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Training

Introduction

7.1   While it is vital to have rules, procedures, and technologies in place, vulnerabilities will emerge if employees are inadequately trained to carry out those procedures. As the witness from Queensland Transport said:

> … some speakers from international security backgrounds mention that there has been too great an emphasis on the technological advances that we are making in aviation security and not on those relating to the human element not just in Australia but worldwide. … The provision of training programs and training techniques for all staff who come into contact with passengers needs to be, I think, a priority in the achievement of security outcomes. It is something that the airports, the regulator and the airlines—all parties who are playing a part in this solution—need to be mindful of.[1]

7.2   The inquiry did not cover the training or performance of customs, quarantine, and immigration officials, but instead focused on the training of private sector employees such as:

■ check-in staff;

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1   Mr Damien Vasta, Queensland Transport, *Transcript,* 12 November 2003, p. 41.

- screening staff;

- cabin staff; and

- airport ground staff.

Check-in staff

7.3   Check-in staff (often referred to as customer service agents) are predominantly employed by airline operators and are represented industrially by the Australian Services Union. The union told the Committee that the focus of security training had been on pilots, flight attendants and screeners.[2] The union commented:

> Our members include 33 of the overseas carriers, plus the major domestic and regional airlines. The inquiries I made do not indicate that there has been any specific additional security training.[3]

7.4   The Committee questioned the domestic carriers on this issue. Qantas responded that it was in the process of rolling out additional security training for all ground staff including customer service agents. Training included recognising unusual behaviour and training in conflict resolution. In both instances, however, the customer service agent was encouraged to alert their supervisor if incidents arose.[4]

7.5   Qantas later expanded on its comments, advising that the aim was to complete the training by the end of 2004. As well, since 11 September 2001:

> … all new customer service agents have received 90 minutes security training as part of their induction program. Additional training for the assessment of doubtful/unattended items have been given to all staff.[5]

7.6   Virgin Blue responded that its staff 'had been trained as to security measures' and it was continuously developing training programs. Training programs in accordance with ICAO standards had been submitted to DoTaRS. Virgin Blue's staff had all been trained and had received specific training for their area of expertise.[6]

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2   Ms Linda White, ASU, *Transcript,* 21 October 2003, p. 40.
3   Ms Linda White, ASU, *Transcript,* 21 October 2003, p. 31.
4   Mr Geoffrey Askew, Qantas, *Transcript,* 12 November 2003, p. 13.
5   Qantas, *Submission No. 74,* pp. 412–13.
6   Mr Philip Scanlon, Virgin Blue, *Transcript,* 12 November 2003, p. 32.

Screening staff

7.7   Screening is predominantly controlled by screening authorities such as the major airports and airline operators. The authorities employ security firms under contract to conduct screening. Screening staff are represented industrially by the Australian Liquor, Hospitality and Miscellaneous Workers Union (LHMU).

7.8   The LHMU raised several issues which it considered inhibited good security outcomes, including:

- the great variation in training and workforce standards between airports—the LHMU suggested a national system of accreditation was needed; companies were signing off on their training outcomes and there were a number of cases where minimum standards were not being met;

- the high levels of casual employees—experienced security officer LHMU members were concerned they had to continuously monitor the performance of poorly trained casual personnel;

- low wages and poor job security—this contributed to high staff turnover resulting in the loss of skills within the workforce;

- the use of labour hire security employees and sub-contracting by security firms—this should be prohibited; and

- the lack of training enabling guards to undertake extensive physical searches—a protocol was needed to establish who was responsible for undertaking this type of search.[7]

7.9   The LHMU's reiterated its comments when it appeared before the Committee.[8]

7.10   The three main security companies (Chubb Security Personnel, Group 4 Securitas Pty Ltd, and SNP Security) responded to the issues raised by the LHMU in submissions and at a subsequent public hearing. The responses were:

- Since 2000 there had been a national screener accreditation program which had to be obtained from a Australian National Training Authority registered training organisation. Screeners had to complete compulsory and elective modules of training, qualify for an ASIC, complete dangerous goods awareness training, and successfully

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7   LHMU, *Submission No. 12,* pp. 74–6.
8   Mr Jeff Lawrence, LHMU, *Transcript,* 2 October 2003, pp. 63–74.

complete 40 hours one-to-one on-the-job training with a qualified work assessor. Screeners were subject to annual recurrent training.[9]

- Only a small percentage of casual staff were employed (some 3% by number, or 6% by hours worked)—they were needed to cover absences or fill four hour shifts. Many casuals worked regular daily shifts. They were required to meet the same standards as permanent employees.[10]

- Average annual earnings for a Chubb permanent employee was $38 000. Staff turnover for aviation security personnel was half that of other types of security employees (just less than 9% compared to just over 20% respectively).[11]

- Sub-contractors were used only in regional or remote areas—they were subject to the same training standards and quality assurance programs.[12]

- While Group 4 had insurance cover for issues arising from body/pat-down searches, there was no cover for individuals. Chubb had supported its employees in litigation concerning non-aviation security, but there needed to be some form of cover for individuals.[13]

7.11   Qantas also told the Committee that the average annual turnover rate for screeners employed by its contractors was 14.3 per cent. This compared with turnover rates of 12.9 per cent for Qantas staff and 18 per cent for screening staff in the USA.[14]

7.12   In a supplementary submission, DoTaRS provided more details of the training required of security officers:

> The Department has mandated that the screening of people, goods and vehicles is to be undertaken by people who hold the *Certificate II in Security (Guarding) with special application to Aviation Screening.* … Screener training is provided at the workplace by … 'Registered Training Organisations' … [which] must be registered with the State/Territory Registration Body under the Australian

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9   SNP, *Submission No. 69,* p. 389; Chubb, *Submission No. 65,* p. 371; Ms Alisa Goodyear, Chubb, *Transcript,* 24 November 2003, p. 12.

10 SNP, *Submission No. 69,* p. 389; Mr Alexander George, Group 4, *Transcript,* 24 November 2003, p. 2; Chubb, *Submission No. 65,* p. 374.

11 Mr Alexander George, Group 4, *Transcript,* 24 November 2003, p. 2; Chubb, *Submission No. 65,* p. 374.

12 Mr Michael McKinnon, Ms Alisa Goodyear, Chubb, *Transcript,* 24 November 2003, p. 15.

13 Mr Alexander George, Group 4, Ms Alisa Goodyear, Chubb, *Transcript,* 24 November 2003, p. 17.

14 Mr Geoffrey Askew, *Transcript,* 12 November 2003, p. 9.

> Quality Training Framework … [which] comprises two sets of nationally agreed standards … [15]

Private or public sector screening

7.13   Group 4 and Chubb raised the issue as to whether private sector or public sector entities should be responsible for providing screening services.

7.14   Group 4 argued that the competitive environment created pressure on the private sector screening companies to 'maintain quality or risk losing business to a competitor.' If services were provided by a government or quasi-government entity—where employment was 'pretty much guaranteed'—the lack of competitive pressure could result in a loss of competence or drop in standards.[16]

7.15   Chubb's submission stated:

> Recent surveys from the General Accounting Office of the USA point toward a deficiency in training, particularly recurrent and supervisory training, annual proficiency reviews, and annual certification programs. The interim reports have not been extremely favorable with many questions of quality still outstanding. It is also interesting to note that the TSA is currently running a pilot program in which they are assessing the possibility of returning the passenger screening function to private security firms.[17]

Committee comment

7.16   The Committee is satisfied with the arrangements for the training of security screeners. The Committee notes that the April 2004 Draft Regulations cover the training and qualifications of screening officers. Screeners are required to hold 'at least a Certificate II in Security Operations'. For the first 40 hours they are to be 'supervised by a qualified screener' and must be assessed annually by 'a suitably qualified assessor of a registered training organisation'.[18]

7.17   The Committee believes it is important to have competent and well paid screening staff who remain in the job. Experienced screening staff are an asset.

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15   DoTaRS, *Submission No. 82,* p. 523–4.
16   Group 4, *Submission No. 67,* p. 381.
17   Chubb, *Submission No. 66,* p. 373.
18   April 2004 Draft Aviation Transport Security Regulations 2004, Division 5.3, 5.05 (1), (4), p. 76.

7.18   The Committee also considers that the use of sub-contractors for screening has been satisfactorily addressed by the screening companies.

7.19   Turning to physical searches, the Committee considers that the *Aviation Transport Security Act 2004* clearly sets out the powers and limitations of screeners.

7.20   The legislation allows screening officers to request, but not require, the removal of **any** item of the person's clothing if it is considered necessary in order to screen a person properly. If the request is refused and the person refuses to be screened in a private room by an officer of the same sex, and if the refusal means that it is impossible to screen the person properly, 'the screening officer **must** refuse to allow the person to pass the screening point.'[19]

7.21   The April 2004 Draft Regulations also specify the training necessary for screeners to undertake physical searches.

7.22   The draft regulations require the initial one-to-one supervision of a new screener to include secondary screening duties including 'searching people with a hand-held metal detector or conducting physical searches.' The annual reassessment is also to include conducting 'limited physical searches of people.'[20]

7.23   The Committee considers it appropriate for the private sector to provide screening services. Competition as well as DoTaRS' mandated requirements and auditing will create pressure to maintain standards. The Committee reviews how performance is assessed in Chapter 8.

Flight and cabin crew

7.24   The submission from the FAAA stated that while the ICAO was rewriting its *ICAO Cabin Crew Training Manual* to incorporate greater security responsibilities, 'the only group not required to demonstrate their safety and security proficiency to an internationally agreed minimum standard is cabin crew.'[21]

7.25   Mr Clive Williams also referred to ICAO guidelines commenting that cabin crews should meet international security proficiency standards and

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19   *Aviation Transport Security Act 2004*, Section 93 (1), (2), (5), pp. 80–1 (emphasis added).
20   April 2004 Draft Aviation Transport Security Regulations 2004, Division 5.3, 5.05 (2), (4), pp. 76–7.
21   FAAA, *Submission No. 34,* p. 254.

that all flight crew should attend security awareness training on a regular basis.[22]

7.26   The submission from Qantas indicated that additional security training for flight and cabin crew had been introduced.[23] Virgin Blue Airlines told the Committee that it had submitted training programs to DoTaRS in accordance with ICAO standards and that its staff including pilots and cabin crew had all been trained.[24]

7.27   The value of the new training was subsequently confirmed by the FAAA:

> A cabin crew training program specifically addressing hijacking and security issues is now in force. It took some time to get that training program in place; it was a big and complex issue. We were able to participate in the development of the program. The feedback we are getting from the crew is that they love it. They are saying: 'It's fantastic. This is what we've needed for so long.'[25]

7.28   The Committee considers that the issue of flight and cabin crew security training has been addressed.

Airport ground staff

7.29   Airport ground staff include baggage handlers, cargo and freight handlers, cleaners, caterers, ramp staff and refuellers.

7.30   There are some 180 airports in Australia which service regular passenger aircraft. Before December 2003 only 38 of these airports were regulated. Changes announced on 4 December 2003, however, will result in all 180 airports being included in the regulatory regime.[26] A feature of regulation is that ground staff are required to carry ASICs. Consequently all staff working at those airports will require ASICs.

7.31   The Committee has considered the training provided to ASIC holders.

7.32   Brisbane Airport advised the Committee that it did not provide any specific security awareness training when ASICs were issued. The submission continued:

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22   Mr Clive Williams, *Transcript,* 5 September 2003, p. 58.
23   Qantas, *Submission No. 17,* pp. 103, 104.
24   Mr Philip Scanlon, *Transcript,* 12 November 2003, p. 32.
25   Mr Guy Maclean, *Transcript,* 5 September 2003, p. 71.
26   DoTaRS, *Submission No. 79,* pp. 428, 443.

> On application, there is a requirement for the applicant to sign that they have read and understood all the security provisions that are printed on the form. The consequences of non-compliance are also provided to them on the same form and we consider that their signature is sufficient proof that they are aware of their obligations. Additionally, we supply the opportunity annually for all airport staff to attend a security awareness briefing as part of our Emergency Exercise Program.[27]

7.33   APAM told the Committee that apart from an induction course when ASICs were issued it did not undertake much ongoing security training because it did not have the resources. It tried to maintain a security culture through signage and newsletters and patrols.[28]

7.34   SACL advised the Committee that:

> Each new ASIC applicant has access to the Sydney Airport specific a Security Awareness Guide … [which] provides details of safety and security requirements at Sydney Airport and gives ASIC applicants the information required to undertake a 'Security Awareness Test'. The test consists of multiple choice questions which are randomly selected from a computer database.[29]

7.35   Coffs Harbour Regional Airport (a currently regulated airport) told the Committee that it trained officers to meet safety requirements and to include basic, fundamental security measures would not be a great impost. It added, however, that it did conduct an induction program for any new employee of the companies operating at the airport. This program attempted to instil basic security awareness, such as reporting unattended luggage.[30]

7.36   The Committee notes that the regulatory regime requires aviation participants to develop transport security programs that:

> … demonstrate that the participant:
> - is aware of their general responsibility to contribute to the maintenance of aviation security
> - has developed an integrated, responsible and proactive approach to managing aviation security …[31]

7.37   Consequently, the Committee sought information from DoTaRS concerning whether the guidance material it was providing to assist the

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27   BAC, *Submission No. 83,* p. 527.
28   Ms Pamella Graham, *Transcript,* 21 October 2003, p. 12.
29   SACL, *Submission No. 84,* p. 529.
30   Mr Bevan Edwards, *Transcript,* 2 October 2003, p. 35.
31   DoTaRS, *Submission No. 79,* p. 454.

preparation of security programs included the need to develop security awareness training for ASIC holders.

7.38   DoTaRS responded that security awareness training was not currently mandated for all ASIC holders, but the 'issue may be considered in the context of the development and approval of transport security programs'. DoTaRS added that a broad ranging review of security training (not just for ASIC holders) was currently being canvassed with industry.[32]

Committee comment

7.39   The Committee acknowledges that many ASIC holders will have attended specified security training because of the nature of their duties. A proportion, however, will not have received security training. The Committee considers that all airport workers should have a minimum awareness of security issues.

7.40   The Committee believes that the computer-based security awareness test offered by SACL to ASIC applicants suggests a cost-effective training instrument. It is unclear from SACL's submission whether this test is compulsory. The Committee considers it would be relatively easy to require those ASIC holders who had not received security training as part of their duties to successfully complete a computer-based security awareness test. This could be required when ASICs were issued and also on a regular basis, such as annually.

Recommendation 4

7.41   **The Department of Transport and Regional Services should require aviation participants to include in their transport security programs compulsory initial and ongoing security awareness training for airport security identification card holders who have not received security training as part of their normal duties.**

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32   DoTaRS, *Submission No. 87,* p. 536.