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Airports and Loci of Aviation: Security Guidelines for Physical Design and Modification

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Abstract. This article provides guidelines for the design and modification of loci and aviation from a security perspective.

Given that it is cost-prohibitive and defies most definitions of common sense to destroy all airports and loci of aviation and start again in the aftermath of some aviation security tragedy, one must attend to both the physical design of new loci of aviation as well as the modification of existing loci.

Even if there were infinite resources to design and modify airports and loci of aviation to maximize security, one might still wittingly or unwittingly be unaware of, ignore, or discount what might need to be done. Given that there are only finite resources, identifying what needs to be done and what most needs to be done to maximize security becomes an even more crucial task.

One guideline is that a one-size-fits-all approach will not fit all loci of commercial and general aviation. Each locus will have a different probability of being targeted by various security threats. Each locus and variant of commercial and general aviation will pose different security consequences for the same physical vulnerability. Each variant of commercial and general aviation will pose different economic consequences for the same degree of security protection. To the last point, one must note that destroying the economic viability of a mode of aviation in deference to security is tantamount to destroying a village to save it.

Another guideline is to establish a systems as opposed to a piecemeal approach to physical design and modification. The isolated identification and fixing of specific security vulnerabilities could even increase the insecurity of a locus of aviation as a whole. As well, what looks like a physical vulnerability in isolation may be nothing of the kind in the context of the system in which it resides. An approximation of a systems approach is a layered one in which various security technologies and procedures are integrated to produce some estimated and cumulative value.

Yet another guideline is that a physical systems approach may be meaningless and yield an unknowable degree of security without a further integration of social design and modification. Here one must focus on individual, group, and larger concatenations of behavior and behavioral dynamics that can contribute to the security value of physical design and modification as much as physical design and modification can contribute to behaviors, their dynamics, and their security value.

A final guideline relates to the sine qua non of intelligence in defining the security threat and in identifying which physical vulnerabilities are worthy of design and modification intention in the context of finite resources. Otherwise, one would be at the mercy of the reconnaissance, surveillance, and research capabilities of terrorists and other potential security violators. One would either guess wrong about the threat or guess right at one point in time and then see that right become wrong at a later point in time because of the expense of changing one's physical security posture to match the changing security threat. This suggests that the optimal security stance is to engage in a continuously changing physical design and modification activity—viz., an activity that would mitigate against significant sunken

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costs and against difficult-to-erect, -modify, and -maintain physical security structures. In addition, one needs to deduce, induce, or otherwise empathize with how a physical layout and the behaviors associated with it are perceived by those presenting a security threat.(See Mastroianni, G. R. (2002). Milgram and the Holocaust: A reexamination. *Journal of Theoretical & Philosophical Psychology*, 22, 158-173; Paranjpe, A. C. (2002). Indigenous psychology in the post-colonial context: An historical perspective. *Psychology & Developing Societies*, 14, 27-44; Weigert, A. J. (2003). Terrorism, identity, and public order: A perspective from Goffman. *Identity*, 3, 93-113; Zebrowitz, L. A. (2003). Commentary: Overgeneralization Effects in Perceiving Nonverbal Behavior: Evolutionary and Ecological Origins. *Journal of Nonverbal Behavior*, 27, 133-138.)