



a security ohana



A five-hour flight from America's mainland lies the island state of Hawaii. The name conjures up images of surfboards, tropical beaches, floral shirts, volcanic eruptions, hula girls and Polynesian culture. The world of international terrorism, despite Hawaii Five-0, seems an anathema but, as **Philip Baum** discovered, the authorities responsible for security at Honolulu International Airport take the threat to security very seriously indeed.

In 1925, Act 176 of the Session of Laws of Hawaii appropriated funds for the acquisition and development of an airport on the Island of Oahu within a reasonable distance from the main Hawaiian conurbation – Honolulu. For the sum of \$27,410 an area of 119.3 acres of land and 766 acres of inundated land was bought, culminating in John Rodgers Field, now Honolulu International Airport, being officially opened on March 21, 1927.

Inter-Island Airways, now known as Hawaiian Airlines, was established in 1929 and commenced services to neighbouring islands. And, on April 16, 1935, Pan American Airways made the first flight from the mainland to Hawaii. The journey took 17 hours and 14 minutes!

Today the airport boasts three terminals serving domestic and international carriers.

Tourist destination it may be, but Hawaii is very conscious of the fact that it is part of the United States and, as such, is a target. Exposed in the middle of the Pacific Ocean and remote from other States, were it not for the commitment to best security practices, Honolulu International Airport could have been regarded as the Achilles Heel of the American domestic aviation industry.

Indeed, up until September 11, 2001, the last time the United States was attacked by air was at Pearl Harbor on December 7,

Overseeing security at Honolulu is the Federal Aviation Administration's Federal Security Manager, Allen Agor. Agor regards the airport as "very progressive", and sites one of the reasons for its security success as being "the appreciation of the threat by the authorities". "Tourism", he says "is the mainstay of the community, and everybody here acknowledges that an attack on this airport, or on flights departing from it, could have a devastating effect on the local economy. With this in mind, the airport has been keen to deploy the latest technologies and, once such a decision has been taken, the authorities move quickly to ensure that such action is carried out."

One of the results of this approach has

"...the airport has been keen to deploy the latest technologies..."

1941 when the Japanese attacked the United States Pacific Fleet in dock. It was an act that brought the United States into World War II. Pearl Harbor itself is located just a few miles from the airport and one only has to visit the memorial at the site of the sunken USS Arizona for inspiration, if it were needed, to combat acts of mass murder be they of a supposedly military nature or pure terrorism. No doubt Ground Zero in New York will now serve as a similar reminder in the years to come.

On facing page: A Freeman Guards Incorporated screener operates an L3 eXaminer at the ANA check-in

been a wide range of technologies from different suppliers. Checkpoints are equipped with Rapiscan, Heimann, and PerkinElmer X-ray machines, archway metal detectors from Metorex, Ranger and CEIA, and CT scanners from InVision and L3.

Only in the field of explosive trace detection does there appear to be a standard. Ion Track's ITEMISER's are deployed at every checkpoint in the airport. Why? Well, as Allen Agor says "if it works, don't tamper with it".

But the moves have not all been airport-driven. The airlines have also been proactive in the development of the secu-



Ion Track's ITEMISER's are deployed at every checkpoint in the airport and are operated by ITS personnel

urity infrastructure of the airport.

Aloha Airlines have been very involved in the testing of the latest CT scanning equipment. The company used InVision CTX technology, but was very much aware of the fact that the technology needed competition to ensure its development. Consequently, Aloha attended trials of L3's eXaminer at American Airlines' operation at Dallas Fort Worth together with other members of the FAA's Security Equipment Integrated Product Team (IPT).

Kathy Yee, Aloha's Staff Vice President, Airports, based in Honolulu, is an operational member of the IPT and she felt that the eXaminer had better potential. "Firstly, there is an operational advantage to a systems where the conveyor belt continues to run. When you are putting 25,000 bags through the system per month, minimal down times are critical. Secondly, we have a turnaround every 23 minutes, so we need a solution that can cope with high frequency".

Aloha has since deployed an eXaminer



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in Honolulu, has one further system on order and is also considering placing a system in Maui too.

Gary Brown, L3's Director of Government Programmes for their Security Systems Division said, "The experience we have had at Honolulu has been tremendous. This was L-3's second US installation and the relationship has been wonderful. L-3 has shipped two additional units that will be fully integrated into the Honolulu conveyor system, taking advantage of the eXaminer speed and integrated capabilities. Our low false alarms have allowed this operation to work daily without major inconvenience to the airline passengers."

Maintenance was a key concern. InVision actually have two technicians on site in Honolulu, whereas L3, as part of Lockheed Martin, are able to call on technical support from their engineers at the nearby Hickam Air Force base.

Aloha's main business is inter-island air traffic and, as such, they handle large numbers of tour groups who "wish to check-in at their hotels, yet don't want their bags to be opened in the airport". Albeit that, in the aftermath of September 11th, both domestic and international security procedures are being reviewed, Aloha's key clientele will continue to be happy-go-lucky tourists keen to board flights with as little hassle as possible. That said, they also operate flight to Las Vegas, Santa Ana and Oakland on the mainland and to some international desti-

nations too, including Midway Island, Christmas Island, Johnston Island, and Kwajalein and Majuro in the Marshall Islands. Although such locations may be less than familiar with many readers, it must be remembered that many of the Pacific islands are also United States military bases, and as such Aloha's flights carry many military personnel.

In fact the military is the second (to tourism) biggest employer in Hawaii. It is estimated that the islands are temporary home to over 100,000 servicemen and their families.

Hawaiian Airlines and Aloha manage

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their own passenger screening checkpoints. Both utilise Rapiscan X-ray machines, supported by Ion Track Instruments trace detection equipment. Hawaiian use Ranger archway metal detectors, whilst Aloha use Metorex systems. Aloha employ ITS as the contract screening company, who have employees trained to provide technical support for the Ion Track equipment. Hawaiian employs Wackenhut, and ITS for technical support.

The Airlines Committee Hawaii (ACH) has Ground Security Co-ordinator responsibility for all the main terminal carriers (ie.

except Aloha and Hawaiian). Each carrier takes it in turn on a quarterly basis, regardless as to the size of their own individual operations, to be the responsible carrier. In Hawaii they call it "kokua" – a spirit of co-operation. And, it's a spirit that works.

The ACH represents 17-20 carriers, depending on the season. Its security responsibility includes the management of the passenger screening point, the handling of any fines imposed for security breaches and the auditing of member airlines security measures.

The main terminal checkpoints are staffed by ITS who have a seven year open-ended contract with the ACH. Staff turnover is 30%, being one of the lowest levels in the whole of the United States. Indeed, it must be stressed that the degree of professionalism exhibited by the screeners in Hawaii, at all checkpoints, was refreshing. I had the opportunity to watch the operations for a considerable period of time, and whilst I have generally been very critical of screener performance in the United States, one could not fail to be impressed by the attitude, demeanour, and actions of the Honolulu-based personnel.

This was enhanced by the very visible and very positive "kokua" between carriers, contractors, airport management and the FAA. Communication, it is often said,

is key to good security. In Honolulu I witnessed screening companies, airlines and the FAA openly discussing problems without fear of retribution. Issues, it seemed, were not swept under the carpet through fear of fines, and faults discovered were not responded to with an immediate rap of the knuckles. Security is a common concern, affecting all members of the "ohana" (a widely used Hawaiian word meaning family), and is dealt with as such.

JAL's Thomas Sakato said his company has "spent \$7m promoting Hawaii in

Japan, and as such we are keen to take the necessary steps to secure the market we are advertising." With up to 17 flights per day, each carrying an average of 300 passengers, and each passenger checking-in an average of 1.5 bags, JAL can end up handling in excess of 75,000 items of checked baggage per day. The deployment of InVision CTX systems has reduced the numbers of bags being opened and JAL has asked for a further system to be integrated into the baggage management system.

For both Japan Airlines (JAL) and All Nippon Airways (ANA), Honolulu is their busiest overseas station. JAL operates all its 17 flights within a seven and a half hour window in peak season. Indeed one could be forgiven mid-morning for believing one was at Tokyo's Narita rather than at an American airport.

ANA has been using L3's eXaminer since February 1, 2001. Operating two or three flights per day and screening around 1000 passengers in a very short period of time, ANA's Manager of Passenger and Cargo Services in Honolulu, Katy Gambino, said

"we were keen to deploy a system faster than the CTX". The eXaminer is capable of a throughput of up to 500 bags per hour. It is now deployed at the ANA check-in and is also used by Philippine Airlines and Air New Zealand for the screening of selectees bags.

There were some interesting initial false alarms. Many Japanese passengers carry Miso (soup mix) in their baggage. The system was incorrectly identifying the mix as an explosive material. Then again, as Katy Gambino said "better it identify an unknown substance as a threat incorrectly than allow it to pass". The eXaminer has been 'taught' to distinguish Miso now!

All the InVision and L3 systems are operated by Freeman Guards Incorporated that has had its personnel specifically trained in CT technologies by both companies.

Akal, a New Mexico-based security company, has a three-year renewable contract with the State of Hawaii for airfield and terminal security. They manage all access control to restricted areas, conduct terminal patrols and are also deputised by the State to supplement the functions of the

airport police. The law enforcement function at the airport used to be handled by the Honolulu Police Department but now is the responsibility of the Airport Sheriff Detail consisting of a lieutenant, four sergeants and 22 deputies. As Akal has first response capability, they also have the powers of arrest and many staff are licensed to carry arms.

Many of Akal's 300 employees at the airport are former police officers, which has facilitated the outsourcing of the policing functions. Similar programmes exist on other Hawaiian islands, where Wackenhut is the contracted company.

Because of the impact of the September 11 attacks, both the State Sheriff's and Akal Security organisations will double their compliment of armed security presence at Honolulu Airport.

In Honolulu, Wackenhut manage the K9 Unit. The six dogs are technically FAA property, managed by one Canine Master, one Assistant Master and four Handlers. The dogs are tested daily, and the team has produced some of the best results in the country.

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One of the passenger screening checkpoints at Honolulu using Ranger equipment

Bomb threats are handled by an EOD unit situated at Hickam Air Force base and the Honolulu Police under mutual aid agreements.

In the same way that a wide range of technologies are present, security responsibility is also multi-pronged.

Allen Agor, the Federal Security Manager, under Title 49 of the US Code, Section 44933 has security oversight responsibility for Honolulu Airport, and his colleagues with the FAA's Honolulu Security Field Office cover the outer-island airports.

Honolulu International Airport has its own State Security Manager, Lance Kaonohi, who acts as a liaison with all the different agencies operating at the airport, as well as overseeing and conducting training. Lance Kaonohi reports to the Airport Manager, Stanford Miyamoto, who is actually the Oahu District Manager for the Airports Division of the Hawaii State Department of Transportation, the owners of the airport.

Kaonohi, as a State employee, has to oversee:

- Akal (with responsibility for airside, apron, terminal and access control, as well as law and order)
- Wackenhut (K9 handlers), and
- Airport Sheriff Detail

It is perhaps an unusual set up. It would be easy to argue that such a wide range of agencies and technologies could breed problems rather than solve them. Then again, you have to remember that

this is Hawaii where everybody's input is respected and welcomed.

There is no doubt that the Federal Security Manager is highly respected and his praises were sung by all. In the words of Jeff Tarpey, Station Manager of United Airlines, "Agor is the glue that holds us all together".

Agor has considerable experience in aviation security. He served as CASLO in Tokyo from 1992 to 1998, during which period he was the FAA's on scene investigator into the Bojinka Plot to blow up 11 US carriers on a single day in 1995. The investigation commenced following the bombing of Philippine Airlines flight 434 on December 11 1994, which made an emergency landing in Okinawa, an incident that required Agor to provide expertise to the Japanese and the Philippine governments.

Such professional experience was also called upon by the Japanese in their investigation into Aum Shinrikyo's use of sarin

Perhaps it is of no surprise that Agor's colleagues nominated him for ASI's Award of Excellence in the category of "Lifetime Service", an award he was to be co-winner of this year.

Admiral Flynn, former Associate Security Administrator for the FAA said of Agor, "His achievements in Honolulu and in Japan, where he was the FAA's Civil Aviation Security Liaison Officer, have been the product of his determination to make close colleagues and team-mates of a wide circle of officials and employees who have roles in Avsec".

Honolulu International Airport has witnessed a slight downturn in traffic, mainly as a result of there now being direct air service from the mainland to other Hawaiian islands. Yet a decrease in air traffic has not resulted in a reduction in security. Indeed, the State is considering proposals for the construction of a duty free port and is consequently investing signifi-

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gas on the Tokyo subway on March 20, 1995.

Now in Hawaii, Agor is keen to develop Honolulu into beacon status for the Pacific. The example for others to follow.

I would argue, however, that maybe the beacon needs to be turned towards the US mainland, and maybe some of Honolulu's domestic counterparts could learn a few lessons. The Hawaiian spirit of "kokua" and "ohana" are traits we could all benefit from.

cant sums into the development of both the airport and seaport.

With the last attack on the United States being weeks ago rather than decades ago, and with federal government now acknowledging that threat levels are high, security will be one area in which the State will continue to invest. That investment is in people, technology and the training of the people to use the technology. ☉



Allen Agor, the FAA's Federal Security Manager in Honolulu. In the words of Jeff Tarpey, Station Manager of United Airlines, "Agor is the glue that holds us all together"