

# Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit

## Inquiry into developments in aviation security since its June 2004 *Report 400: Review of Aviation Security in Australia*

### SUBMISSION COVER SHEET

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## **Review of Aviation Security in Australia**

### **Updated Comments by the Flight Attendants' Association of Australia on the Cabin Crew Perspective of Australian Aviation Security**

#### **Background**

The FAAA reintegrates the points raised previously within our submission to the Joint Statutory Committee of Public Accounts and Audit (2 September 2003) and again highlights the vital safety and security basis of the cabin crew role.

The FAAA contends that while customer service duties form an important component of the modern cabin crew role, its primary nature is best characterised as that of aviation safety and security professional. The reduction of the airline flight deck crew to two members on the majority of the world's air transport category aircraft, while the size and capacity of the aircraft cabin continues to grow, has increased the vital role of cabin crew as members of an integrated operational safety and security team.

The safety and security functions and obligations of cabin crew are clearly detailed within the Convention on International Civil Aviation<sup>1</sup>, which requires that cabin crew members be trained to "*minimise the consequences of acts of unlawful interference*" and to "*...contribute to the prevention of acts of sabotage or other forms of unlawful interference.*" In recognition of these obligations Annex 2 to the Convention specifically identifies cabin crew as a 'safety-sensitive' group<sup>2</sup>

*This primacy of safety and security is further reflected within the ICAO Cabin Crew Safety Training Manual, which states that "cabin crew training is about safety ...their duties and responsibilities in air transport operation are safety related and their training should clearly reflect this"*<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> International Civil Aviation Organisation, ( 2001). *Annex 6 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation, International Standards and Recommended Practice - Operation of Aircraft*. Part 1: International Commercial Air Transport – Aeroplanes (eighth edition). ICAO, Montreal: Canada.

<sup>2</sup> International Civil Aviation Organisation, (1990). *Annex 2 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation, International Standards and Recommended Practice – Rules of the Air* (ninth edition). ICAO, Montreal: Canada.

<sup>3</sup> International Civil Aviation Organisation, (1996). *Cabin Attendants Safety Training Manual* (second edition). Doc 7192-AN/857 Part E1. ICAO, Montreal: Canada.



1. With respect to Recommendation 5 of the Review of Aviation Security in Australia (Report 400), the FAAA wholly concurs with the necessity to create a robust security culture that seeks to elicit the full participation of all aviation personnel.
2. The key to eliciting the inclusive sentiment required to create a robust security culture is, however, the full consultation and inclusion of all stakeholders - including cabin crew. The FAAA believes that the efficiency of this process is hindered by the lack of a formal mechanism for the representatives of cabin crew members to liaise with the Department of Transport and Regional Services (DoTaRS). Since the Committee's report was published no such formal consultation has taken place.
3. Cabin crew will always inform the relevant regulator or operator of any security concern of which they become aware, however, formal consultation between this association and DoTaRS may be an important aid to this process.
4. As human operators such as cabin crew members are fundamentally the most flexible and valuable components of any complex socio-technical aviation system the FAAA again highlights the value of eliciting the full contribution of cabin crew members toward developing a robust security culture.
5. Cabin crew members represent a vital quality control mechanism within the Australian aviation security system. Cabin crew are intimately familiar with the aircraft cabin environment and as such will quickly recognise any security anomaly.
6. In an airborne security incident it is the cabin crew who carry the responsibility for direct action to neutralise a cabin security incident. The lives of passengers may therefore lie directly within the hands of cabin crew in both the safety and security contexts.
7. As cabin crew members are not responsible for the design or oversight of aviation security systems they are not required to defend the efficiency and utility of such systems. The FAAA is therefore in the position of being able to simply inform the Committee as to whether, from the user's perspective, the aviation security system is functioning adequately.

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