

ASSA-i



AVIATION SECURITY
SERVICES ASSOCIATION
INTERNATIONAL

Position Paper on the EU List of Actions to address

Chemical Threats to Civil Aviation

Introduction

Established in 2002, ASSA-i is the single voice for aviation security providers. Its vision is professional, efficient and seamless security services for individuals, luggage and cargo, so that people and goods can fly safely and securely. To this end, the ASSA-i members are constantly seeking to optimise security solutions, where both technology and people are selected and combined to provide high quality security.

The ASSA-i Experts have carefully examined the EU List of Actions to address Chemical Threats to Civil Aviation and would like to make the following points:

- The ASSA-i Members take it to heart to deliver high quality security services in airports. To this end, they abide by the ASSA-i Quality Charter, which has served as a basis for the CEN Standard EN 16082:2011, and lists high quality criteria in the following areas:
 - o The service philosophy;
 - o The quality of the contract management;
 - o The quality of the contract infrastructure (equipment, technical support)
 - o The quality of the structure and organisation of the company
- ASSA-i, as a member of the horizontal Private Security Association, CoESS, also fully supports the CoESS-UNI Europa Best Value Manual, produced with financial support of the EU, and which aims to give buyers of private security services quality criteria to select the best value proposal.
- Whilst security has become an ever-growing challenge and priority, in particular after the attacks on airports in recent years, requirements and pressure on private security services suppliers are equally growing, together with the need to ensure acceptable throughputs to ensure a smooth, safe and secure passenger journey;

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- The technology in use is increasingly sophisticated, requiring screeners to be well selected, so that they have the right profile and skills, and are well trained and re-trained. Meanwhile the terrorists are developing equally sophisticated and complex ways of attacking airports.
- Seeking to detect and prevent these potential attacks is the common objective of law enforcement and private security stakeholders.
- In order to support the successful implementation of the new measures, ASSA-i draws the attention to the following issues:

The paper does not explicitly mention the use of intelligence as first and most important means of addressing the terrorist threat. It should be the foundation without which any of the following building blocks will not be effective.

The next very important aspect is the [balance between quality, time, and throughput](#).

- The [minimum timeline](#) for the new measures to be implemented would be 2 years, as guards need to be recruited, background checked and trained, in a workforce deficit context, and with the need to carefully select the candidates given the sensitivity of the job and the current context.
- The actions will have a significant [impact on the process and will affect the throughput KPIs](#);
- The discussion triggers (again) the [discussion on quality](#): airport guards are required to be constantly more numerous and better trained, as the task becomes increasingly complex, and increasingly stressful. As a way of comparison, surgeons get 12 years of training to look at MRI for relatively similar images (human bodies are not significantly different from one another), whilst guards get trained to pick images that are much more complex, just within a few weeks.
 - o From relatively straightforward X-ray screening in the past to today's highly sophisticated screening requirements, the difference is the same as between a regular car and an F1. A drivers' license will not help to drive an F1 car;
 - o Bags are getting increasingly complex due to changes in travelling habits and additional costs for hold baggage;
 - o Not one bag is similar to the next, and each day new items, mostly electronic, are invented, which passengers take with them.

Any solution should [consider the bigger picture](#), which is:

- The [profile of guards](#) to satisfy today's screening requirements: they need to have specific competences and education (not just training);
- The [pressure on guards](#) entails health and safety hazards, namely stress, but also, given the substances covered, actual hazards from touching and breathing chemicals or other toxic substances;



- The **pressure on throughput and operations** needs to be considered, as there will be an **impact on time** required for screening;
- The **quality must be given more weight** in the criteria to select private security providers, whilst many airports are still focused solely on price. Ultimately this creates a risk for guards, all airport staff and passengers.
- **New profiles need to be defined** to perform the enhanced screening tasks and this in turn will require that the working conditions and compensation be reviewed.

The Aviation Security Services Association – International

ASSA-i is a **non-profit association** representing the private security companies that provide security services at airports. The aim of ASSA-I is to promote the interests of the aviation security providers in national, European and International fora and to promote high-quality security services.

ASSA-I was set up in 2002, in the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, to be the single voice of private security providers and, as such, to promote high quality standards and professionalism in aviation security.

The association's purpose is to promote the interests of the aviation security providers, which are members of the association. The members' activities have an international scope and include the surveillance and protection of civil aviation, in particular as regards the inspection of individuals, luggage and cargo, as well as any other relevant security action.

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