

## 2. NONMILITARY SECURITY

# SECURITY AT AIRPORTS IN RELATION TO SECURITY SERVICES

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### ABSTRACT

The following article has been devoted to the issue of security at airports. The first part discusses the theoretical aspects of safety in relation to airports. Then the most important, in the author's opinion, documents regulating issues of security at airports are described. The third part of the article describes selected services which are responsible for security at airports. The article was written to show the relations between the activities of the security services and security at airports.

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## Introduction

Civil aviation objects, in particular airports are exposed to conducting the acts of unlawful interference by terrorist groups or individual persons. It results from the character of that kind of places, for example a large area and a cluster of population which creates problems in controlling every place and identification of threats. Therefore, a variety of activities are taken to prevent and control unlawful acts. For this purpose, relevant legislation is developed to appoint airport security services and other entities responsible for ensuring safety in these objects.

The author decided to present relationships between the activities taken by security services and security at airports. It was possible due to theoretical issues related to problems described and selected legislations and activities of some services.

## Theoretical aspects of safety at airports

Discussion about security at airports requires the explanation of a concept of aviation safety at the beginning. According to Annex 19 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation, this term is defined as follow: *the state in which risks associated with aviation activities, related to, or in direct support of the operation of aircraft, are reduced and controlled to an acceptable level*<sup>1</sup>. Safety has an interdisciplinary character because it is associated with a variety of areas. These include a human factor, technical factor, organizational factor and environmental factor. In other words, these factors create an aviation safety model (Fig. 1.)

<sup>1</sup> *The Annex 19 to the Convention of International Civil Aviation Safety Management*, ICAO, 2013, p. 1-2.

Figure 1. Aviation safety factors.



Source: Own study based on: T. Compa, J. Kozuba, J. Pila, *Czynnik ludzki a poziom bezpieczeństwa realizacji zadań lotniczych* (in:) *Logistyka, Instytut Logistyki i Magazynowania*, Poznań 2013, Vol. 6, p. 73.

Speaking about safety in relation to airports, it is necessary to explain what this term means. According to Polish Aviation Law, an airport is a segregated area (including objects and equipment with durable nature) on land, water or other surface which is listed in the register of airports and used for commercial flights<sup>2</sup>. A complete understanding of the complexity of the structure and functioning of airports requires analysis of the following issues: infrastructure, location, potential hazards, performed operations and fulfilled functions and tasks as well.

The above discussion provides a brief introduction to further analysis of the issues related to security at airports. The subsequent part of the article describes basic documents regulating the subjects discussed and activities of entities and selected services which are responsible for ensuring safety.

<sup>2</sup> The Polish Aviation Law, art. 2, pts. 4 and 17.

## Selected documents regulating security at airports

Properly constructed legislation and its observance are the basis for the proper functioning of the airports. Without such documents it would be impossible to correctly carry out air operations. The following are briefly described most important, in the author's opinion, issues from the following documents: the Chicago Convention, the Annex 17 to the Chicago Convention, Montreal Convention, the Polish Aviation Law, and the National Civil Aviation Security Program.

### The Convention of International Civil Aviation

This Convention is the basis for civil aviation existence. The Chicago Convention together with 19 annexes creates a compact set of recommendations and standards to

improve the effectiveness and efficiency of aviation activities.

Issues related to airports are included in the section *Airports and other facilities for air navigation*. Attention should be paid to article 69, which obligates the ICAO Council to consult with the countries in which it has been shown that, for example, airports are not sufficient for safe, regular, efficient and economical operation of existing or planned international air services<sup>3</sup>. What is more, these consultations should be carried out also with other countries related to this issue. These activities are to develop and implement preventive recommendations.

### The Annex 17 to the Convention of International Civil Aviation

This annex specifies the requirements for the protection of civil aviation against the acts of unlawful interference. Among others, there are discussed issues related to controlling access to restricted areas at the airport, security measures used in relation to the luggage or passengers, mail and other transported cargoes.

States are obligated to introduce the Airport Security Program in chapter 3.2. This document should be developed in accordance with the requirements of the National Civil Aviation Security Program. Section 3.2.4. is also important, according to which it must be ensured that (...) *design requirements of the airport, (...) necessary for the implementation of protection measures in the national civil aviation security program will be incorporated into the design and construction of new facilities and changes in the facilities existing at airports*<sup>4</sup>. Moreover, committees are appointed for airport security which have to help airport authorities to coordinate the implementation of protection-related projects.

<sup>3</sup> The Polish Aviation Law, Art. 69.

<sup>4</sup> The Annex 17..., p. 3-2.

### The Montreal Convention

The Montreal Convention was made in Montreal in 23 September 1971. This document was developed to extend the range of offences in relation to civil aviation, which were known at that time. It is necessary to punish the following persons<sup>5</sup>:

- persons threatening the safety of an aircraft in flight,
- persons destroying or damaging the aircraft being in service which causes inability to flight or threat to its safety in flight,
- persons who put substances or devices that may damage the machine or which can result in an inability to complete flight or a threat to safety in flight of aircraft being in service,
- persons who are damaging or interfering work of aviation navigation equipment,
- persons giving false information which can be cause of a threat for safety of an aircraft in flight.

The Montreal Convention was supplemented by the Montreal Protocol signed on 24 December 1988 due to the dynamic development of aviation and the growing threat of terrorism. According to its provisions, the crime is committed also by people using weapons, equipment or substances to<sup>6</sup>:

- the implementation of the act of violence against a person in an international civil airport which resulted in death or serious body injury,
- serious damage or destruction of the aircraft which are not in use, the devices located within the international civil airport or cause a break in the activities of an airport facility.

It should be noted that the Montreal Convention and the Montreal Protocol do

<sup>5</sup> The Montreal Convention updated by The Montreal Protocol, art. 1, para. 1.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibidem*, art. 1, para. 1 bis.

not specify punishment for specific crimes. This is left to the internal legal rules of each country.

### The Polish Aviation Law

The Polish Aviation Law is the basic document which regulates the issues related to civil aviation in Poland. In accordance with article 84, a system of rescue and fire protection at airports must be established and implemented<sup>7</sup>. Moreover, aviation obstacles have to be immediately reported to the manager of the Polish Aviation Authority and then labeled<sup>8</sup>.

There are also conditions for an airport manager to ensure the safe operation of the facility. These include issue regulations, orders, prohibitions, the development of the airport operations manual or making decisions about the activities of the airport security service in relation to a person suspected of committing a crime.

### The National Civil Aviation Security Program

It is impossible not to mention the National Civil Aviation Security Program while discussing the documents related to security at airports. The topic discussed is contained in chapter 8: the airport manager determines the following areas – public, operational, restricted, the boundaries and transitions between areas and separate area (in justified cases)<sup>9</sup>. It is very important that access to these areas is constantly monitored under the responsibility of the airport manager<sup>10</sup>.

This person determines (together with Border Guard and Police) the frequency and means of undertaking surveillance and patrolling the restricted area, perimeter fence and areas adjacent to them

by the competent security service<sup>11</sup>. The airport manager determines also the frequency and means of undertaking surveillance and patrolling public area to exclude the possibility of discarding items that may pose a potential threat to the safety of persons and property<sup>12</sup>. We can see that this matter is very complex on the basis of basic documents that have been briefly described, regulating the safety issues at airports. It is proven by the need of a systemic approach to such subjects, so it is possible to identify potential hazards early enough and take prevention activities.

### Selected services providing security at airports

The safe operation of airports is not possible without the existence and operation of specialized services and entities. The most important include an airport manager, the airport security service, Border Guard and Airport Police. The number of services is much longer but due to volume of the article, the author focused on services mentioned above.

### The airport manager

The airport manager is a person being in charge of the overall operation of the airport, also listed in the register as a civil airports manager<sup>13</sup>. This person is responsible for the security<sup>14</sup> control of passengers, baggage and other cargo using aircraft security service. In addition, his/her task is to protect the public area<sup>15</sup>. It is important that the airport manager is a person capable of prohibiting the performance of activities which would endanger the safety of flight<sup>16</sup>.

<sup>7</sup> The Polish Aviation Law, art. 84, para. 1.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibidem*, art. 87, para. 2.

<sup>9</sup> The National Civil Aviation Security Program, 31 of July 2012, § 16, para. 1.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibidem*, §17.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibidem*, §36, para. 2. pts. 1

<sup>12</sup> The National Civil..., §36, para. 2. pts. 1

<sup>13</sup> The Polish Aviation Law..., art. 2, para. 7

<sup>14</sup> Security is a part of safety, it refers to protection against acts of unlawful interference (Source: author own work).

<sup>15</sup> The Polish Aviation Law, art. 186b, para. 1-4a.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibidem*, art. 68, para. 2a.

It is necessary to mention that the airport manager must also ensure the use of the airport according to its specifications<sup>17</sup>. He/She is also able to allow the use of airport or its part for another activity than aviation.

### The airport security service

The airport security service (according to Polish Aviation Law) is an internal security service or specialist armed protection formation<sup>18</sup>. Its main tasks include<sup>19</sup>:

- security control
- controlling access to restricted areas
- controlling passes issued by the airport manager,
- recognizing and transferring to the Police or Border Guard an offender of safety conditions at the airport or a passenger violating the conditions of carriage and a person who, without authorization, obtained or tried to obtain access to the restricted area or person who has committed or attempted to commit an act of unlawful interference and person who violates the public order as well.

It should be noted that airport security service is the basic formation which, on the behalf of the airport manager, performs tasks of civil aviation security at airports. However, the activities performed by employees of the airport security service may be controlled by officers of the Border Guard.

### The Border Guard

The border guard is another service related to ensuring security at airports. The officers of this formation are entitled to perform such activities as<sup>20</sup>:

- controlling the number of airport security service employees at control points,

- observing and recording the operation of a security control point,
- immediate response to the infringement of airport security service,
- immediate notification to the airport manager proposals for removing serious deficiencies identified,
- immediately response to the signals of the disruption of public order at the security point and the area adjacent to it.

Border Guard officers are also required to check if transported weapon is unloaded and properly secured. Moreover, it is also necessary to verify that the ammunition was packed in a suitable manner to prevent hitting the percussion cap<sup>21</sup>.

### The Police

The Airport Police Stations are specialist facilities. Police officers perform the tasks of prevention and operational – reconnaissance tasks in collaboration with the airport security service and the Border Guard. This is to prevent unlawful acts directed against civil aviation. What is more, police officers are able to control persons, luggage, and stop suspects<sup>22</sup>.

It is impossible to forget about technical devices which are necessary to detect threats early. Requirements for equipment are contained in section 12 of Annex I to Regulation 300/2008 and section 12 of Annex to Regulation 2015/1998<sup>23</sup>.

### Conclusion

The discussion above shows that security at airports is extremely complex. The biggest challenge for security services is the continuous technological development and unrestrained creativity of people committing acts of unlawful interference. This means that people who commit crimes will be always 'one step'

<sup>17</sup> Ibidem, art. 68, para. 2.

<sup>18</sup> Ibidem, art. 2, pts. 21.

<sup>19</sup> The National Civil ..., art. 186b, para. 5.

<sup>20</sup> The Polish Aviation Law, art. 186b, para. 3.

<sup>21</sup> The National Civil ..., §5, para. 2, pts 3.

<sup>22</sup> J. Rajchel, *Bezpieczeństwo w porcie lotniczym*, WSOSP, Dęblin 2010, pp. 120-121.

<sup>23</sup> The National Civil ..., §71.

ahead of the relevant services. For this reason, cooperation between services and all other actors functioning at airports are necessary. In addition, these activities must be supported by information and telecommunications systems and specialist equipment to detect hazardous materials.

The purpose of this article has been achieved, it means that the author presented the relationship between the activities of the security services and security at airports. The above discussion indicates that there is no possibility to ensure safety without adequate regulations and entities responsible for its condition.

The article contains only the outline of the most important issues related to security at airports because of the complexity of the topic. The in-depth analysis of this subject requires extensive theoretical and empirical research.

## References

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