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**REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND
THE COUNCIL**

**2024 ANNUAL REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF REGULATION (EC) N°
300/2008 ON COMMON RULES IN THE FIELD OF CIVIL AVIATION SECURITY**

1. INTRODUCTION

According to Article 16 of Regulation (EC) No 300/2008¹, the Commission shall every year present a report to the European Parliament, the Council and the Member States informing them of the application of this Regulation and of its impact on improving aviation security.

In 2024, the Commission services continued the implementation of the actions announced in the Commission Staff Working Document (SWD) “Working towards an enhanced and more resilient aviation security policy: a stocktaking”. The implementation phase of the 14 flagship actions identified in this document ran throughout 2024, together with Member States. This work focused on the new aviation security baseline and boosting innovation development in alignment with the EU Aviation Security Strategy.

2. THREAT EVENTS AND OUTLOOK

The Commission, together with the relevant agencies, maintained a continuous dialogue on, and regular monitoring of, emerging security threats for aviation, including those of a hybrid nature, with Member States and other stakeholders, to build up the knowledge and capacity to react to those threats, effectively managing the risk.

2.1 Terrorism and hybrid threats

Terrorism and violent extremism continue to pose a significant threat to the European Union and its Member States, notably from global jihadist networks, while the overall threat level remains significant. Destabilising internal and external events have contributed to the intensification of radicalisation, enhanced tension and social polarisation, potentially leading to terrorism and violent extremism across the Union. Terrorists operate across borders, leveraging new technologies and *modi operandi*. The spread of mis- and disinformation online and its potential for radicalisation remains a key concern. In an environment that is more decentralised and volatile, diffuse terrorist and violent extremist actors connect and inspire one another beyond ideology or group affiliation.

The conflicts in the Middle East region have raised the threat to the EU’s internal security and hold considerable potential for mobilisation and radicalisation, which could activate a range of new threat vectors across Europe. The conflict has greatly increased the volume of extremist content online, including terrorist propaganda, anti-Semitic and anti-Muslim content and polarising narratives.

¹ Regulation (EC) No 300/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2008 on common rules in the field of civil aviation security and repealing Regulation (EC) No 2320/2002 (OJ L 97, 9.4.2008, p. 72).

Civil aviation remains a high-profile target, while threats and challenges are expected to evolve, with likely increased diversity of modi operandi of attack. Insider threats and home-grown terrorism remain an area of particular attention. Conflict zones will continue to provide terrorists with an environment offering the opportunity to acquire more sophisticated military grade equipment.

While the Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine has so far had a limited impact on the terrorist threat and violent extremism in the EU, it has led to an increased hybrid threat against the EU's internal security, via an increase in disinformation, cyberattacks, attempts to instrumentalise migration, and sabotage actions against critical infrastructure, including air cargo security.

2.2 Air cargo security incidents

Starting in July 2024 a series of unlawful acts of interference took place in the secure supply chain of (air) cargo and mail in Europe. These incidents involved the use of Improvised Incendiary Devices (IID). They mobilised government and industry efforts, at EU and international level, to reflect on vulnerabilities and solutions for enhanced resilience. The Commission, jointly with Member States and industry stakeholders developed a set of preventive measures that contribute to mitigating the modus operandi used and strengthening the air cargo supply chain.

2.3 Cybersecurity

As civil aviation becomes increasingly interconnected and digitalized, cyber threats pose increasing risks to aviation security, safety, and efficiency. Cyber-attacks targeting the transport sector could potentially have disastrous consequences and lead to significant economic disruption. More than 8,500 cyber-attacks impacting various aviation stakeholders worldwide were reported in 2024. The preferred methods for conducting cyber-attacks were fraudulent websites, phishing and malware, and Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS). The main targets were airspace users, airports, air navigation service providers and their supply chain.²

The motivation underlying cyber-attacks is varied. While financial gain is the most common reason, others are motivated by ideology or acting on behalf of hostile State actors.

In this complex environment, efforts have focused on rapid and effective implementation of existing regulatory initiatives, ensuring they are fully operationalized and consistently applied.

² EUROCONTROL/EATM-CERT 2025 report on cyber in aviation.

3. RISK ASSESSMENTS

3.1 Drones

As indicated in the “Drone Strategy 2.0”³, the Commission committed to consider whether an amendment to the aviation security rules was necessary to ensure that aviation authorities and airports increase their resilience when faced with the risks posed by non-cooperative and unauthorised drones.

The Commission services conducted a dedicated risk assessment exercise, finalized in the first quarter 2024, on the risk posed by non-cooperative and unauthorised UAs (unmanned aircraft) to civil aviation and airports facilities. The scope of the risk assessment exercise primarily covered the threat posed by the use of UAs for purposes of terrorism. Hybrid scenarios involving State actors were not considered.

The final outcome pointed out that, at that point in time, the risk exposure of civil aviation and airports facilities against intentional attacks perpetrated by terrorists making use of UAVs capabilities was not significant. As a result, the residual risk did not mandate the need for a review of the existing aviation security rules.

3.2 Conflict Zones

Under the EU Conflict Zone Alerting System common risk assessments continued to take place on a regular quarterly basis in 2024, under the lead of the EU aviation security integrated risk assessment group, including EU Member States, EU Intelligence and Situation Centre (EU INTCEN) of the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA). The aim of this exercise is to share information on the assessment of risks to EU civil aviation arising from conflict zones in a timely manner to support risk mitigation. In case of urgency, exceptional meetings are arranged.

The group held four quarterly meetings in 2024 and seven ad hoc urgent meetings, in particular with regard to the conflict in the Middle East and its impact on EU civil aviation. This led to the publication of three conflict zone information bulletins (CZIB), the withdrawal of one CZIB, as well as the extension of 11 existing CZIBs.⁴

The integrated EU aviation security risk assessment process also provides risk assessment capability and supports the decision-making process (risk mitigation) for air cargo security and aviation security standards.

³ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, A Drone Strategy 2.0 for a Smart and Sustainable Unmanned Aircraft Eco-System in Europe, COM(2022) 652 final, 29 November 2022.

⁴ <https://www.easa.europa.eu/en/domains/air-operations/czibs>

4. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK AND SUPPLEMENTARY TOOLS

4.1 Legislative framework

Civil aviation remains an attractive target for hostile actors and countering this threat requires the implementation of proportionate, risk-based protective measures. The Commission and Member States are therefore constantly adjusting the mitigation measures to achieve the highest level of security while minimising adverse effects on operations.

Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/1998 was amended in May 2024 by Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/1255⁵. The latter introduced amendments to address the evolving threat and risk picture as well as recent technology developments. They introduced a regime for approval and oversight of hauliers that in many cases ensure surface transport of secure air cargo and mail on behalf of regulated agents and known consignors. One airport⁶ was also added to the list of third countries recognised as applying security standards equivalent to the common basic standards on aviation security. A second amendment to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/1998 was adopted in July 2024 by Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/2108⁷ that reintroduced temporarily a lower volume limit for screening of liquids, aerosols and gels (LAGs) using Explosive Detection Systems for Cabin Baggage (EDSCB) equipment meeting standard C3, and called for an improvement of the detection algorithms used by that technology.

4.2 Union database on supply chain security

The Union database⁸ on supply chain security constitutes the only legal tool for consultation when accepting consignments from another regulated agent or from a known consignor. The same database also includes a list of approved civil aviation security equipment with ‘EU Stamp’ marking.

At the end of 2024, the database contained about 37 000 records of regulated agents, known consignors, known suppliers of airport supplies, independent validators, ACC3 airlines, regulated suppliers, third country regulated agents and known consignors, security equipment, airports and users. Its availability rate was 99.99%, meaning that during the year 2024 it was unavailable for less than 30 minutes in total.

4.3 Pre-Loading Advance Cargo Information (PLACI)

Economic operators responsible for bringing consignments into the Union customs territory (as destination or as a place of transit) from third countries by air have to

⁵ For details, see Annex 2.

⁶ Svalbard airport in the Kingdom of Norway.

⁷ For details, see Annex 2.

⁸ <https://ksda.ec.europa.eu/>

submit electronically advance cargo information to EU customs. This data is analysed for civil aviation security purposes by the customs authorities of the first point of entry in the EU using the new customs import system (ICS2).

The outcome of the PLACI risk analysis may require the implementation of specific mitigating aviation security measures, including the possibility of a “Do Not Load” (DNL) instruction or referral. These must be applied by economic operators engaged in the EU in-bound supply chain before the consignment is loaded on board of an EU-bound flight.

In 2024 around 141 million PLACI filings were recorded. These led to about 1400 requests for screening (RFS) being issued, but there were no requests for not loading the goods (DNL). The majority of these were related to express shipments, followed by postal and general air cargo.

5. INSPECTIONS AND OTHER COMPLIANCE MONITORING ACTIVITIES

5.1 General

Regulation (EC) No 300/2008 aims at preventing unlawful interference with civil aviation in order to protect persons and goods. While this Regulation requires Member States to regularly monitor compliance in implementing the common basic aviation security standards by airports, air carriers and other entities and to ensure the swift detection and correction of failures, the role given to the Commission by the legislator is to monitor the effective implementation by the EU/EEA⁹ Member States of this legal requirement.

Article 15 of Regulation (EC) No 300/2008 requires the Commission to conduct inspections and, as appropriate, to make recommendations to improve aviation security. To fulfil this monitoring objective, the Commission’s oversight system covers Member States’ activities in setting up, maintaining, and applying an effective national civil aviation security programme and an effective national civil aviation quality control programme.

To this end, the Commission operates a two-layer system of compliance monitoring, i.e. its own inspections complemented by the assessment of Member States' annual reports on national monitoring activities.

Since 2010, the compliance rate identified during Commission inspections has remained stable at around 80%. However, effective implementation of some measures

⁹ European Economic Area: 27 EU Member States, Norway, Iceland and Switzerland. The EFTA Surveillance Authority (ESA) is responsible for conducting aviation security inspections in Norway and Iceland. The Commission conducts aviation security inspections in Switzerland based on a bilateral agreement.

leaves room for improvement and require continued efforts by the industry stakeholders, appropriate authorities and the Commission.

5.2 Frequency and scope of the inspections

The Commission carries out inspections of Member States' aviation security administrations (the 'appropriate authorities' as defined in Article 9 of Regulation (EC) No 300/2008), as well as inspections of airports, operators and entities applying aviation security standards.

The number, frequency and scope of these inspections are established in the strategy of the Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport (DG MOVE) for monitoring the implementation of EU aviation security standards. It takes into consideration the level of aviation activity in each Member State, a representative sample of the airport operations type, their level of compliance in implementing the aviation security regulations, results of previous Commission inspections, assessments of national annual quality control reports, security incidents ('acts of unlawful interference'), threat levels and other factors and assessments.

To provide the Commission with adequate assurances on the compliance level of Member States, a multiannual monitoring approach is used. As such, evidence is acquired concerning the application of Regulation (EC) No 300/2008 and its implementing legislation by every Member State in a cycle of two years, by means of either an inspection of its appropriate authority or an inspection of at least one of its airports.

In addition, evidence of the application of the common basic standards on aviation security is obtained in a cycle of five years by a selection of at least 15% of all EU airports falling under Regulation (EC) No 300/2008, including the largest airport in terms of passenger volumes in every Member State. The inspections carried out by the Commission at selected airports constitute a strong indicator of the overall compliance level in each Member State.

5.3 Procedures and methodology for inspections

Commission Regulation (EU) No 72/2010¹⁰ lays down the procedures for conducting Commission inspections in the field of aviation security. It includes, *inter alia*, provisions for the qualification and powers of Commission inspectors.¹¹

The methodology used to conduct the inspections has been developed in close cooperation with Member States' aviation security authorities and is based on the verification of the effective implementation of security measures.

¹⁰ Commission Regulation (EU) No 72/2010 of 26 January 2010 laying down procedures for conducting Commission inspections in the field of aviation security (OJ L 23, 27.1.2010, p. 1).

¹¹ See Articles 4 and 5.

5.4 Inspections carried out by the Commission

The Commission had an active team of eight full time aviation security inspectors, supported by a pool of some 80 national auditors nominated by Member States and who qualify for participation in Commission inspections.

Engaging national auditors in Commission inspections also contribute to a peer review system and allows spreading methodologies and best practices across Member States and associated countries.¹²

5.4.1 Inspections of national appropriate authorities

The inspections of appropriate authorities aim at verifying whether Member States have the necessary tools – including a national quality control programme, legal authority and appropriate resources – to be able to adequately implement EU aviation security legislation.

As part of its sixth cycle of appropriate authority inspections, the Commission carried out five inspections during 2024. The Member States inspected in 2024 did align their national aviation security programmes with EU legislation, provided their appropriate authorities with the necessary enforcement powers for monitoring and enforcing all requirements of the Regulation and its implementing acts, ensured sufficient auditors were available for performing compliance monitoring activities, and implemented most of the requirements related to security training.

However, the inspections highlighted the need for additional efforts in the following areas: keeping the national civil aviation security programmes up to date in line with legislative changes and clearly defining the responsibilities for the implementation of the common basic standards; ensuring full alignment of security programmes of airports, operators and entities with the Union legislation and national civil aviation security programmes and monitoring thereof; standardisation of the certification and recertification of x-ray operators on a national level; full development of cyber security related training; full implementation of the methodology required for the inspection and the elements to be included in reporting national compliance monitoring and fulfilment of requirements pertaining to the reporting process (e.g. timely submission of reports and closure letters, etc.). In addition, in some Member States, certain duties were not fully carried out due to inadequate task allocation. These included the monitoring of airports, air carriers and some entities with security responsibilities and their respective security programmes. Furthermore, when carrying out inspections, the authorities did not systematically cover the full range of directly linked security measures, or did not conduct tests in all required areas. Airport on-site verifications revealed that the effectiveness of national monitoring activities could still be further improved in all Member States inspected.

¹² See Annex 1 for a summary of all Commission and ESA compliance monitoring activities in 2024.

5.4.2 Initial inspections at airports

In 2024, the Commission carried out 17 initial airport inspections aiming at verifying if the appropriate authority adequately monitors the effective implementation of aviation security measures and is capable of swiftly detecting and rectifying potential deficiencies. Any deficiency identified by Commission inspectors must be rectified within an established timeframe. Inspection reports are shared amongst all Member States.

After the 15th year of implementation of Regulation (EC) No 300/2008, the inspection results reflect the efforts made by appropriate authorities and the industry. Most of the security requirements were correctly implemented. However, the inspections highlighted areas for improvement in effective implementation of some measures, for instance, in screening and access control to security restricted areas, security controls for supplies, as well as in cyber security.

5.4.3 Follow-up inspections

In accordance with Article 13 of Regulation (EU) No 72/2010, the Commission routinely carries out a limited number of follow-up inspections. Such inspections are scheduled when several serious deficiencies have been identified during the initial inspection, but also on a random basis to verify that appropriate authorities have the necessary powers to require rectification of deficiencies within set timeframes. In 2024, four follow-up inspections were carried out.

5.5 Assessments of Member States' annual quality control report

Point 18 of the Annex to Regulation (EC) No 300/2008 requires Member States to annually submit a report to the Commission on the measures taken to fulfil their obligations and on the aviation security situation at their airports.

The assessment of these reports, in addition to its own regular inspections, provides a tool for the Commission to closely follow the implementation of national quality control measures. This, in turn, allows for swift detection and correction of deficiencies in each Member State.

The assessment includes an analysis of regular monitoring of airports, air carriers and other entities with aviation security responsibilities, as well as time spent by the auditors in the field, scope and frequencies of a suitable mixture of compliance monitoring activities, national compliance levels, follow-up activities and the use of enforcement powers.

The quality of annual reports and information provided by Member States remains constant and further harmonisation was achieved during 2024.

A formal comprehensive evaluation was sent to the Member States highlighting, where needed, suggestions on how to improve or better tailor the national efforts.

5.6 Assessments of third country airports

The Commission conducts assessments in the context of One Stop Security (OSS) arrangements between the EU and third countries. The purpose is to confirm that implementation of certain security measures continues to be of an equivalent standard to the implementation of EU aviation security legislation. In 2024, three assessments were conducted, respectively, in the United States, Montenegro and Singapore.

5.7 Article 15 cases and legal proceedings

If the identified deficiencies in the implementation of security measures at an airport are serious enough as to have a significant impact on the overall level of civil aviation security in the Union, the Commission will activate Article 15 of Regulation (EU) No 72/2010. This means that the appropriate authorities of all Member States are alerted to the situation, and that flights arriving from the airport subjected to Article 15 shall be treated as arriving from a third country, resulting in the obligation for the receiving airports to implement compensatory security measures in respect of arriving transfer passengers and their baggage, as well as the aircraft on which they arrived. No such case was initiated in 2024.

The Commission also has the possibility to open infringement proceedings in accordance with Article 258 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, particularly in cases of prolonged non-rectification or recurrence of deficiencies. In 2024, no such proceedings were launched.

6. MEETINGS AND EVENTS

The Commission organised the second Transport Cybersecurity Conference covering all transport modes on 2 May 2024. The event took stock of developments since the first Transport Cybersecurity conference in 2019, with the aim to identify remaining gaps, encourage an exchange of practices and ideas among the different communities, as well as to address evolving cybersecurity threats facing the transport sector.

The Commission launched the Aviation Cybersecurity Subgroup in February 2024, initiating a structured series of plenary meetings and dedicated task force sessions, building on the mandate set by the Aviation Cybersecurity Working Group. The objective was to foster cooperation between aviation safety, aviation security, and cybersecurity authorities to facilitate alignment and compliance between the NIS2 Directive¹³ and aviation-specific rules. It further sought to avoid potential gaps or

¹³ Directive (EU) 2022/2555 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 December 2022 on measures for a high common level of cybersecurity across the Union, amending Regulation (EU) No 910/2014 and Directive (EU) 2018/1972, and repealing Directive (EU) 2016/1148 (NIS 2 Directive).

duplications of cybersecurity obligations and minimise unnecessary administrative and operational burdens.

The Commission and the US Transportation Security Administration (TSA) organised the second U.S. - EU Air Cargo Security Summit in Dublin, Ireland, in November 2024. The event provided an opportunity to identify threats and risks to air cargo and to collectively implement mitigation strategies.

To provide Member States with feedback from inspections, promote transparency and harmonise compliance monitoring methodologies, the Commission organised an annual meeting and training of the AVSEC national inspectors in October 2024.

7. INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE

7.1 General

The Commission continued its contribution to global aviation security by engaging with international bodies, such as the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), the European Civil Aviation Conference (ECAC) and key trading partners, working closely with Member States to ensure co-ordinated EU positions. Dialogues were also held with certain third countries, such as the US, Canada, Australia, Singapore, and the UK.

7.2 International bodies

The EU actively participated, as an observer, in the annual meeting of the ICAO Aviation Security Panel (AVSECP/35), which took place from 22 to 26 April 2024 as well as in the third meeting of the ICAO Cybersecurity Panel (CYSECP/3), which took place from 3 to 7 June 2024.

7.3 Third countries

In the context of the aviation security relations with the United States, the EU-US Transportation Security Cooperation Group (TSCG) aims at fostering co-operation in several areas of mutual interest. It ensures the continued functioning of One Stop Security (OSS) arrangements and of the mutual recognition of the respective EU and US air cargo and mail regimes. The 33rd meeting of the TSCG took place on 10-11 September 2024.

In application of Article 435 of the EU/UK Trade Cooperation Agreement, the EU-U.K. Aviation Security Cooperation ensures cooperation on aviation security matters, exchange of information, discussion and sharing of best practices and development of cooperation arrangements between technical experts. The 4th EU-U.K. Aviation Security Cooperation Meeting took place on 15 May and the 5th on 31 October 2024.

In conformity with EU law, the Commission has established OSS arrangements recognising security standards applied in some third countries, or airports of third

countries, as equivalent to EU standards.¹⁴ Discussions on OSS with Japan were continued, but differences between the regimes applied did not allow moving forward with the OSS for the moment. No new OSS arrangements were concluded in 2024.

Regarding capacity building, the “Civil Aviation Security in Africa, Asia and the Middle East” project (CASE II), funded by the European Commission with a budget of EUR 8 million and implemented by ECAC, continued in 2024. Activities delivered by aviation security experts included workshops, webinars and bilateral in-country activities.¹⁵ The overall objective of CASE II is to counter the threat of terrorism to civil aviation by partnering with States in the three regions, to strengthen their aviation security regimes.¹⁶

8. CONCLUSIONS

The July 2024 air cargo incidents highlighted the serious risks to aviation. Transport operators can be both targets and instruments for malicious actors. Existing EU legal instruments have enhanced aviation security, yet high threat levels require means for rapid exchange of information and reaction as required.

The Commission is collaborating with Member States to amend existing implementing legislation in the field of aviation security for sharing classified information on aviation security occurrences. The continuous effort to strengthen aviation security standards will also involve strengthening the aviation security legislation to enable immediate response measures while maintaining the one-stop security area in EU airports.

Ensuring secure aviation operations in the air and on the ground is a fundamental condition for commercial aviation to flourish. The optimal aviation security regulatory system combines innovation with stability and always maintains the highest level of security. In 2024, the Commission continued its work to ensure such an aviation

¹⁴ The EU has OSS arrangements with the US, Canada, Singapore, Montenegro, Serbia and the UK.

¹⁵ Year 2024 has seen the highest volume and diversity of delivered activities since the launch of the Project, with a total of 77 activities delivered to Partner States to the benefit of 1117 participants. This represents a year-on-year increase of 15% from the total number of activities delivered in 2023 and more than double the number of activities delivered in 2022 (35 activities). These activities consisted of 48 bilateral training activities, 17 multilateral training activities, six mentoring activities, two regional workshops, one interregional workshop and the funding of three APEX in Security Reviews. In total, 208 in-country and remote activities have been delivered since the Project’s inception. Of this total, 177 were delivered in-country for the benefit of 83 Partner States and ECAC/EU Member States. In terms of expertise mobilisation, 30 experts have been released from 14 ECAC/EU Member States, to contribute to 19 activities (24%) and 32 experts from 16 Partner State CAAs were released to contribute to training activities and workshops. The Project Team also welcomed two secondees (one from Morocco and one from Cameroon).

¹⁶ Partner States are selected based on objective criteria, such as the commitment/capability of a given State to fully benefit from the capacity-building activities delivered by the Project, or the absence of possible duplication with other capacity-building initiatives, either bilateral or multilateral.

security system, while meeting present and future challenges, and in close co-operation with regulators and stakeholders alike.