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ASSEMBLY — 36TH SESSION

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 15 : Aviation Security Programme

**THE NEED FOR A RISK-BASED APPROACH
IN AVIATION SECURITY**

(Presented by the International Air Transport Association)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Today's aviation security system is at a high level but can be inefficient and too reactive to events. This paper presents some key principles of a risk-based security approach, which aims to build strength and efficiency by focusing on the main risks.

Action: The Assembly is invited to:

- a) set up a common risk-assessment methodology with the help of ICAO; and
- b) introduce a risk-based approach to their national aviation security system.

<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	Not applicable
<i>Financial implications:</i>	Not applicable
<i>References:</i>	Not applicable

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 IATA supports the high level of improvements made to aviation security since 2001. The latest amendments to Annex 17, and the responsible approach taken by governments to implement its increased standards, are proof that aviation security has become a major part of the international regulatory framework. Steps towards more harmonisation are also starting to happen, for instance with the coordinated 1-litre bag system applying to passengers carrying liquids, aerosols and gels (LAGs). It is time for a discussion not only on what more we can do to prevent acts of unlawful interference, but how we can do what we do better and more efficiently, without of course degrading the level of security.

1.2 Intelligence and the likelihood of an attack are central elements of risk management. The need to introduce more risk assessment is driven in part by the passenger hassle factor. The hassle factor is making air travel increasingly unpopular and contradicting the very aim of the Chicago Convention Article 22, which aims to preserve the speed and convenience of air travel (“to prevent unnecessary delays to aircraft, crews, passengers, and cargo”). It is also driven by increased costs for security measures and for related equipment and technology. In this context, all stakeholders in the system, i.e. governments, airlines, airports and passengers, have an interest in reflecting on how best to decide which possible measures can be introduced, and what their respective impacts, both positive and negative, are likely to be across the board.

2. KEY ISSUES

2.1 A key principle towards more risk-based security is the idea that addressing all risks at the same level, regardless of their severity, is actually less efficient than concentrating the bigger part of one’s resources on the most severe risks. Like everything, air transport operates in a context of limited resources, be they financial, infrastructural or other (availability of trained staff, etc.). In this context, and in the interest of better security, governments must carefully weigh the options which present themselves to them, and make the right decisions.

2.2 The primary role of the authorities must be to centralise intelligence and threat information. Airlines are major interested parties and need to be informed in due time. Assessing and prioritising the different risks is a typical government duty. A certain risk can be addressed or mitigated by a number of possible measures. Here the role of governments should be to assess which of these options will pose the lesser impact on industry and passengers. This impact can be operational (inconvenience, delays), but also financial.

2.3 IATA itself has introduced with its member airlines a concept of Security Management System, or SEMS (see IATA Working Paper on the subject). A Security Management System sets out a company’s security policies and its intent to manage security as an integral part of its overall business. As with any business plan, goals are set, levels of authority are established and so on. Ultimately, the SEMS should become woven into the fabric of the organisation and become part of its culture

2.4 The same approach should apply to public authorities and their security functions. A risk-based, security management system is not only the right decision to make from a business point of view, it is also the right decision to make in terms of making security more solid and sustainable. IATA has found that when entities approach security as a collection of individual components, they risk facing situations where a new security measure duplicates previous measures while degrading customer service, or worse, a new security measure leads to a reduction in overall security. As an example, the large size of the Prohibited Items List can make it difficult for screeners to focus on what governments deem to be the

biggest threat items (e.g. explosives). By opting for a risk-based process, governments can lay down a precise plan of action for preventing acts of unlawful interference – combining a pro-active approach to security and a consistent reaction to threat information and events. A risk-based approach aims to avoid conflicts between different measures and help governments be more confident when updating their legislation.

2.5 Accountability also plays an increasing role in today's societies.

2.6 Concretely, a sound risk-management system in aviation security should include the following elements:

2.6.1 Carefully defined individual passenger assessments, based on internationally accepted standards as incorporated into national legislation, as an element of risk analysis, to facilitate the identification of individuals who may pose a threat to the safety and security of civil aviation.

2.6.2 The development of programmes designed to facilitate the movement of passengers who, through appropriate risk assessment, are deemed to pose no risk to safety and security and thus permit more effective targeting of resources. These programmes must be designed in such a way that under normal circumstances, no more than five percent of passengers are selected for additional enhanced security screening.

2.6.3 Systems that are effectively designed in order to avoid the need for additional random checks of passengers.

2.6.4 Carefully defined cargo assessments, using regulated agent/known shipper programmes, based on internationally accepted standards as incorporated into national legislation, as an element of risk analysis, to facilitate the movement of cargo which does not pose a threat to the safety and security of civil aviation.

2.6.5 The exchange of relevant information between appropriate organizations to assist in performing passenger and cargo risk assessments to facilitate the movement of known passengers and cargo globally.

3. CONCLUSION

3.1 IATA invites the Assembly to consider the following actions on the issues raised in this paper:

- a) take note of the principles presented in this paper;
- b) set up a common risk-assessment methodology with the help of ICAO; and
- c) introduce a risk-based approach to their national aviation security system.