

POLICING AND CRIME ACT 2009

EXPLANATORY NOTES

TERRITORIAL EXTENT AND APPLICATION

Part 7 – Aviation Security

Section 79 Security planning for airports

Section 24AB Risk advisory groups

391. Section 24AB creates a statutory requirement that qualifying aerodromes must establish RAGs and makes provision for their membership. There are currently in excess of 35 aerodromes presently operating groups on a voluntary basis that carry out risk assessment. These are commonly known as ‘MATRA’ groups and these resemble the proposed RAGs. As a minimum, a RAG’s membership must include a person nominated by the aerodrome manager and a person nominated by the chief officer of police for the relevant area.
392. Subsection (3) provides the manager of the aerodrome with a power to appoint additional persons to the RAG as he or she sees fit. It is expected that the aerodrome manager will use this power to ensure that the Group’s membership contains the necessary expertise to be able to properly advise on the threats to the aerodrome identified. Persons that may be appointed by the aerodrome manager could include, but need not be limited to, representatives of airlines, cargo and catering concerns with a presence at the airport.
393. The chief officer of police may use the power contained in subsection (4) to appoint a second representative to the RAG. The chief officer, could, for example, use this power to appoint a representative of Special Branch where Special Branch has a presence at the airport.
394. It is expected that the Commissioners for Her Majesty’s Revenue and Customs (HMRC) will use the power contained in subsection (5) to appoint a representative to the RAG in circumstances where HMRC are carrying out border and frontier protection functions that will impact upon security planning considerations at the aerodrome in question.
395. Subsection (6) provides the Secretary of State with a power to appoint additional persons to the RAG as he or she sees fit. The expectation is that this power will be used by the Secretary of State to appoint such representatives of UKBA and SOCA to RAGs as may, from time to time, be necessary.
396. Subsection (9) also provides the Secretary of State with a power to appoint observers to the RAG. The observers would be able to witness the proceedings. In addition, as the RAG may decide its own procedure, it could permit the observers to take part in the discussions in order, for example, to provide expert advice.