IMPROVING PERFORMANCE THROUGH SECURITY CULTURE

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Throughout his entire aviation security career Adam has been working collaboratively with internal, national and international partners. His roles starting with Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) of Poland, through LOT Polish Airlines and now with IATA have consisted of supporting business and operations with aviation subject-matter expertise. In his current capacity, Adam's primary focus has been on revamping, advancing and enhancing Security Management System (SeMS) processes to ensure aviation security risk assessments are robust, effective, and suitable.

Introduction

Organizational culture is commonly understood to be a set of norms, beliefs, values, attitudes, and assumptions that are inherent in the daily operation of organizations and abided by all entities and personnel within those organizations. Security culture cannot be considered in isolation of the organizational culture as a whole.

Just as leaders have a critical impact on organizations and their culture, organizational cultures greatly influence leaders by guiding their decisions. Organizations should, therefore, ensure that the full commitment at every level of leadership, from top management to supervisors, is always applied and in all activities, strategies, policies, and objectives to continuously improve the security culture.

Management should lead by example and encourage all employees to adopt a security mindset by advocating security as an organizational and personal value and aligning their own behavior with this value.

As such security culture (which is a critical element of a Security Management System, SeMS) is a type of organizational culture that encourages optimal security performance and enables continuous progress of this performance (either by improving it or maintaining at the high level). Several activities have been initiated by IATA, its member airlines and partner organizations to leverage on the security culture concept and thereby improve security performance in critical areas, starting from front-line personnel and those in specialized security functions (e.g. operators of x-ray screening equipment) up to the managerial level. These initiatives are described below.

"See It, Report It"

In the scope of security awareness and reporting, the IATA "See It, Report It" campaign aims at alerting everyone working at and around the airport of the importance of occurrences' reporting. This is the very important proactive behavior that enables early identification of vulnerabilities, threats or actions that, if undetected or underreported, may result in reduced security capabilities. "See It, Report It" videos are available in thirteen languages and may be viewed at https://www.iata.org/sems/.

Human performance in security screening

Human performance in security screening remains a key element of protective measures. It is therefore essential it can be measured using fair, transparent and objective set of criteria, reducing the emergence of demotivating factors (feeling of subjectivity, unfairness, stress, complacency). IATA together with its industry stakeholders (including IATA Strategic Partners) has coordinated the development of the first ever industry agreed proposal for a common and harmonized performance assessment tool in x-ray hold baggage screening operations. This tool has been developed based on industry contributions and with great engagement of a scientical/research partner holding over 15 years applied research in this area, CASRA. Core elements of the tool (the image library and the assessment methodology) are available upon request. Please contact CASRA or IATA Aviation Security for details. The next step would be to develop a similar tool for cargo x-ray screening operations.
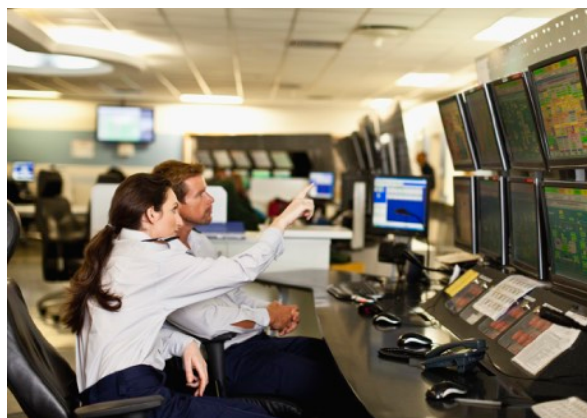
SeMS Competency Test

Finally, recognizing the critically important role of different managerial levels in promoting the security culture, the SeMS Competency Test (SeMS) has been developed by IATA. It offers a unique, harmonized method of assessing the SeMS expertise of individuals assigned with security responsibilities. It is an industry benchmark of SeMS that enables assessing the SeMS proficiency level of individuals through a standardized, objective, and transparent validation method. The results of this assessment could be used for qualifications check during recruitment, quality control, or to design an individual professional development plan. It can also help to professionalize SeMS related positions by linking the assessment results with job-roles (SeMS/security managers, security supervisors, auditors, instructors).

Conclusions

All these initiatives, individually as well as a bundle aim at bolstering the security posture of the industry. They are people centric as the aviation security relies on humans as our best resource to keep passengers and goods safe and secure in the air. By using these tools, the aviation stakeholders can reinforce and confirm their involvement and engagement in enhancing security culture. It can be achieved by encouraging awareness and alertness, fostering healthy critical thinking of aviation security, rewarding and recognition of good performance and willingness to improve professionally.

IATA wishes the entire industry a successful Year of Security Culture.