



Airport Security

The country's main aim of airport security is to prevent aircraft from being sabotaged or the use, voluntary or forcibly, of aircraft for a purpose associated with terrorism. Airport security for this purpose should not be confused with security for other law enforcement requirements (e.g. customs/immigration) or airside safety.

AMROBA contends that the basic principle of providing this kind of security has been politicised so much in Australia that it has created a new breed of government 'over aggressive' inspectors that forget the aim of security. Instead they concentrate on minor legislative requirements, which have little bearing on keeping a departing aircraft safe, applicable to individuals working at, or using the airport rather than preventing the wrong persons or objects from boarding an aircraft. One standard does not fit all – what may be correct for a major international airport or a major interstate airport does not fit the rest of the airports in Australia.

AMROBA contends that the threats have not been correctly identified and there is a tendency to encapsulate a whole regional airport inside a security net instead of concentrating security on persons/baggage/cargo, travelling or carried on an aircraft, as the major threat. Prevent the threat from entering the aircraft.

Passenger/cargo screening services to prevent persons or objects that can affect safety of a flight from being carried out, are the major areas that need to be concentrated on and this does need all regional or remote aerodromes to be secured in the majority of cases. If a regional or remote airport is a transit airport then security should only apply during the time the commercial operating aircraft, which could provide a threat, is on the ground.

All airside employees in the aviation industry should have security checks. Any personal licence issued by CASA should only be issued post a security check and the person should retain the licence as long as the person's security is not proven to be of concern to security within the aviation history.

This would remove the 'police force' enforcement processes that do not concentrate on the prevention of a threat to the security (safety) of safe flight by an aircraft.

In addition, has threats been correctly identified in Australia – for example, aircraft that do not have the inertia to do serious damage to property should not be placed in the same threat level as those aircraft whose inertia will do serious damage to property.

This screening model has been used successfully in Europe and Israel since the 1980s and has worked very well. Government security funding should be allocated to airport owners to control screening security on a monthly (or at least quarterly) basis, rather than grants or infusion of one-off funds. This would permit a much better match of screener numbers to actual passenger throughput at each airport, in a changing airline environment.

Many of our members, not involved in commercial passenger operations, see the lack of real benefits that securing an airport by fences, etc achieves at regional and remote airports. In most cases the security is seen as a hindrance. Many requirements are not seen as minimising security by involving persons that have no direct involvement with commercial passenger operations and invoke additional red tape on an already over-regulated GA industry.

Restricting the public from airside has always been for safety reasons not security – airside can be a dangerous environment so the aviation industry has for decades supported airside restrictions to prevent personnel injury.

AMROBA contends that airside 'safety' and 'security' has been blurred in Australia and recommends that security threats should be the main aim of security requirements not safety requirements. Sabotage and terrorism requires something or somebody that will cause the aircraft to not provide a safe flight, to be placed on aircraft, this is what security legislation should concentrate on. Screening systems must be the barrier to security issues.

Customs, immigration and safety requirements must remain separate to security issues.

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