



February 2007

Successful completion of RAIC 1

“It was a long battle, but a very satisfying one”, says Rob Durward, the Director of Technical Programs and RAIC, on the success completion of RAIC 1.

As of January 1, 2007, the Restricted Area Identification Card, replaced the Restricted Area Pass at 29 major airports across the country. As of February 1, 2007, all of the 29 airports are compliant with the new regulations and no one will be entering the restricted areas of these airports without a RAIC.

“I would like to take this opportunity to thank the RAIC Team, both past and present for all of the hard work and dedication that they put into this project. As everyone knows this project had its up and downs, but I am proud to say that this project was completed with the help of many CATSA employees, Transport Canada and the airports”.

The RAIC, a biometric identity card with finger print and iris template, has

replaced the restricted area pass. Over 215 biometric readers have been deployed, some finger print and some iris readers. CATSA was responsible for integrating 19 different access control systems. This was a customized application created for CATSA which is a complex system.

“We still have a lot of work ahead of us” says Peter Burden, RAIC Program Manager, “we have to maintain the application and the equipment, which means a continued dialogue with the airports”.

Now that RAIC 1 is successfully completed, it is on to RAIC 2 which includes all of the areas outside the airport terminal building. The RAIC team is looking forward to the challenge! ■

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Message from the President and CEO

Aviation: Still a Target in 2007

In the January edition of CATSA News, I discussed the continued threat to civil aviation and highlighted why we must never let our guard down. Another aviation security incident, which took place just recently on January 24, clearly shows that civil aviation remains an attractive target in many parts of the world. This incident involved the hijacking of a Sudanese Air West Boeing 737 enroute from the capital Khartoum to el-Fasher in the Western Darfur region of Sudan. A disgruntled passenger, brandishing several knives and a pistol, attempted to force the pilots to fly to the United Kingdom. The flight was instead diverted to neighbouring Chad where the hijacker was arrested and the passengers and crew released unharmed.

Although this hijacking took place far away, it is a stark reminder that the global aviation industry still faces many threats and challenges. We must keep in mind

that the integrity of the global system is only as strong as the weakest link. This reality means that must always be on high alert for potential threats coming our way.

Even though we continue to face difficult challenges in aviation security in 2007, it doesn't mean that we shouldn't do anything about these challenges. Indeed, as we wrap up our first five years of operations, this must be an underlying theme as we move ahead on our journey towards more effective and efficient aviation security: Just because something is difficult, it doesn't mean we can ignore it. We must continue to forge ahead and do what is right for aviation security.

Inter-Agency Meeting

On January 29, CATSA hosted its fourth Inter-Agency Forum, bringing together representatives from our key partner organizations to discuss security communications. This is a particularly critical topic for us because teamwork is essential when it comes to security and we cannot have effective teamwork without good communication and information-sharing. For inter-departmental communication to be effective, partner organizations need to have trust in each other and be familiar with how each organization operates.

Similarly, we all know how teamwork is critical in our everyday operations and especially for those of us working on the frontlines. We all need to have trust in one another to do our jobs well. We cannot achieve our mission by working independently or in silos. Forums such as this Inter-Agency meeting help foster the type of trust and familiarity needed to facilitate effective communication. Here at CATSA, we find these Inter-Agency meetings critical to our operations and are looking forward to additional meetings in 2007.

New Challenge for Screening Officers

I am extremely pleased and excited to announce the official launch of a special new project: Project Inspiration. Project Inspiration is a special essay-writing contest for screening officers related to the 1985 bombing of Air India Flight 182 designed to offer screening officers an opportunity to share their thoughts on this tragedy.

As I have stated many times before, there is a direct and critical link between the terrorist threats we face on a daily basis and the role screening officers play on the front-lines each and every day. The Air India bombing is a tragic incident that highlights this reality. Your job as a screening officer is not simply to intercept prohibited items. Your job is about saving lives and preventing another tragedy like the Air India bombing.

I firmly believe that screening officers have a lot of valuable things to say about the importance of their job. This is your opportunity. We at CATSA know that you care about what happened on June 23, 1985 and recognize the significant impact this terrorist attack has had on aviation security in Canada. Now we want to hear about how it has affected you personally and how it has influenced how you view your role in the aviation security community. ■

Jacques Duchesneau, C.M.
President and Chief Executive Officer

CATSA Co-Chairs Aviation Security Conference in Asia



Between January 29 and 31, 2007, delegates from all corners of the globe gathered in Singapore to share experiences and best practices on the delivery of aviation security services.

Because Canada is considered a leading international expert on aviation security issues, CATSA was invited to co-chair this prestigious event and was represented by Kevin McGarr, Acting Executive Vice-President and Chief Operating Officer.

This conference was designed to be an open forum for the exchange of ideas. It also served as an important opportunity

for discussion of various topics relating to aviation security and of the importance of working together with partner countries and sharing best practices to achieve common objectives.

Mr. McGarr's main message to the delegates centered on this — the importance of working together to address evolving threats to civil aviation, rather than working in isolation.

“There is an old Ethiopian proverb that says: When spider webs unite, they can tie up a lion. Like these proverbial webs, our ability to work together is the key to our success as we work to defeat evolving threats to the aviation security industry. Together, we can tie up the beast that international terrorism is”.

International conferences like Aviation Security Asia 2007 are an excellent opportunity for CATSA to share the lessons we have learned over the past five years in designing and implementing Canada's post-9/11 aviation security regime with other countries. While we can learn a lot from other countries, they too can learn a lot from our experiences. In reality, cooperation in aviation security is critical, not only for closing loopholes, but also for ensuring the effectiveness of our individual security systems. After all, in such an interconnected and globalized world, we are only as strong as the weakest link. This bodes true not only for our international partners, but also for our partners and stakeholders here at home too. Only by working together will we succeed in successfully securing the critical elements of the air transportation system. ■

MVPs Make the Extra Effort

A blizzard and an accident involving a small aircraft on Tuesday, January 9th resulted in closure of the Ft. St. John airport until the following morning. The snow storm continued through the night until the next morning and while the airport was again operational, the RCMP were advising local area residents to stay off the roads. In particular, the main road to the airport had been closed due to heavy drifting snow. A back road remained open and only 2 screening officers were able

to make their way to the airport. Other employees scheduled that day were understandably reluctant to chance the drive in the terrible conditions or were unable to get out of their driveways until around noon.

Garda employees Brent Taillefer and Sheree Davies discussed a contingency plan for the morning flights and contacted CATSA Operations Manager Doug Pow for approval. With cooperation from other airport employees, 81 passengers and

their baggage were screened as required. No security delays were incurred on the 4 flights involved.

CATSA and Garda are extremely appreciative of the extra effort, organization and contingency planning these two employees made. Garda has recognized their commitment and dedication with a small token of appreciation and nomination in the Garda Most Valuable Player (MVP) program.

An Unexpected Career

“I didn’t plan this at all,” says Sharon Benson, Supervisor for Aeroguard at North Bay Airport, talking about her career in security.

Indeed, Sharon’s career path started in the small community of Iroquois Falls, about 40 km south of Timmins, Ontario, where she worked in construction and had a second job as a waitress.

“When I was 28, I went back to school to get my Grade 12,” she continues. “Then I took a two-year legal assistance course and a one-year business admin course. By that time, I was in North Bay, raising two kids on my own, and cleaning at the airport to make extra cash.”

When a vacancy for a screening officer came up, Sharon applied. She hasn’t looked back since. Within 18 months, she was promoted to assistant supervisor. In 2001, when the new airport building was opened and an extra supervisor was needed, she was promoted again.

North Bay airport is a bit of a contradiction—a small building and an oversized runway.

“Because we had a military complex here at one time,” says Sharon, “we have a 10,000 ft runway that can handle 747s. So we’re the alternate for the big airports. Inside though, on a good day, 50 screened people can squeeze into the holding room. But small is good. The whole airport is very user-friendly. Ask anybody anything

and they’ll know the answer because we all work together so closely.”

The airport handles nine flights a day to Toronto, Ottawa and Sudbury. Mostly, the passengers are business travellers, some on regular trips to Russia or Africa. Snowbirds also travel through North Bay.



Sharon Benson, Supervisor for Aeroguard at North Bay Airport

Sharon and her team work a front-of-house system. They screen 100% of checked baggage before passengers get their boarding pass and return to get themselves screened. The item they collect most these days are liquids, although mace and pepper spray sometimes feature.

Says Sharon, “This is one area where US and Canadian rules differ. Here, passengers are not allowed to carry mace.

We intercepted a bottle from an 80-year old lady once and had a hard time explaining why she couldn’t take it with her.”

There are also occasional incidents involving the local explosives factory whose personnel travel frequently.

“When we first started using the EDT, the alarm would ring non-stop for those guys,” explains Sharon. “Now, they’re a lot smarter about wiping things down before they travel. The number of alarm calls has gone down tremendously.”

Another person who sets the alarm off every time he travels is North Bay’s colourful mayor. Sharon thinks it may have something to do with his signature gold tie or his cowboy boots. His punchy one-liners as he gets patted down make him a favourite passenger of all the screening officer.

North Bay’s bomb squad does some of its training at the airport. Three years ago, the squad gave a memorable seminar to the security personnel. They acted out some mock scenarios, demonstrated how the robot might remove a bomb from the X-ray and detonate it safely, and what some explosives actually look like.

“I love the challenge of this job,” says Sharon. “It’s an ever changing world out there, so you have to be on your toes all the time.” ■

Rendez-vous de la Francophonie 2007



Media Inquiries

If you receive inquiries from the media about CATSA or any security-related matters, please refer them to 1-888-294-2202.

Feedback

Please provide us with your feedback on this newsletter using the "Contact Us" section on our web site at: www.catsa-acsta.gc.ca

Heads up everyone!

In an effort to highlight and strengthen the presence of the French language, the Public Service Human Resources Management Agency of Canada will be holding its annual Rendez-vous de la Francophonie in March 2007.

Rendez-vous de la Francophonie consists of several days of bringing together francophones and francophiles across Canada. It is also the opportunity for Canadians to participate in various activities that highlight and strengthen the presence of the French language.

CATSA is pleased to promote and actively participate in the 9th Annual Rendez-vous de la Francophonie. Stay tuned for more details coming soon on the screening officers' website on activities surrounding Rendez-vous de la Francophonie 2007 taking place in your community!

We all know that respect for both our official languages, throughout Canada, is an essential condition for our country's social harmony. As a Crown corporation, CATSA is committed to enhancing the vitality of the English and French linguistic minority communities in Canada and supporting and assisting their development. As such, we will continue to celebrate the richness of cultural diversity. ■



CATSA is dedicated to providing services to the travelling public in both official languages.