

ACI Advisory bulletin

Landside security

Montreal, 19 May 2016 – The terrorist attacks in the landside area of Brussels Airport on 22 March 2016 have again brought aviation security sharply into focus for all aviation stakeholders, governments and in the media. Ensuring the security of the traveling public is a top priority for ACI and its member airports, and a prerequisite for a sustainable worldwide aviation system.

Background

Aviation-specific security regulations focus on the airside spaces (non-public spaces of airports accessible only to air passengers who hold a valid boarding pass and to security cleared staff). These regulations are designed to prevent unlawful interference with air transport. Landside spaces (airport spaces accessible to the general public) are subject to general security regulations enacted by national authorities. It is therefore up to these national authorities to review and coordinate with airports to identify the appropriate measures that match their specific threat scenario.

In the coming months, ACI expects to see both ICAO and national regulators highlight this issue and set new standards and recommended practices for landside security in response to the perceived increase in threat, the attacks in Brussels and previous attacks on public areas of airports such as Glasgow and Domodedovo (Moscow). ACI is working with ICAO to ensure that airport views are reflected in guidance material and that best practices are taken into consideration.

This advisory bulletin is addressed to ACI members and identifies a number of options and best practices airports can use to protect landside spaces. Not all of the measures identified would be the responsibility of the airport; in many instances airports own the real estate landside but the responsibility for public spaces lies with local law enforcement. However, the measures below can be used in discussion with local authorities and national regulators when determining the risk level and appropriate actions. The top priority should be to agree responsibility and accountability for measures between the airport and the regulator.

The following list provides a set of actions and measures that may be appropriate for the protection of landside spaces; not all will be applicable in all cases.

Scope, responsibilities, threats and vulnerabilities

- Collaborate with national regulators to agree on a definition of “landside.” This might include areas of mass gathering inside or close to the terminal, where there is a regular concentration of people. A clear definition will be critical to defining the scope of measures and ensuring that the focus of measures is on genuinely high-risk areas, and not all property owned by the airport.
- Work with national regulators and local authorities, as appropriate, to conduct a vulnerability assessment of the airport to determine if any adjustment to current security measures is warranted.
- Consider a discussion with local authorities on the most appropriate measures for your particular situation and identify the benefits and disadvantages of each. Engage the airport Security Committee in this discussion so that all parties have the same understanding.
- Collaborate with national regulators to define responsibilities for each measure and the interfaces between each stakeholder involved. In many cases, the responsibility for public security lies with the airport but law enforcement authorities typically implement the measures.
- Ensure that there is a mechanism to share threat information between local law enforcement, intelligence agencies and security cleared airport staff. Set up appropriate mechanisms for regular updates and emergency communications. Ensure that relevant airport staff have sufficient security clearance.

Additional screening

- Locating an additional security inspection checkpoint to the entrance of the airport terminal (or outside of the terminal) may compromise the security of air travelers by having them congregate in large groups outside of the terminal building, thus moving the vulnerability elsewhere.
- Additional screening also adds inconvenience to passengers, and possibly creates hazardous conditions for passengers of reduced mobility or those with small children.
- However, random, unpredictable checks during high risk situations may provide an additional element of deterrence and detection and be more effective than permanent procedures applied to all passengers.

Best practices

The following list provides some best practices in detection, deterrence or mitigation of landside threats that reflect current ICAO guidance material and other industry best practices. These measures are not applicable in all circumstances, and ACI recommends that each is considered based on its applicability, practicality and the threat environment. Equally, depending on individual state requirements, the airport may not necessarily bear responsibility for measures

on the landside; this should be clearly determined in conjunction with the national regulator and local authorities.

Building design

- Consider infrastructure and airport design features to mitigate the threat from attack. These might include:
 - blast proofing;
 - the use of materials to minimize damage (such as shatterproof glass);
 - bollards, flowerpots and other structures to prevent drive-in attacks;
 - the separation of vehicle drop-off and pickup points from the terminal entrance through use of a concourse or other pedestrianized area; and
 - management of space to reduce gatherings of people.
- Reduce access areas (such as terraces) where an active shooter or bomber might have access to crowded public areas.
- Reduce areas where items can be hidden, such as opaque rubbish bins or concealed corners.
- When new buildings are planned near the airport, engage with local planning authorities to ensure that security considerations are taken into account, such as balconies, terraces or windows that open, close to the terminal building.
- When designing new terminal buildings, ensure that security considerations are taken into account; retrofitting is more expensive.

Physical measures and process design

- Implement CCTV or other means of surveillance of public areas in conjunction with law enforcement agencies (This may be the responsibility of local law enforcement).
- Work with other stakeholders (airlines, regulators and ground handling agents) to identify ways of reducing queues and congregations of people, such as self-service options or better distribution of check-in desks at certain times of day.

Staff and passenger awareness and communication

- Remind passengers and visitors to be vigilant and report unattended baggage or suspicious behaviour. Provide information, either through posters or PA announcements.
- Provide security awareness training for all staff (both airport and non-airport employees, including those not involved directly in security) to recognize suspicious behaviour, and provide a simple and quick means to report it. Consider a “see something, say something” campaign for both staff and passengers.

Patrols and surveillance

- Use specialist behaviour detection officers (This may be the responsibility of local law enforcement).
- Ensure there are regular high visibility patrols of public areas by airport security, police or other law enforcement agencies, as a means of both detection and deterrence.
- Law enforcement patrols can use detection dogs effectively in landside areas to identify explosives without affecting passenger flows.

Crisis and incident response

- Set up agreed procedures for coordination and communication among responsible parties should an emergency situation occur.
- When extra measures are put in place for a specific threat, agree a clear list of criteria with authorities that will result in measures being removed once the threat level returns to normal.
- Define a contingency plan which identifies additional measures and procedures to be implemented according to the threat level. This should include procedures for evacuation.
- Have a well-defined emergency plan that can be executed if an emergency occurs. This should include coordination among all stakeholders. Hold regular exercises to test the plan. This should also include or be supplemented by a business continuity plan.

Notes

1. State regulations supersede the information contained in this advisory where applicable.
2. This circular is intended to address areas around a passenger terminal where there are mass gatherings of passengers. Different airport areas, such as the airport perimeter, transportation hubs and cargo facilities, have different threats, risks and mitigation measures.
3. For more information, please email info@aci.aero.