

**GUIDANCE FOR CONTINGENCY PLANS
FOR UNLAWFUL SEIZURE OF AIRCRAFT**

1. Characteristics

1.1 Unlawful seizure of aircraft usually occur while aircraft are airborne, although there have been instances where an aircraft has been seized while on the ground.

1.2 The seizure of an aircraft may be carried out for a variety of reasons or purpose by a single person or group of persons coming from different organizations and persuasions, such as but not limited to:

- (a) by terrorists to publicise their cause and / or to exert political blackmail on a target government; or
- (b) by criminals for pecuniary gain; or
- (c) by mentally disturbed individuals; or
- (d) by economic migrants or refugees from an oppressive regime.

1.3 Perpetrator/s may use or threaten to use firearms, explosives, inflammable liquids, or CBRN materials. They may even produce replica firearms or other simulated weapons in order to seize an aircraft.

1.4 Whatever the circumstances, whatever the motivations of the perpetrator/s or the nature of the weapons they possess or claim to possess, an unlawful seizure of aircraft is dangerous and should, whenever possible, be handled in accordance with the recommendations detailed in this annex.

2 Aircraft Operators

General

2.1 Aircraft operators should prepare and develop contingency plans in respect of unlawful seizure of aircraft. These plans should incorporate the Recommended Practices detailed in the following paragraphs.

Flight Crew Response

2.2 Aircraft operators should have staff instructions detailing advice to flight crews in responding to an unlawful seizure of aircraft. These instructions should contain the following advice:

- (a) they should respond to unlawful seizure of aircraft calmly, and insofar as is possible, apply themselves to the safe operation of the aircraft and the comfort of passengers;

(b) they should, if they are able, inform ground control by radio transmission (RT) that an unlawful seizure of aircraft has occurred, and pass such additional information as is possible.

(c) they should avoid using force unless:

(i) petrol or other inflammable liquids are being distributed endangering the safety of the aircraft and there is no other alternative;

(ii) the perpetrators' weapons are obvious fakes;

Note: The Tokyo Convention (1963) provides for aircraft commanders to request passengers to assist in restraining offenders.

(d) they should comply with perpetrators' instructions insofar as these are compatible with aircraft safety;

(e) they should accept air traffic services' instructions as to airport of landing provided the safety of the aircraft is not further endangered in so doing;

(f) they should endeavour to land the aircraft as soon as possible;

(g) they should demonstrate that all flight crew members are necessary for the safe operation of the aircraft;

(h) they should encourage the perpetrators to make decisions to tax their energy and to avoid retribution in case a crew suggestion is perceived to be a trick;

(i) they should maintain normality, insofar as is possible; (NB. Alcoholic drinks should not be dispensed and the consumption of such drinks in the possession of passengers should not be allowed.

(j) one member of the crew should act as the principal point of communication with the perpetrators to assist in establishing a rapport with them;

(k) they should avoid discussions with perpetrators on politics or the credibility of their motives; communications should be centred on the safety of the aircraft, the well-being of passengers and crew, and on the concern of their dependants;

(l) they should attempt to persuade the perpetrators to leave the flight deck, in the interests of flight safety, particularly when landing;

(m) after landing they should accept taxiing instructions to unfamiliar areas of the airport;

(n) they should advise perpetrators to accept fixed (secure) landline communications with the aircraft;

(o) they should encourage the perpetrators to speak directly to the authorities on the ground rather than through themselves;

(p) they should endeavour to establish the number of perpetrators and their weapons and discreetly attempt to pass this information and any other relevant detail to the authorities without endangering their personal safety or that of the passengers and crew;

(q) they should propose the release of as many passengers as possible, especially the sick, elderly and children;

(r) they should attempt to escape from the aircraft when this can be achieved without undue risk and is not likely to result in repercussions to other hostages;

(s) they should inform the perpetrators of aircraft unserviceability or crew sickness as a means of encouraging acceptance of another aircraft or replacement crew.

Aircraft Operator Response

2.3 Aircraft operators should have staff instructions detailing their response to an unlawful seizure of aircraft. These instructions should require the aircraft operator to take the following actions:

(a) on receipt of information that one of their aircraft has been unlawfully seized, the aircraft operator should inform the Administrator, OTS and continue to report developments;

(b) prepare to deploy an aircraft operator team to the point at which the aircraft lands, preferably in an aircraft of similar type to that unlawfully seized, and in possession of information on the specifications and characteristics of the unlawfully seized aircraft;

(c) identify the passengers and crew on board the unlawfully seized aircraft, their number, names, where they joined the flight and their nationality;

(d) collate information of the crew, their time on duty, experience on aircraft type and area involved;

(e) establish the status of the aircraft involved ó e.g. fuel state, serviceability, support services etc.

3. Airports

General

3.1 The airport operator, through the Airport Security Committee should produce and develop contingency plans in respect of unlawful seizure of aircraft. These plans should incorporate the Recommended Practices detailed in the following paragraphs.

Preparation

3.2 The Airport Security Manager should carry out a comprehensive survey of the airport to obtain information about the layout of the airport and its installations. This is best done by a site meeting of the Airport Security Committee attended by representatives of each agency likely to be involved in the plan's execution, thus ensuring that the needs of each agency are covered and that there is no conflict of interest.

3.3 This survey should include identification of:

- (a) the airport's vulnerable points;
- (b) the extent of available support services within and outside the airport;
- (c) remote areas for evacuating personnel and diverting aircraft from normal termini and facilities;
- (d) the availability of accommodation for the use of tactical response teams and the media, floodlighting, communications and access points throughout the airport;
- (e) the most advantageous points at which an unlawfully seized aircraft might be positioned. This preferred parking area should be remote from passenger facilities or vulnerable points where it may be served by fixed landline communications and afford tactical advantage to the tactical response teams.

3.4 Arrange for the following to be readily available:

- (a) up-to-date maps, plans and photographs of the airport;
- (b) details of the main types of aircraft in use by major aircraft operators;
- (c) a scale model of the airport.

3.5 Instructions should state that no physical attempt should be made to prevent an unlawfully seized aircraft from landing.

Reception

3.6 Airport emergency procedures should designate one or more parking areas to which an unlawfully seized aircraft might be directed.

3.7 In selecting parking areas the following points should be taken into consideration:

(a) the need to be remote from other aircraft, passenger facilities, hazards such as fuel farms etc. and from the view of the press and the public;

(b) the availability of covered approaches to facilitate action by security forces/tactical response teams (e.g. runway drainage access points, adjacent buildings, natural features such as undulations in the terrain, presence of trees, hedgerows etc;

(c) the need for tactical response teams and other units to have quick and easy access to the scene to deal with the situation;

(d) the availability of fixed landline communications;

(e) the continuance, as far as possible, of normal operations during the incident;

(f) the compass bearing on which the aircraft will be parked.

3.8 Plans should address the possibility that the position of the aircraft may change.

3.9 Plans should provide for the restriction of aircraft services, such as fuel or food, until the requirements have been considered by the Incident Commander.

NB. Medical support and other services necessary for the preservation of life may be rendered at any time.

Actions similar to those detailed above should be incorporated in contingency plans for use in the event of an aircraft being unlawfully seized at the airport.

4. Command Structure and Operational Control

4.1 Plans should detail the command structure to be implemented for dealing with an unlawful seizure of an aircraft, clearly setting out the division of responsibility between central government, police authority, the airport and contingency military forces. Once these forces are in place the airport and the aircraft operator should act in a supporting role.

4.2 Plans should contain the following instructions in respect of operational control:

(a) Coordination should be carried out from a Main Base Station (MBS);

(b) The MBS should provide sufficient accommodation and communication facilities for the operational support units to establish and maintain rapid and direct liaison with the Crises Incident Management Commander (CIMC).

(c) Senior representatives of the airport, aircraft operators and air traffic control services should be on call to provide an interface between the Incident Commander and other aviation security stakeholders.

(d) The MBS should be located within a secure area which excludes the press and the public;

NB. Experience has shown that the air traffic control tower is rarely suitable.

(e) There should be an Inner Cordon (IC) within this area to:

(i) isolate operational control;

(ii) coordinate with the negotiators any move to the aircraft;

(iii) prevent any unauthorised movement that might provoke the perpetrators; and

(iv) contain any attempted breakout by the perpetrators.

(f) The IC should be controlled by a Forward Controller who should be mobile.

(g) Access into the IC should only be authorised by the Forward Controller.

(h) There should be separate facilities remote from the MBS, to deal with the press and the public.

(i) A casualty station should be set up with dedicated communications to respond to requests from relatives and friends of any passenger-hostages.

5. Communications

5.1 Contingency arrangements should be made:

(a) to call out telephone and other communication authorities;

(b) for establishing communications with the Crises Incident Management Task Group and the Administrator, OTS as soon as possible. The Administrator, OTS may deploy a liaison officer and point of contact;

(c) for links between the Forward Control Post and personnel deployed within the Inner Cordon.

5.2 Arrangements should also be made for either radio or landline links with the MBS.

5.3 Where radio links are used, arrangements should be made to switch to a landline link for communications between the Forward Control Post, the MBS, the negotiators and the Air Traffic Control tower at the earliest opportunity.

5.4 There should be good internal communications within the MBS and good landline links to the Government control centre, police headquarters, emergency services, airport authorities, the Air Traffic Control tower and the aircraft operator involved.

5.5 In the event of any major incident, the Crises Incident Management Commander may request the immobilisation of mobile / cellular telephones within the area. Maximum use should be made of hard wired telephones but, where mobile / cellular telephones are required to be used during an emergency, they will require special configuration.

6. Operational Intelligence

6.1 Contingency arrangements should be made to set up an Intelligence Cellö at the scene of the incident with responsibilities for:

- (a) the coordination of intelligence priorities;
- (b) direction on the collection of intelligence;
- (c) supervision of its filtering, collation and assessment; and
- (d) dissemination of information to those who need it.

6.2 Arrangements should be made to provide the Intelligence Cellö with detailed plans of any building within the airport to which hostages may be taken along with details of occupancy, the position of lifts, gas, electricity and water supply points and access to master keys.

7. Ground Movement and Apron Control

7.1 It is the responsibility of the local police to:

- (a) control traffic around the airport to ease the progress of emergency vehicles and persons needed at the airport in connection with the incident, and to contain any attempted breakout by terrorists; and
- (b) control traffic within the landside areas of the airport and control the media and general public.

8. Negotiation

8.1 Contingency arrangements should be made:

(a) for negotiators to be provided with a secure facility within the Forward Control Post; and

(b) to provide video monitoring of the unlawfully seized aircraft in the event that a direct view from the Forward Control Post is not available.

9. Denial

9.1 Provision should be made to prevent the departure of unlawfully seized aircraft by any means compatible with safety (e.g. denying towing services or blocking manoeuvres) unless the departure is authorised by the Crises Incident Management Commander.