AIRCOP
Real time operational communication between international airports to counter transnational organized crime and illicit drug trafficking, and prevent terrorism
AIRCOP is a multi-agency project implemented by UNODC in partnership with INTERPOL and the World Customs Organization (WCO). It aims at strengthening the capacities of international airports to detect and intercept drugs, other illicit goods and high-risk passengers, including foreign terrorist fighters, in origin, transit and destination countries with the overall objective of disrupting criminal networks.

AIRCOP was designed in 2010 as part of the European Union’s Cocaine Route Programme to curb cocaine trafficking on passengers, in cargo and mail, from source countries in Latin America - via the Caribbean and Africa - to Europe. The increased capacity and knowledge of trained personnel has led to the expansion of the project scope to cover the multiple threats targeting airports, including all illicit drugs, illicit goods (such as wildlife, counterfeit medicines or weapons) and, as of late, terrorism and trafficking in persons. The project has also expanded its geographical coverage and currently includes airports in Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean and the Middle East.

Based on the fundamental idea of information sharing and trust building, adaptable to the evolution of trafficking routes and the emergence of newly trafficked commodities, AIRCOP is continuously expanding across the globe as a key element of border management and security.

A project funded by the European Union under the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace

AIRCOP also receives contributions from Canada, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway and the United States of America.
AIRCOP supports inter-agency cooperation through the establishment of Joint Airport Interdiction Task Forces (JAITFs). These are multi-agency task forces, bringing together law enforcement agencies operating at international airports, which may include the police, customs, immigration, airport authorities, national security or drug enforcement agencies.

JAITFs are nationally owned, established by ministerial or presidential decree and have a mandate over the entire airport platform on passengers, mail and cargo.

AIRCOP facilitates secure real-time transmission and sharing of information between law enforcement services at national, regional and international level by connecting the different JAITFs to data and communication networks.

Specific tools provided by AIRCOP include extension of INTERPOL’s I-24/7 criminal databases and access to WCO’s CENcomm system.

Furthermore, regular exchange of information and cooperation are also facilitated between JAITFs and bilateral Liaison Officers, as well as airlines operating at selected airports.

AIRCOP promotes an intelligence-led approach by providing a range of basic and specialized training activities at national and regional level as well as a series of mentoring activities.

Training and mentoring activities are conducted by experienced law enforcement officers active in key international airports, delivering up-to-date expertise and building long-term communication and cooperation, well beyond the duration of the actual activities.

To strengthen South-South cooperation, new countries interested in joining AIRCOP participate in study visits to functioning JAITFs, while exchange programmes are organized between the different JAITFs.
Our development

39 countries

43 airports

Our results

Seizures as of February 2018

- 5.7 tons of cocaine
- 2.1 tons of counterfeit medicine
- 8 potential FTF

- 700 kgs of pangolin scales
- 1.6 tons of cannabis
- 1.3 tons of meth
- 350 kgs of heroin
- 100 kgs of amphetamine
Seizures also included 2 tons of khat, fake passports, guns and ammunition.

- 541 kgs of ivory tuks
- 360 kgs of ephedrine
- 9 tons of tobacco product
- 7,5 million undeclared USD
Contributing to air border control

Training and mentoring activities cover a wide range of issues such as targeting, intelligence, behavioral analysis, inspection, forgery and forensics across the 5 phases of the air passenger travel cycle (pre-departure, departure, pre-arrival, arrival as well as post-arrival), as well as in relation to cargo and mail.

AIRCOP can provide JAITFs with various types of office equipment, IT and photographic equipment, as well as inspection and testing tools (mobile device forensics for cell phone data recovery, urine tests, explosive detection tools, spectrometer, X-ray, vehicle, etc.).

To consolidate the expertise built throughout the life of the project, AIRCOP promotes the exchange of good practices through thematic standardized curricula, exchange programmes between the JAITFs as well as discussions during the regional meetings of heads of JAITFs and AIRCOP Global Meetings.

AIRCOP funds the annual WCO-led COCAIR joint operation, during which controls and exchanges are heightened between participating airports, with a focus on cocaine interdiction. AIRCOP supports the participation of JAITFs in other joint operations organized by INTERPOL, WCO and other organizations on specific threats or in specific regions.

AIRCOP collaborates with international organisations, such as the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the International Air Transport Association (IATA) and the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate (CTED); regional entities such as CARICOM and the G5 Sahel; and law enforcement agencies, such as the Brazilian Federal Police (INTERCOPS).

AIRCOP produces operational and strategic reports highlighting trends, routes, type of substances, modus operandi and concealment methods, based on data from WCO’s CENcomm and INTERPOL criminal databases and reports.

Our growth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Capacity Building</th>
<th>Equipment</th>
<th>Good Practices</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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Our commitment

Our commitment to air border control

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total airports</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>30</td>
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<td>2014</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>100</td>
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TOTAL number of partner airports (as of February 2018)
AIRCOP supports governments in developing staff selection procedures, vetting methods, trainings on ethics and standard operating procedures.

Upon request, AIRCOP could support other accountability mechanisms, such as codes of conduct, internal inspection or reporting channels.

AIRCOP trainers and mentors come from law enforcement agencies (police, customs, etc.) from countries across the globe further highlighting the importance of the AIRCOP network which incorporates international best practices and promotes South-South/trans-regional cooperation. As of February 2018, trainers come from:

AIRCOP contributes to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations Development Agenda 2030.

Thanks to the trainings and equipment provided, JAIFTs adjust to new threats identified and can thus evolve from drug interception to other trafficked goods such as wildlife, or high-risk passengers such as foreign terrorist fighters. AIRCOP also adapts to national situations and can strengthen existing airport units with similar mandates rather than creating new ones.
AIRport COmmunication Project
AIRCOP

Regional Office for West and Central Africa
Regional Office for Central America and the Caribbean
Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa

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