



# AIRCRAFT OPERATOR SECURITY PROGRAM - FOREIGN AUTHORITY ACCEPTANCE

## The issue and position

States are mandated to require aircraft operators to submit and receive approval of their Aircraft Operator Security Program (AOSP) according to their national rules to ensure applicable requirements of their National Civil Aviation Security Program (NCASP) are adhered to. At the same time, States must ensure relevant information is available to the aircraft operators as per ICAO Annex 17 3.1.10 Standard.<sup>1</sup>

NCASP structure and content may vary as the interpretation of Annex 17 and its related guidance material (ICAO Security Manual Doc 8793) may result in transliteral differences.

Aircraft operators are often faced with the need to satisfy differing requests of various States to which they may provide scheduled or chartered air transport services. Specific challenges for aircraft operators arise when Foreign State regulators require:

- The Aircraft Operator Security Program (AOSP) to be translated into a Host State's official language, and/or;
- The AOSP be developed in a format which is specific to a particular Host State.

As a result of multiple and varying requirements from various Host (Foreign) States related to the AOSP, the aircraft operators' risks in cases of acts of unlawful interference increase substantially.

To facilitate the recognition of State of Registry approved AOSPs, Host States must take into account the responsibility of the State of Registry (Aircraft Operator Certificate/AOC issuing State) to require adherence to the standards contained in ICAO Annex 17 as a minimum.

The requirement for aircraft operators to translate their AOSP into multiple languages for the purpose of complying with every Host State's approval requirements combined with maintain different language versions of the same AOSP raises the opportunities for errors in implementation and compliance exponentially. Improper interpretations may arise when auditors base their assessment on a translated version of the aircraft operator's AOSP. Moreover, any update to the AOSP will also require translation, which again adds to potential for errors in the various language versions.

Host States should therefore accept the AOSP either in the national language of the State that issued the AOC or in English as an alternative to the local language in order to facilitate the assessment of aircraft operator's compliance.

States shall ensure relevant parts of their NCASP and/or applicable guidance information are made available for aircraft operators to ensure compliance and implementation of necessary and adequate measures.

## Background information

Aircraft operators, hold an approved/accepted and valid AOC and Operations Manual (OM) from their State of Registry competent authority. An AOC is required to lawfully operate air transport services between States. The AOC and operating specifications include a registry of aircraft types and approved airports.

The OM may contain specific security standards with which the aircraft operator must comply. The AOC State of registry shall have a NCASP in place containing the minimum ICAO Annex 17 Standards. Aircraft operators are required to establish and maintain the security procedures contained in their approved/accepted AOSP.

States are required to comply with ICAO Chicago Convention and its Annexes, including provisions contained in the Annex 17. If differences arise, ICAO is notified, whereby all States concerned would be made fully aware of these. Thus point-to-

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<sup>1</sup> ICAO Annex 17 Standard 3.1.10 requires States to: "make available to its (...) aircraft operators and air traffic service providers operating in its territory and other entities concerned, a written version of the appropriate parts of its national civil aviation security program and/or relevant information or guidelines enabling them to meet the requirements of the national civil aviation security program."

point air transport between States is based on approved and/or recognized AOCs, OMIs and AOSPs, that meet the minimum requirements contained in ICAO Annex 17.

Additionally, according to the IATA Operational Safety Audit (IOSA) standards covering aircraft operator documentation systems, the aircraft operator needs to ensure that its AOSP covers at least the following:

- Requirements of the NCASP of the State of the Operator;
- Applicable requirements of other States to which operations are conducted;
- The security standards of the aircraft operator.

IOSA certified aircraft operators must ensure their documentation (procedures) used directly in conduct or in support of the operations under the AOSP are properly maintained and routinely updated. All interested parties (including service providers) receive relevant instructions in a timely manner, including any specific security requirements. Specific policy elements of the AOSP, that require operationalization, are embedded in operational documentation and processes where responsibilities are delegated throughout the aircraft operator's organization. In cases where security measures are to be applied in a State (airport location) that are different and/or exceed the baseline AOSP, the aircraft operator shall adjust local manuals/processes where necessary without having to amend the policy framework of the AOSP.

To hold valid IOSA Certification the aircraft operator must ensure compliance with AOSP processes, consequently, compliance with baseline standards may be confirmed by all concerned by accessing [the IOSA Registry](#).

IOSA provisions are compliant with the ICAO Security Manual which reads as follows "Aircraft operator security programs are generally drafted to meet the requirements of a National Civil Aviation Security Program and other regulations of the aircraft operator's home State. To address the need for aircraft operator security program variations required by other States and perhaps an aircraft operator's special circumstances, aircraft operators should develop a supplementary station procedures program that may be appended to the aircraft operator security program".

## Proposed solution

Host States should accept the English AOSP (if the Host State does not accept the AOSP in the aircraft operator's language) approved by the AOC issuing State as proof of intent to comply with Annex 17 Standards, i.e. all ICAO Annex 17<sup>2</sup> Standards including compliance with the States NCASP.

Host States should also consider IOSA Certification as proof of intended compliance with all ICAO Annexes (Safety and Security) including baseline security measures.

For the purposes of specific compliance with any additional and/or specific requirements of the Host State two elements should be considered sufficient:

- Specific section in the AOSP describing how the aircraft operator ensures specific additional measures required by the Host State to which the aircraft operator is seeking to conduct operations are reflected in the aircraft operator's operational procedures (ground operations manual, cabin operations manual, cargo manual, etc.) and implemented by the aircraft operator own personnel or service providers;
- State specific addendum to the AOSP referring to these operational documents/procedures or describing the implementation of such measures. The addendum should be provided in English in lieu of the local language.

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<sup>2</sup> On this basis there are no ICAO Annex 17 differences filed. Even if differences are notified by the AOC issuing State, Foreign States have access to these differences and could engage a bilateral discussion.