



Wolfgang Stoeckel
Chair of the EIFS network
German Federal Police

The EU In-Flight Security Officer Network (EIFS), also known as Air-Marshals, is a network initiated back in 2015 aiming towards enhancing in flight security, in line with the EU efforts to increase aviation security.

The EU aviation security regulation 300/2008 includes air marshal operations within the EU aviation security matrix.

After initial contacts among DG HOME and the International In-Flight Security Officer Committee (IIFSOC) EIFS was formed by the European IIFSOC members.

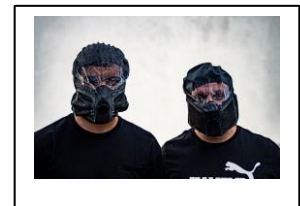
Today, EIFS unites all EU Member State In-Flight Security Officer (IFSO) units (Austria, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Spain) and their most closely affiliated non-EU partners from the USA, Canada, Australia and Switzerland.

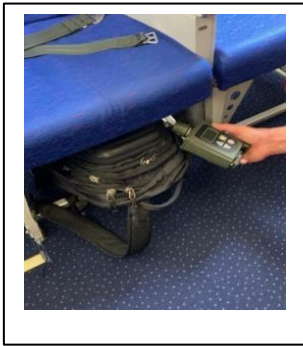
Chaired by the German IFSO Unit BSL BPOL, the network is focusing on the sensitive domain of the aviation security as this transportation means can be particularly exposed to terrorist attacks. As a matter of fact, ground-based aviation security is primarily focusing on preventing dangerous items to reach the aircraft. EIFS on the other hand, is focusing on the potential threat passengers might represent once on board.

Since their formation, EIFS, recently restructured into four Working Groups, have focused their activities on tactical and strategic issues along four pillars of interest:

Equipment

In this field EIFS has tested and delivered recommendations for communication and detection devices, training supplies and protective hardware.





- Instructors

Seasoned IFSO instructors have refined existing and newly generated training regimes, concepts and curricula for a wide range of IFSO-specific skills (Firearms, Tactical First Aid, Behavior

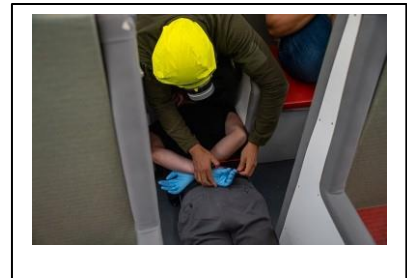


Detection, and others). These products were tested during pilot courses by the network, to be inserted into the national training concepts.

- Tactics

Tactical ground rules and basic guidelines for specific operational scenarios were tested, refined and added to the national units' operational concepts.

These joint trainings and exercises aim to further standardize the national IFSO program's plan of action in the event of an in-flight attack.



- Strategy

The increasing standardization of operational concepts continues to bring the associated IFSO units closer together.

EIFS also cooperates closely with other law enforcement networks wherever and whenever fighting terrorism or aviation security is the common goal.

With the recent adoption of their Terms of Reference, EIFS has now put thought to paper and given themselves voluntary rules of conduct. With these, the network underlines its

intention of proceeding to evolve towards a professional institution.

Throughout the past five years, these seminars, discussions, trainings, tests and exercises have covered a wide range of highly specialized topics, leading to a significant increase of the individual unit's operational capabilities, as well the strategic alignment of the network as a whole.

Standing out from within this multitude of activities, EIFS organized and executed AIGIS 2022, their to date largest individual effort.

The exercise, held in October 2022 at and over Vienna Airport, represented the first ever combined air/ground intervention against a simulated in-flight attack on the European continent.

It brought together more than 300 In-Flight Security Officers, ATLAS operators, NATO, Airpol and airline representatives from more than 15 EU and non-EU countries.

The lessons learned from this highly successful endeavor were carried back into the various participating entities and from there found their way into the national crisis reaction concepts.

In another milestone activity, EIFS and Airpol drafted and adopted a joint agreement on Emergency Weapon Procedures for armed IFSO at European airports during unplanned landings.

Building on their activities of the past five years, and hand in hand with associated aviation and public security partners, EIFS will continue their constant efforts to fulfill their mission as the last line of defense in the European aviation security matrix.