

# AVIATION SECURITY INTERNATIONAL

www.asi-mag.com

**AEROSPACE & SECURITY MEDIA**  
www.aerospace-media.com

THE GLOBAL JOURNAL OF AIRPORT & AIRLINE SECURITY



## Ben Gurion International Airport: trailblazer of the airport cyber security centre



**ALSO:**  
SKY MARSHAL DEPLOYMENT  
ROUTE SELECTION  
LEAST RISK BOMB LOCATIONS  
DEPORTEE ESCORTS

MEDIA SPONSOR TO:



The 3<sup>rd</sup> International Conference on  
Unruly Airline Passenger Behaviour  
18 - 19 SEPTEMBER 2019 | RIVERSIDE VENUE, LONDON, UK  
[WWW.UNRULYPAX.COM](http://WWW.UNRULYPAX.COM)

**HOTELS & GROUND  
TRANSPORTATION:  
ENSURING A  
SECURE LAYOVER**

**REMEMBERING  
ALAS CHIRICANAS  
FLIGHT 901:  
25 YEARS OF  
SUICIDAL TERRORISM**



# FRANKIE BOYLE:

## TYPIFYING A WORLD WITHOUT ORDER

by Philip Baum

It would be more than reasonable for you to expect the lead editorial in this issue of the international journal of airport and airline security to focus on airport perimeter security. After all, there have been several significant recent incidents highlighting the fallibility of security fences and access control measures; most notably, the heist in Tirana, Albania, on 9 April, which resulted in €5m in cash being stolen by gunmen armed with AK-47s as it was being loaded onto an Austrian Airlines passenger jet bound for Vienna. Also comment-worthy, on 14 April, a man successfully managed to bypass security and secrete himself in the wheel well of an Air France flight at Guadeloupe's Pointe à Pitre International Airport, and then survived the two-hour flight to French Guyana; if a body can be hidden in the aircraft fuselage, so can a bomb.

But no, I'm afraid I'm opting to be a killjoy and put the world of comedy in the crosshairs. Why? Due to one TV channel-hopping experience which resulted in my watching a BBC2 programme

entitled *Frankie Boyle's New World Order*. Let me make

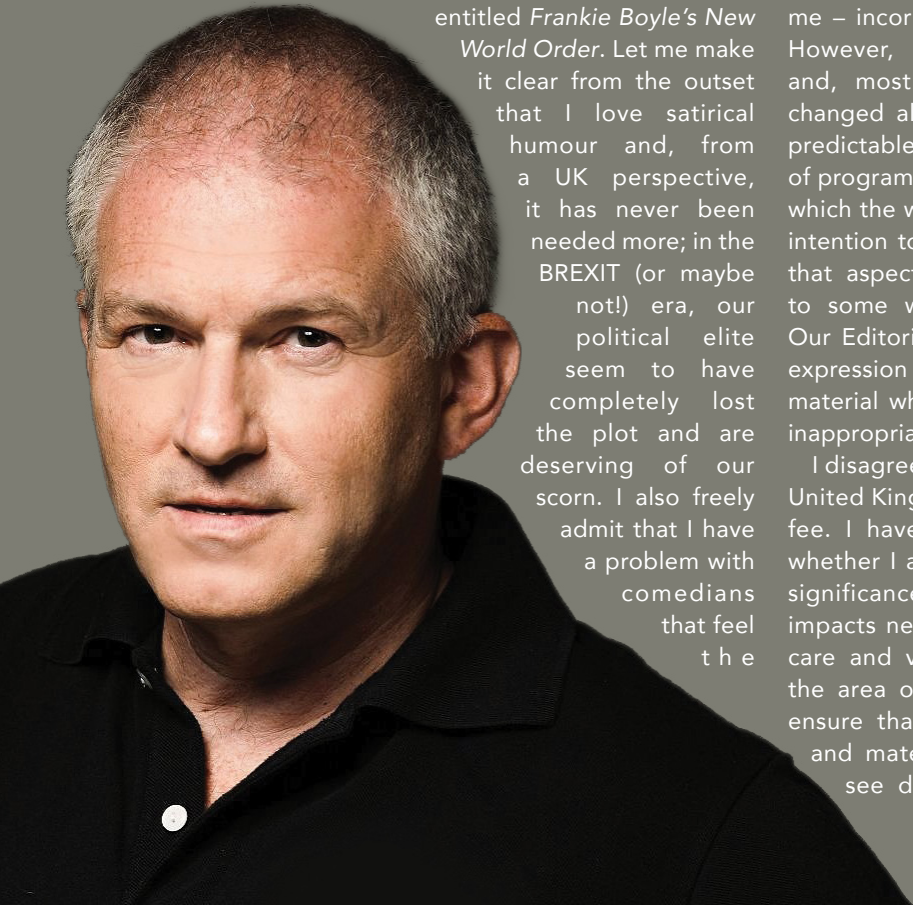
it clear from the outset that I love satirical humour and, from a UK perspective, it has never been needed more; in the BREXIT (or maybe not!) era, our political elite seem to have completely lost the plot and are deserving of our scorn. I also freely admit that I have a problem with comedians that feel the

"...I am astonished how intelligent, socially responsible and morally well-intended individuals, often in the public eye, freely litter their tweets with either scathing personal attacks...or the 'ooh, aren't I clever' use of obscenities..."

need to lace every line with an expletive in order to get an extra laugh. I can, however, choose whether to watch a programme. There is plenty on television that I have next to no interest in, and may even be offended by, but I recognise that others could be equally appalled by things that I might enjoy.

However, there is a point at which we must question whether what is being broadcasted is conducive to the public good. Until 25 April, I had never written to complain about any TV programme and my only previous press complaint related to an article which referenced me – incorrectly citing my views on passenger profiling. However, Frankie Boyle's puerile, pseudo-intellectual and, most worryingly, potentially dangerous offering changed all that. The standard-form BBC response was predictable: "Comedy is one of the most subjective areas of programming and there is no single set of standards on which the whole of society can agree. While it's never our intention to offend our audience, it is perhaps inevitable that aspects of our programmes which are acceptable to some will occasionally strike others as distasteful. Our Editorial Guidelines uphold the right to freedom of expression and the right of programme-makers to include material which some members of the audience may find inappropriate or offensive."

I disagree. In order for me to watch any television in the United Kingdom, I have to pay the BBC a £154.50 licence fee. I have no choice. But whilst it may matter little whether I am a disgruntled customer, it is of far greater significance if our light entertainment programming impacts negatively on behaviour in society. The upmost care and vetting needs to be exercised, especially in the area of comedy – edgy comedy in particular – to ensure that viewers mental health also be considered and material does not fuel the declining respect we see displayed in our everyday lives. Perhaps the



editorial guidelines of the BBC should, at the very least, be to “uphold the right to freedom of expression and the right of programme-makers to include material which”, and here I would change it to ‘the majority’ (rather than ‘some’), “members of the audience may find inappropriate or offensive.” Or, in these post-BREXIT referendum days, rather than >50%, I’ll accept a >60% substantial majority view!

We live in a society where we all have to be exceptionally cautious about what we say. As we go about our daily lives, and in the workplace in particular, we have to go overboard to ensure that no remark can be perceived as being homophobic, ageist, racist or prejudiced. Even light-hearted comments, where no individual person was targeted, can result in litigation. We have clamped down on ‘freedom of expression’ and, in doing so, supposedly made tremendous progress in creating a more caring, sensitive and loving society. Until we turn on our televisions or, worse still, enter the world of social media...

Broadcast communication is more offensive than ever. I only dabble with Twitter (referencing this in my last lead editorial), partly as I am astonished how intelligent, socially responsible and morally well-intended individuals, often in the public eye, freely litter their tweets with either scathing personal attacks (we tell children not to say something online that they would not say to a person’s face) or the ‘ooh, aren’t I clever’ use of obscenities.

That’s all well and good if the attacks are truly satirical. Jim Jefferies is a foul-mouthed Australian comic but most of his material is, I think, absolutely fantastic. It is true that his most famous sketch targets supporters of the US Second Amendment and their right “to keep and bear Arms”, and, whilst I might love it, some might find offensive. But it targets a policy, not an individual.

The media has declared open season on Donald Trump. In the next few weeks, as Trump prepares for his State Visit to the United Kingdom, there will be an outpouring of angst and mass protests; in its coverage, the media has a duty to maintain perspective and ensure that a line is drawn between political satire and personal attacks – especially when they relate to physical features, an area in which the US channels are even more culpable of caricature excess than their British counterparts. I return to Frankie Boyle’s programme...

Yes, I thought that the use of expletives seemed puerile; there was the shock factor of using the ‘C’ word (sorry, my publisher won’t allow me to use it!). Yes, I thought that plenty of Boyle’s material was over-the-edgy; ‘joking’ that “I really don’t think I could watch if Trump were assassinated because I’d be [makes reference to sexual gratification] my glasses would fall off” has, I believe, no place on television. You can loathe the man, but not relish the idea of the democratically elected leader of our closest ally being killed on the streets of London.

Boyle has track record; earlier in April, in commenting about Theresa May’s meeting with leading Brexiteers,

## Security Tip #4

# Solve ETD Consumable Supply Problems

Lowest price  
Always in stock  
Same-day shipping  
Guaranteed for life  
Equal to or better than OEM products



+1 978 975 3200

EMEA

+44 (0)1923 678838

sales@dsadetection.com  
dsadetection.com

**DSADetection**  
SINGLE FOCUS. SINGLE SOURCE.

the BBC sanctioned his remark, "Where the [F-word] are the IRA when you need them?" To joke about a terrorist attack (the bombing of a Brighton hotel by the IRA during the Conservative conference in 1984) is unacceptable at any time, but especially on a state-owned TV network at a time when the Northern Ireland peace process is making the headlines again; was there any consideration that the victims and their loved ones might be watching? Worse still, albeit more historical, Boyle thought it funny to tell a joke on TV (albeit not on the BBC) about supermodel Jordan's disabled child, saying, "Jordan and Peter Andre are still fighting each other over custody of Harvey – eventually one of them will lose and have to keep him." Whilst I can at least choose not to watch or not to tune in again, the reality is that the establishment, by permitting this material airtime, contributes to the normalisation of offensive communication.

However, the limit is really reached when 'humour' starts to focus on physical attributes. Boyle targeted Trump. Donald Trump can choose his policies but not his looks. He has family members who may not have elected to pursue such a public life. Maybe Trump is easy cannon fodder and embraces his international notoriety, but the same cannot be said for Michael Gove, a prominent member of the current UK Conservative government and potentially the next Prime Minister. The Boyle show ended with a litany of attacks on Gove...all based on his physical appearance and none relating to his politics. And this was where I drew my red line. Like Gove or hate him, no person should ever be subjected to such a torrent of abuse in any circumstances and most certainly not at the expense of BBC licence fee payers. It was not satirical. It was disgusting. The man has a family, who did not put themselves in the public spotlight; for them, such 'humour' could have catastrophic consequences. Indeed, they could for anybody who has concerns about their own body image. They are not fair game and, even if I can't, they certainly don't need to take it all as a joke.

Rarely a day goes by without the issue of mental health being in the news. The scale of the challenge we face as a society is terrifying and it is incumbent upon our public broadcasters to uphold standards that ensure that we do not fail to encourage people to show respect. If we are trying to be a more politically correct society, the same rules should apply to what appears on our television screens.

"...every three hours the safety of a flight within the EU is threatened by passengers behaving in an unruly or disruptive manner..."

So, what has Frankie Boyle got to do with aviation security? According to the European Union Aviation Safety Agency, in a report published this April, "Every three hours the safety of a flight within the EU is

threatened by passengers behaving in an unruly or disruptive manner." Note that this is just in the EU and only refers to reported incidents. Worldwide the problem is far higher. "At least 70% of these incidents [in the EU] involve some form of aggression", which is terrifying for the crewmembers and other passengers on board. The problem of unruly passengers is growing at a phenomenal rate and crewmembers are all attesting to the fact that there appears to be an increasing breakdown in discipline. There are multiple reasons for this, and often alcohol is a causal factor, but overall the language used by unruly passengers has plunged to new depths and the respect shown to uniformed personnel who are there for passengers' safety and security has diminished. Airlines are not immune from criticism, and I am certainly not suggesting that Boyle-style show viewers, and their ilk, are the cause of flight diversions. But the erosion of respect demonstrated on TV and in social media legitimises, and tacitly encourages, the nature of the outbursts the industry witnesses.

"...the erosion of respect demonstrated on TV and in social media legitimises, and tacitly encourages, the nature of the outbursts the industry witnesses..."

Imagine how the flight attendant of an Air India flight to London felt on 11 November 2018 when confronted by the Irish human rights lawyer, Simone Burns. She set out her position, whilst demanding more alcohol, declaring that, "I'm a [expletive] international lawyer" and referred to the crew as "Indian money-grabbing [expletive]". An educated woman, Burns questioned, "Do you treat business-class passengers like that? Who are international criminal lawyers for the Palestinian people?" and felt that she was sufficiently self-important to be able to claim that, "If I say boycott [expletive] Air India...done!" She was rightly jailed for her tirade, but would the same language have been used a decade or so ago? One-off incidents perhaps, but not, as is now the case, on a daily basis.

Set aside alcohol-driven incidents if you wish, but not outbursts resulting from mental health issues. Airlines are carrying an ever-increasing number of passengers who are taking anti-depressants and who have anxiety-related disorders. All too often, body image issues are a contributory factor. As the retail industry knows only too well, advertisers are having to be more cautious about the portrayal of the 'body-beautiful', so surely the least we can expect of our broadcasters is to refrain from ridiculing those whose features are not the most desirable? Those who think that they are just having a bit of fun at the expense of others should be constrained because often that naïve banter can have damaging consequences – in society and, consequently, in the passenger cabins in the skies. ■