describe events, with consequences ascribed for each. The Expert Panel then proposed mitigations for identified threats.

Results of the assessment were then reviewed by business aviation personnel in Europe, and other parts of the world, for validation. Conclusions of the study became the basis of recommendations made to the ICAO Security Panel. IAOPA completed a similar Security Threat Assessment for general aviation and for aerial work, although

with different methodologies. Results of the two assessments were coordinated to ensure a consistent message from the general aviation community.

The Security Threat Assessment also presented IBAC with material to update the International Standard for Business Aircraft Operations (IS-BAO). The standard, introduced earlier this year, contains security standards and guidelines for application by business aircraft operators worldwide.

Security Standards for General Aviation

Presently, ICAO operator standards contain security requirements for commercial air carriers. However, there is no reference to security in the general aviation standards.

We propose changing the general aviation standards to assign responsibility to the pilot in command. Further, we propose that security standards be amended to require general aviation security in accordance with State security programs and that these be tailored to the level of threat within the respective State.

We are recommending more specific requirements for larger general aviation aircraft, namely those over 5,700 kgs or 12,500 lbs. In this case, we propose that standards require:

- operators to implement security programs to industry standards and to advise regulators of their implementation;
- background checks for all pilots; and
- security checks on passengers and baggage that are not pre-qualified.

We have introduced the concept of pre-qualified passengers in recognition that in private operations passengers are normally company employees who fly on the same aircraft continuously. Pre-qualification means they have been security checked by their company to preclude continual checking when boarding their own aircraft.

Airport Security

Considerable discussion by the Expert Panel revolved around limitations in the ICAO standards for airports. The only specified level of security is for a Security Restricted Area, often called a 'sterile' area. The restricted area carries with it requirements such as background checks on all who access the area and for all screening conducted by a certified screener.

Restricted areas are not practical and would be extremely costly for regulators if applied to general aviation areas of big airports and dedicated general aviation airports. The

standard also does not recognize the reality that many general aviation facilities have excellent safety programs, although not always aligned with Security Restricted Area standards. Again, one size does not fit all.

The solution proposed by IBAC is to incorporate into security standards a secondary level of security that would be more applicable to general aviation and smaller remote airports. Security Program Zones would be applied by airport and security authorities to general aviation type airports, and possibly also to small remote commercial airports, thus allowing for security provisions to match the threat.

The principal behind the Security Program Zones is delegation of security responsibility to private sector entities. Private organizations such as FBOs, corporate operators and training organizations, would be assigned responsibility for their facility, and apron in front of the facility, to provide security as defined in a security program. This flexible approach facilitates introduction of a security program that matches the threat. The security program for a facility situated close to a major terminal may be relatively restrictive, yet the program for a general aviation facility at a smaller remote airport can be designed to better suit the threat.

It is clear that provisions must be made to ensure passengers boarded outside a security restricted area are not mixed with passengers boarded within. Such provisions are manageable and should be established within the standards.

These recommendations were presented to the ICAO Aviation Security Panel last month, strongly supported by some States, the Airport Council International and the International Federation of Airline Pilots Associations. The Panel accepted the recommendations and the proposed standards must now be considered by the ICAO Council.

Summary

In summary, IBAC is proposing responsible and responsive rules for general aviation security. The community is resolved to do the right thing and to ensure security is tailored to the threat. Aviation as a whole demands effective and realistic security rules and we are committed to help design and implement the best possible standards.