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Mission and structure

AIRPOL is the Network for Police and Border Guard Units at EU airports. Its scope is airport policing, aviation security and air border security. This includes basically all policing tasks at the airport except for border control. The Airpol mission is to enhance the co-operation between police organisations at EU airports and raise the general level of competence answering to defined priority areas.

25 EU MS are currently taking part to the Airpol Network. Partner countries outside the EU: AU, CA, CH, IL, NO, UK and US.

AIRPOL main mission:

- Further develop the co-operation between Police and Border Guard units at EU airports.
- Develop best practice.
- Manuals, guidelines, exercises, training sessions and conferences.

Plenary Congress and Management Board Meetings

Airpol had three Management Board meetings and one Plenary Congress during the 2023 gathering just over 100 participants from 24 countries and several co-operation partner organizations, networks and the Industry in a dedicated Exhibition area.

CBRN

Airpol conducted training on CBRN detection in two sessions, A and B including 26 participants from 14 countries and one invited participant from Aquapol.

Part A is a theoretical session providing informative elements on chemical, biological and radioactive sources, CBRN risk analysis for civil aviation and risk indicators, CBRN protection measures, first response measures and discussions based on various example scenarios. Part B is a practical session inclusive of the use of detection equipment. Final goal is to enhance the preparedness of law enforcement first responders in case of a CBRN incident at airports.



Behaviour Detection

Any person who has an authorized access to or knowledge of an organization's resources, including personnel, facilities, information, equipment, networks, and systems, could exploit his role/knowledge for unauthorized purposes. In view of a series of cases and incidents regarding terrorism or violent extremism-related insider threats, and whilst recognizing that the security responsibility is Member States' (MS) competency, AIRPOL has taken action in order to mitigate insider threats at airports.

AIRPOL has designed and performed specialised training sessions for law enforcement deployed at the airports, focusing on behavior detection with theoretical and practical sessions in class rooms and at the airport.

Table-Top Exercise Severe Incidents at An Airport

Security at an airport is provided by a wide array of stakeholders. It is of paramount importance to regularly test the responsiveness of the different layers in order to grant a coordinated and efficient reaction in case of a terrorist threat. Airpol has therefore has conducted a set of table-top exercised in 16 airports of 15 countries gathering over 800 participants including all relevant key actors at the airports. 10 of the exercises were conducted in 2023.



A Pilot Project In Behavioral Assessment Screening in European Airports (Base)

The pilot is a comparative study on the efficiency of the Airpol Behaviour detection model at four European airports, comparing organisation, context, work methods etc. The aim is to further develop the work methods. The study is performed I two parts interviews with various officials at management level at the airport, Police, Airport, Security etc. and one part is shadowing the officers to follow the operational work asking questions and get an idea of the environmental issues.

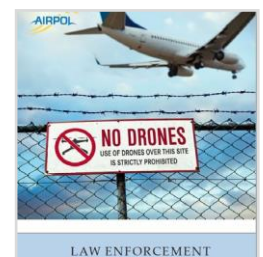


Intelligence Work Group

The Airpol Intelligence work group has further developed the work methods during the year, increased the number of countries taking part and has begun exchanging information to member states and co-operation partners. The group has recurring webex meetings to exchange information. Contact has been taken also with other groups outside the police such as the Airport associations, airlines etc.

Manuals And Guidelines

AIRPOL has issued a technical manual for Law Enforcement on how to respond to



Drone incidents at airports which is aligned with the Communication on countering potential threats posed by drones, adopted by the EC in October 2023.

https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/communication-commission-countering-potential-threats-posed-drones_en



AIRPOL has developed operational guidelines together with the EU In-Flight Security officer Network (EIFS) providing guidance to the law enforcement deployed at an airport on the weapon procedures to in case of an emergency landing. The guideline is a support for the local Police Commander not having IFSOs of their own and therefore not having a routine for dealing with foreign armed police officers. The guideline is an agreement between the EIFS network and AIRPOL about standardized procedures.

PROGRESSING WORK READY TO BE ISSUED IN VARIOUS WG SECURING THE AIRPORT COMMUNITY

UNRULY PASSENGERS WG

The strands of work regarding the handling of unruly passengers has progressed focusing on the communication among airport law enforcement and aircraft. Technical guidelines will be developed in Spring 2024.

THE INSIDER WG is developing an Awareness Table-Top Exercise on Insider Threat Mitigation. The overall goal of the exercise is to increase the preparedness of the security stakeholders at airports in identifying and fighting terrorist threat posed by insiders. The lesson learned of AIRPOL practical exercise will represent the basis for further developments at policy level on the current work on background checks.

PROTESTER WG

A guideline how to deal with protesters is being developed. The Aviation industry faces an increasing problem with various groups of protesters both peaceful and more violent ones. The work is including an important part how to prepare the whole airport including all relevant actors for a possible protest action. The guideline will be ready Autumn 2024.