



HOW TO STOP A HIJACKING

Critical Thinking in
Civil Aviation Security

Clay W. Biles



CRC Press
Taylor & Francis Group

How to Stop a Hijacking

Hijackings and bombings have plagued civil aviation since 1931 and air rage incidents are on the rise. While there is aircraft and inflight training available for air marshals, other first responders receive minimal training on inflight security awareness and protocols. There are no other resources currently available to flight crews or armed first responders that specifically address inflight security and how to control threats of disturbances on airplanes.

How to Stop a Hijacking provides readers with fundamental principles on how to think more critically about onboard security threats. The aircraft cabin is an environment that poses unique security challenges, and first responders can apply security awareness and critical thinking skills to establish a safer environment in the cabin and airport for everyone onboard. The lessons in this book are driven by the central objective of teaching the reader how to counter inflight aggression and maintain tactical control of the cabin. Written by a former federal air marshal instructor, this book looks at the recent rash of air rage incidents and violence on airplanes, in addition to the real and ever-present threat of hijack or potential explosive device.

How to Stop a Hijacking is a practical guide that offers methodological and tactically proven strategies for stopping violent acts on board an aircraft inflight.

Clay W. Biles is a former US Federal Air Marshal and inflight security instructor. Biles joined the Federal Air Marshal Service in 2008 and flew more than 1 million miles on international and domestic flights. Biles resigned in 2013 and founded High Order Security, a company that assists at-risk personnel in Latin America. He lives in the San Francisco Bay Area with his wife and two children.



Taylor & Francis

Taylor & Francis Group

<http://taylorandfrancis.com>

How to Stop a Hijacking

Critical Thinking in Civil Aviation Security

Clay W. Biles



CRC Press

Taylor & Francis Group
Boca Raton London

CRC Press is an imprint of the
Taylor & Francis Group, an **informa** business

Designed cover image: TBC

First edition published 2023

by CRC Press

6000 Broken Sound Parkway NW, Suite 300, Boca Raton, FL 33487-2742

and by CRC Press

4 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon, OX14 4RN

CRC Press is an imprint of Taylor & Francis Group, LLC

© 2023 Clay W. Biles

Reasonable efforts have been made to publish reliable data and information, but the author and publisher cannot assume responsibility for the validity of all materials or the consequences of their use. The authors and publishers have attempted to trace the copyright holders of all material reproduced in this publication and apologize to copyright holders if permission to publish in this form has not been obtained. If any copyright material has not been acknowledged please write and let us know so we may rectify in any future reprint.

Except as permitted under U.S. Copyright Law, no part of this book may be reprinted, reproduced, transmitted, or utilized in any form by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying, microfilming, and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without written permission from the publishers.

For permission to photocopy or use material electronically from this work, access www.copyright.com or contact the Copyright Clearance Center, Inc. (CCC), 222 Rosewood Drive, Danvers, MA 01923, 978-750-8400. For works that are not available on CCC please contact mpkbookspermissions@tandf.co.uk

Trademark notice: Product or corporate names may be trademarks or registered trademarks and are used only for identification and explanation without intent to infringe.

ISBN: 978-1-032-37315-7 (hbk)

ISBN: 978-1-032-37300-3 (pbk)

ISBN: 978-1-003-33645-7 (ebk)

DOI: 10.4324/9781003336457

Typeset in Palatino

by Apex CoVantage, LLC

This book is dedicated to first responders in civil aviation, past, present, and future.



Taylor & Francis

Taylor & Francis Group

<http://taylorandfrancis.com>

CONTENTS

Acknowledgment	xi
Introduction	xiii

SECTION I The Basics of Inflight Security

1 Introduction to Inflight Security	3
2 A Brief History of Threats to Civil Aviation	9
3 Terrorist Attack Planning and Hijack Tactics	49
4 Inflight Jurisdiction, Inflight Awareness, and Layers of Aviation Security	73

SECTION II Behavioral Detection and Adversary Recognition

5 Passenger Profiles	85
6 Proactive Profiling	91
7 Surveillance Detection	115

CONTENTS

SECTION III Safety and Security Considerations

8	Flight Deck Door Procedures and Awareness	127
9	Passenger Search and Restraint	135
10	Inflight Medical Response	149
11	Inflight Fire Response	153

SECTION IV Tenets of Inflight Security

12	The Basic Principles of Inflight Security	159
13	The Tactical Mission Statement	161
14	Act Decisively	165
15	Use Speed, Surprise, and Aggression	167
16	Simplicity of Tactics	169
17	Techniques Versus Principles	171
18	Communication	173

19 Six-Check	179
20 Aggressive Mindset, Stress, and Motor Skills Management	181

SECTION V Counter-Hijack Response Strategies

21 OODA-Loop Theory	191
22 Positions of Dominance and Advantage	195
23 Considerations for Armed First Responders	199
24 Considerations for Unarmed First Responders	205
25 Least-Risk Bomb Location	209
26 Suicide-Bomber Response	215
27 Aircraft-Specific Tactics for Armed First Responders	219
28 Multi-Level Aircraft Considerations	233
29 Emergency Evacuation	235
30 Outside Breach of Aircraft	237

CONTENTS

31 Post-Incident Stabilization	239
Conclusion	245
Glossary	247
Index	257

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

A thorough government review was performed on the manuscript—by the SSI (Sensitive Security Information) Program, within TSA (Transportation Security Administration), an Agency of the U.S. DHS (Department of Homeland Security). Such review, in accordance with the SSI Regulation at 49 C.F.R. part 1520, confirmed that the work contained no sensitive information.



Taylor & Francis

Taylor & Francis Group

<http://taylorandfrancis.com>

INTRODUCTION

This book's main purpose is to help first responders in civil aviation like you learn how to think more critically about onboard security threats. By applying critical thinking skills to inflight security, you can establish a safer environment in the cabin for everyone on board. The aircraft cabin poses unique security challenges. Unfortunately, current training falls short for preparing you to analyze situations that may be harmless on the ground but catastrophic in the air. The lessons in this book are driven with the central objective of teaching you how to maintain tactical control of the cabin during an inflight security threat so the pilot-in-command can safely land the aircraft. The tactics outlined in this book are not new; they have been in the terrorist hijacker playbook for decades. It is time for first responders like you to understand these tactics, too. By applying the lessons within, you can learn how to be a more effective first responder and how to avoid becoming the victim of onboard violence. I hope the information within will help you think more critically about civil aviation security now and in the future. Fly safe.



Taylor & Francis

Taylor & Francis Group

<http://taylorandfrancis.com>

Section I

The Basics of Inflight Security

Hijackings and bombings have plagued civil aviation since 1931. Individuals have used these violent acts to make political statements, to bring awareness to political causes, and for reasons of psychological abnormality. Flight attendants, special passengers (such as law enforcement officers), and other first responders in civil aviation have been on the frontlines of this inflight violence, responding when needed in order to preserve the safety of the aircraft, crew, and other passengers on board. But aircraft hijackings and bombings are extremely rare. At least, this is what the past two decades of the historical record reflect. In fact, recent trends suggest a prevalence for inflight rowdiness in the form of aggressive behavior, or *air rage*, not of suicide bombings or hijackings. But if there are any violent extremist hijackers or would-be bombers out there, hatching plans anew, we can always rely on inflight security officers like federal air marshals to keep us safe, right? *Wrong*. Unfortunately, in the United States, federal air marshals perform security on less than 1% of commercial flights. Other countries around the world have similar inflight security coverage. This means that, regardless of what airline you work or travel on, there is a high likelihood that you will find yourself on an aircraft without inflight security support. This also means that, in the face of an onboard threat, it will likely be up to you and other first responders to find a solution to keep everyone on board safe.

Although attempted hijackings and bombings of aircraft are rare, they pose a serious risk to an aircraft inflight. Because of these dangers, inflight security decisions are always made by anticipating the threat of a hijacking or bombing. By keeping hijack and bomb threats at the forefront of your mind (and by implementing the tactical processes outlined in this book) when you initiate threat protocol, you will be able to more rapidly and effectively respond to inflight security threats. Two people who are seen fighting in the cabin may, at face value, appear to be engaging in aggressive behavior for reasons of air rage; however, a fight like this could also be a diversion in preparation for a violent hijacking. When you respond to an inflight security threat as a first responder, it is important for you to follow specific protocols in the cabin to help maintain the security of the flight deck, integrity of the aircraft, and safety of the crew, yourself, and other first responders and/or passengers. This book guides you through this decision process. Making more effective inflight security decisions can be accomplished by learning and applying the tenets of inflight security and by expanding your knowledge of threats against civil aviation. The tenets of inflight security will teach you the basics of threat hierarchy and inflight security protocols, whereas a firm understanding of past threats to civil aviation will allow you to better predict and respond to future threats in aircraft and airports. Section I is split into four chapters: Chapter 1 gives a brief introduction to inflight security, explains basic terminology, and provides a general understanding of inflight security; Chapter 2 gives examples of threats to civil aviation and lessons on hijacker and bomber tactics and behavior; Chapter 3 will give you a brief understanding of terrorist planning and operations and will expand on aggressor behavior and tactics; finally, Chapter 4 provides information about inflight jurisdiction and the layers of aviation security, all of which will help you think more critically about inflight security. The purpose of this section is to help you form a security perspective that considers the most dangerous threats to passengers, crew, and other first responders in aircraft and airports.

1

Introduction to Inflight Security

This chapter introduces terminology to ease your communication with other first responders and introduces some basic information about inflight security to help broaden your understanding of the subject. *Inflight security* is a security discipline that is focused on maintaining the security of the flight deck, the integrity of the aircraft, and the safety of the flight crew, the first responder, the first responder's team and passengers. Australia and many other countries around the world have government-operated *inflight security programs* where individuals travel in commercial aircraft to help secure the inflight environment. In Australia, there are *air security officers* or ASOs. In the United States, there are *federal air marshals* or FAMS. Austria, Canada, Jordan, China, Israel, and Poland (among many other countries) all have their own inflight security programs and specific titles (or names) assigned to their security officials. These security officials are universally called *inflight security officers* or IFSOs. The aircraft that inflight security officers typically travel in are those that are *flagged* (belonging) to the country of the respective inflight security program that is providing the security (e.g., federal air marshals typically fly on United States-flagged aircraft). Many countries around the world either re-initiated their inflight security programs or built new ones after the September 11, 2001, coordinated hijackings. A number of the previously mentioned countries rapidly hired and trained thousands of new inflight security officers in the wake of this particular attack.

Inflight security officers receive several months of training in detecting criminal behavior; terrorist attack methods and planning; and aircraft-specific tactics. This training gives insight into criminal behavioral

indicators and physiological changes to the human body under stress; teaches how a terrorist or criminal organization may plan and execute an attack against civil aviation; and provides instruction on how to re-hijack an aircraft during a hijacking or bombing attempt. After formal training, inflight security officers learn more about the aviation environment by conducting surveillance on and observing the behavior of passengers in aircraft and airports around the world. This on-the-job training gives inflight security officers a heightened ability to detect potential terrorist and criminal acts by enabling them to distinguish baseline behavior from illicit (or deceptive) behavior. Frequent flyers like you will be particularly good at recognizing baseline behavior inside the aircraft environment because of your repeated exposure to it. This experience will help you better implement the topics discussed in this book and will give you an advantage in helping to detect inflight security threats.

To deter hostile acts on board an aircraft inflight, inflight security programs must reveal some information about itself. At a minimum, they must let their adversary know of the existence of their inflight security program. This is considered *deterrence*. An example of deterrence would be the public acknowledgment by the Chinese government that it has an inflight security program. This is the same thing as telling air pirates that, if they attempt to hijack or bomb a China-flagged aircraft, there is a chance that a security team could be on board to stop them. Therefore, there is *deterrence value* in having the potential on board presence of an inflight security officer (or inflight security team) known. There is a higher deterrence value in releasing information about the existence of an inflight security program and a lower deterrence value when the existence of an inflight security program is kept secret. This book could be considered a form of deterrence, since those who read it will be better prepared to thwart a hijacking or bombing attempt. By reading this book and applying the techniques and principles within, you will not only act as a more effective deterrent against hijackings and attempted bombings, but you will also be better prepared to handle the cases of air rage, inflight aggression, and other inflight disturbances that are more likely to require communication with the captain and the initiation of threat protocols.

To ease communication between first responders, a standard system of terminology should be used at all times. To begin, the *cabin* is the area inside the aircraft where passengers sit and where cabin crew members, for example, flight attendants, perform their duties. Cabins are divided by *travel class*, which denotes the quality of seating accommodations. The travel class of cabins found in commercial aircraft typically includes *first*

class (highest travel class), *business class*, and *coach class* (lowest travel class). Some aircraft may have a cabin with only one type of travel class, while others may have a cabin with mixed travel class. Cabins typically contain one or more *lavatories* (or bathrooms) and may have one aisle (single-aisle) or two aisles (double-aisle); some aircraft have a mix of single- and double-aisle cabins. Aircraft typically have one *deck* (one floor) or two *decks* (two floors); aircraft may therefore be referred to as *single-decker* or *double-decker aircraft*. A cabin also typically has a *galley* (or kitchen).

All aircraft have a *forward area*. The forward area is often referred to as the *position of dominance* because of its importance as a tactical position inside the aircraft. The position of dominance is the area aft of the flight deck door and forward of the first row of seats. The *flight deck*, or cockpit, is where the pilots control the aircraft, while the person legally responsible for the safety and operation of the aircraft during its flight is the *pilot-in-command*, or *captain*.

An *aircraft hijacking*, or *air piracy*, is the unlawful seizure of an aircraft within the *special aircraft jurisdiction*, a legal term that means that all external passenger doors in the aircraft have been closed. In contrast to a hijacking, a *commandeering* is defined as the unlawful seizure of an aircraft; a commandeering can take place either in the special aircraft jurisdiction or on the ground with the doors open. Hijackers often attempt to gain *cabin compliance* as a way to control people in the cabin during a hijacking or commandeering; hijackers have historically sought to gain cabin compliance by forcing passengers and/or cabin flight crew into a position of disadvantage, that is, seated, with hands on top of the head, fingers interlaced, and faced away from the aisles.

As a first responder in civil aviation, you undoubtedly have familiarization with various makes and models of aircraft, also known as *aircraft equipment*. This is an important consideration for inflight security. Likewise, an aircraft's cabin layout, often referred to as *aircraft configuration*, is equally important to understand because it can give you an idea of where a hijacker or bomber can hide and how they might move to position themselves tactically inside of the aircraft. Important aircraft configuration considerations include the *number of aisles* (single-aisle or double-aisle); *lavatory number and location*; *the number of decks*; *number and location of emergency exits*; and *how the flight deck is accessed*.

The number of aisles in an aircraft is important because it determines how an *aggressor* (e.g., aggressive individual, hijacker, hijacker team, suicide bomber) can move inside the cabin. As noted earlier, commercial aircraft have either one or two aisles (referred to as single-aisle or double-aisle

aircraft). Some aircraft have both double- and single-aisle cabins, like the Boeing 747, which has a double-aisle configuration on the lower deck and a single-aisle configuration on the upper deck. If one of the decks inside of a *double-decker* aircraft has two aisles, then the aircraft is considered to be a double-aisle aircraft. Double-aisle aircraft are also often referred to as *wide-body aircraft* and *Jumbo jet aircraft*. Another important consideration about aisles is that the majority of them are not arranged in a perfectly straight line. Most aisles appear straight, but they actually curve along the length of the aircraft cabin, following the fuselage. This curve in the aisle is more obvious on double-aisle aircraft configurations (you can see this curve by standing in the rear of a double-aisle aircraft and looking down the aisle toward the flight deck). The aisle in single-aisle aircraft is easier to navigate than the aisles in double-aisle aircraft; however, there are certain single-aisle aircraft with bulkheads that jut out into the aisle and prevent rapid movement in the cabin. An aircraft's aisle configuration should always be considered and evaluated *before* flight and any potential obstacles such as carts, bulkheads, and/or people in the aisle(s) that could prevent ease of rapid movement in the cabin should be periodically evaluated *during* flight.

It is equally important to understand how the flight deck door is positioned in relation to the aisle(s). This is important because a hijacker (or hijack team) needs to move down the aisle toward the flight deck in order to reach the forward area, breach the cockpit door, and hijack the aircraft and they typically choose the fastest path (e.g., the aisle in-line with the flight deck door) in order to perform those actions as quickly as possible. Some double-aisle aircraft, such as the Boeing 767, Boeing 777, and Boeing 787, have a flight deck door that is in-line with the left-side aisle. The importance of this *left-side dominant, or aisle-to-flight deck, configuration* is a topic that will be expanded upon throughout this book.

The location of emergency exits is important because there is a higher likelihood of an emergency landing on land or water during an aircraft hijacking or inflight bombing. This is one example (among many others) where finding an escape route from the aircraft cabin is an important safety consideration. Onboard safety brochures that depict an aircraft's cabin layout typically indicate the location of emergency exits. As a first responder, you should know the location of the nearest emergency exit and be ready to assist in emergency evacuations if needed. An emergency exit can also be used to ground an aircraft. If an emergency exit door is opened prior to departure, the aircraft cannot take off because it will not be capable of maintaining stable flight. An evacuation slide is

heavy and bulky, and if an emergency exit is deployed prior to take-off, the aircraft will not be able to leave the ground until the slide is removed. Removing an emergency slide takes time and requires an experienced aviation mechanic, making the deployment of an emergency slide a viable option for preventing take-off and for allowing the aircraft more time on the ground where a military or law enforcement rescue/response can be attempted. If an emergency slide needs to be opened on the ground in order to deny a hijacker the ability to force a take-off of the aircraft, one should be aware of any people on the outside of the aircraft in the vicinity where the emergency slide might impact upon inflation. Ensuring that people on the ground are away from the area where an emergency slide will open is an important safety consideration because emergency slides inflate suddenly and with violent force. Although opening an emergency exit on the ground can be a useful tactic during certain inflight security situations, it is especially dangerous for people on the outside of the aircraft and should only be performed by using caution and forethought.

All aircraft are unique in some respect, but the majority of aircraft have a single deck, regardless of whether they have a *narrow-body* or wide-body. There are, however, two aircraft in common use today that have two decks (a *lower deck* and an *upper deck*): these are the Boeing 747 and the Airbus A380. As mentioned earlier, the Boeing 747 has a unique cabin configuration because it has a double aisle on the lower deck and a single aisle on the upper deck. Also, the forward area on a Boeing 747 is located on the upper deck (there is no forward area on the lower deck of a Boeing 747). The Airbus A380 has its own unique configuration; for example, the Airbus A380 has two forward areas (one on the upper deck and one on the main deck). Although the lower deck of the Airbus A380 is where the flight deck stairwell is located, the forward area of the lower deck can also be easily accessed from the upper deck stairway (which ends at the forward area of the lower deck). For these reasons, you must make special inflight security considerations when you are working or traveling in the cabin of an Airbus A380 or Boeing 747. Other special security considerations for these aircraft configurations will be explained in greater detail in the section about deployment strategies.



Taylor & Francis

Taylor & Francis Group

<http://taylorandfrancis.com>

2

A Brief History of Threats to Civil Aviation

In order for you to better understand how to formulate an inflight security response and to be able to adapt that response to meet future threats, it is important for you to examine some of the more important aircraft hijackings and bombings that have occurred throughout history. The study of the historical record is important because it will give you an idea of the various types of rare, but extremely dangerous aggressive actions you might expect to see inflight. This is true whether the aggressor is a lone-wolf hijacker, a dedicated hijacker team, a suicidal-hijacker team, a trained hijacker pilot, or a suicide bomber. The study of this history will also poise you to better predict future methods of inflight and ground-based attacks.

Although the focus of this chapter is to review past inflight security threats, three examples of past airport attacks will also be presented. Ground-based historical snapshots of threats to civil aviation are as important to understand as inflight threats because they serve as examples for teaching lessons in criminal behavior detection and passenger profiling. After reading all of the examples presented in this chapter, you will begin to be able to recognize and predict hijack tactics on the ground and in the air. The ability to predict methods of attack is important when applying critical thinking skills in civil aviation.

FIRST RECORDED HIJACKING AND FIRST LETHAL HIJACKING

The *first recorded hijacking* occurred in February 1931, in Peru. During this hijacking, a Pan Am mail plane was assaulted from the ground by a small group of three to four Peruvian revolutionaries who breached the cockpit and forced the captain to fly a specific route so that the revolutionaries could drop propaganda leaflets. Seventeen years later, the *first lethal hijacking* occurred. On July 25, 1947, three Romanian hijackers hijacked an aircraft in their attempt at receiving political asylum. Shortly after take-off, the hijackers stood up from their seats and gained cabin compliance by threatening the crew and passengers with violence. The hijackers controlled the forward area, breached the flight deck door, and forced the pilots to divert the aircraft. As the hijacking came to a climax, one of the hijackers killed flight mechanic Mitrofan Bescioti.

FIRST RECORDED AIRCRAFT BOMBING

On November 1, 1955, a man named Jack Graham took out multiple life insurance policies on his mother prior to her flight from Denver to Seattle. Using deception and his understanding of security procedures for checked baggage, he then managed to insert a bomb into his mother's luggage which was later loaded onto his mother's flight, a Douglas DC-6B aircraft (United Airlines Flight 629). The bomb eventually detonated inside the aircraft en route to Seattle and killed all 44 passengers and crew members on board. This was recorded as the first bombing of an aircraft in flight. Graham never had the chance to cash in the insurance policy on his mother: he was sentenced to death for his crime instead.

SUSPECTED SUICIDE BOMBING OF AN AIRCRAFT INFIGHT

On January 6, 1960, a McDonnell Douglas DC-6B aircraft (National Airlines Flight 2511) exploded en route to Miami, Florida, from New York. The investigation remains open to this day; however, it is suspected that the explosion was a murder-suicide. Inspectors determined that Julian A. Frank, a lawyer from New York, had wounds consistent with those caused by dynamite and residue indicative of the handling of an explosive prior

to its detonation; investigators suspect that Frank placed an explosive device under his seat and then detonated it. All 35 passengers and crew on board were killed as a result of the blast. If the investigators' version of events is to be believed, the tactics used by Frank included deception, a basic understanding of airport security procedures, and the surreptitious placement of an explosive device inflight. Since it is much easier for a suicide terrorist to strap an explosive device to their body and walk onto the aircraft than it is to carry it onto the aircraft and place it below their seat, the official explanation of events cannot be certain. Evidence does suggest that the destruction of the aircraft occurred because of a suicide bombing; if true, this makes this particular attack a first of its kind.

FIRST DOMESTIC HIJACKING OF AN AIRCRAFT IN THE UNITED STATES

On May 1, 1961, a passenger on a Convair 440 aircraft (National Airlines Flight 337) stood up from his seat and, using the alias "Cofresi the Pirate," locked himself in the forward lavatory and passed a note to a flight attendant that said he had a bomb. The hijacker wanted to be taken to Cuba and claimed he would "blow up the plane" if his demands were not followed. The hijacker was armed with a small pistol and claimed to have been hired to kill Fidel Castro by a Cuban diplomat. This hijacking was recorded as the first hijacking of a US aircraft in the United States. The aircraft was successfully diverted to a military base in Havana and allowed to return to the United States the following day. This hijacking was the first in a long string of hijackings to Cuba that would eventually lead to the inception of an inflight security program in the United States. During May 1, 1961, hijacking the hijacker applied tactics through deceptive means by claiming to have an explosive device inside the cabin (this claim was made in order to gain cabin compliance, control the forward area, and to aid the hijacker's breach of the flight deck and diversion of the aircraft). This example shows how powerful the threat of an explosive device can be when the claim is made inflight.

FIRST DISRUPTED HIJACKING BY A PASSENGER

On August 3, 1961, a father and son hijacker team (aged 38 and 16) stood up from their seats approximately 20 minutes before landing in El Paso, Texas (inbound from Albuquerque, New Mexico) and, armed with handguns,

gained cabin compliance by threatening passengers and crew inside the Boeing 707 aircraft (Continental Airlines Flight 54). A law enforcement officer on board named Leonard W. Gilman quickly volunteered to be one of the hostages. The hijackers took Gilman hostage as they controlled the forward area aircraft and attempted to divert the aircraft to Cuba. In order to get the aircraft on the ground, the pilots told the hijackers that the aircraft needed to land in El Paso to get fuel for Cuba. Upon landing, the aircraft was met by Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agents who surrounded the aircraft; FBI agents shot out the aircraft's tires while an ambulance blocked the aircraft from moving. As law enforcement officers were acting on the ground and a negotiator was talking with the hijackers, Gilman punched the older hijacker in the face, stopping the hijacking. The hijackers were subsequently charged with kidnapping and interstate transportation of a stolen craft. Luckily, nobody on board the aircraft other than Gilman and one of the hijackers was hurt (Gilman suffered a broken hand; and the hijacker, a broken nose). A lot of important lessons can be learned from the successful inflight security response initiated by Mr. Gilman; he acted in a discreet way that allowed him to get close to the hijackers (a form of surprise), and by using a strategy of speed, surprise, and aggression, Gilman was able to put a quick end to an onboard drama that had the potential for a much more violent outcome for passengers and crew. Speed, surprise, and aggression is a tactic that will be expanded on in detail in the section on deployment strategies.

HIJACKING/MURDER-SUICIDE

On May 7, 1964, a Fokker F-27 aircraft (Pacific Airlines Flight 773) mysteriously crashed into the ground in San Ramon, California. The flight was referred to as the "gambler special" because of its route between San Francisco and the casinos in Reno. The investigation into the crash ruled it to be a hijacking/murder-suicide. Francisco Paula Gonzales, a 27-year-old former Philippine sailing team member, was suspected as the culprit. Voice recordings from the cockpit suggest that Gonzales breached the cockpit and then shot the captain and the co-pilot with a Smith & Wesson .357 magnum before turning the firearm on himself. The aircraft crashed immediately afterward and all 44 passengers and crew on board were killed. Gonzales was plagued by financial problems and had reportedly planned the suicide in advance. The investigation suggested it is likely that, like other hijackers before him, Gonzales used his firearm to threaten passengers and crew members with violence to gain cabin compliance, control the forward area,

and breach the flight deck. Once inside the flight deck, the suicide hijacker was able to kill the pilots and gain control of the aircraft to force a crash. Although hijackings remained rare during this time, the tactic of breaching the flight deck door during a hijacking was common, but it did not raise concerns among airlines nor calls from Congress to harden the cockpit and restrict access to the forward area. By 1964, although criminals had been targeting aircraft for hijackings and bombings for several decades, terrorist groups began to turn their attention toward aircraft as a means of political currency and as a way to make a political statement. This initiated a period of several years beginning in the mid-1960s when violent extremist terrorist groups began performing surveillance on targets in civil aviation, mostly in countries in Europe and the Middle East. This surveillance would be re-initiated by other violent terrorist extremist groups in the mid-1990s in the United States, information from which would lead to the September 11, 2001, coordinated terrorist hijackings.

HIJACKER TEAM HIJACKING

On July 23, 1968, a pilot, a military colonel and a karate teacher, all members of the Palestinian Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), hijacked a Boeing 707 aircraft (El Al Flight 426) by threatening the crew and passengers with pistols and grenades. The hijackers initiated the hijacking while the aircraft was on its way to Lod Airport (now Ben Gurion International Airport) from London Heathrow International Airport. This assembly of hijackers was unique, since it was the first time a hijacker team had used a trained hijacker pilot. The hijackers breached the flight deck, hit the captain in the head with a pistol, and demanded that the aircraft be flown to Algiers, Algeria. The hijackers also separated passengers in the cabin into two groups: Israeli and non-Israeli. After landing in Dar El Beida, Algerian officials impounded the aircraft and released the non-Israeli passengers. Negotiations ensued over the next 40 days and were eventually successful in obtaining the release of the 16 remaining prisoners.

HIJACKER TEAM HIJACKING

On August 29, 1969, two individuals armed with assault rifles and grenades hijacked a Boeing 707 aircraft (TWA Flight 840) while it was en route to Tel Aviv from Rome. A *dirty airport* in Rome was chosen for its lax security,

giving the terrorist group the ability to smuggle weapons onto the aircraft. This was one of many violent hijackings during which hijackers worked in a team by using the threat of violence to control the cabin and take a position in the forward area prior to breaching the cockpit. The hijackers selected Westerners for torture by separating the passengers into groups (Westerners and non-Westerners). The hijackers had been interested in hijacking TWA Flight 840 because the Israeli Ambassador Yitzhak Rabin was supposed to be on board; however, luckily for the Ambassador, he had decided not to travel on that particular flight. When it was discovered that the Israeli Ambassador was not on board, the hijackers had the aircraft diverted to Damascus, Syria. In Damascus, the hijackers evacuated the passengers and crew and then rigged an explosive device to the nose of the aircraft. Passengers were eventually released from the aircraft after the Israeli government agreed to release 71 imprisoned Syrian soldiers; unfortunately, this showed terrorists that it was possible to have their demands met by hijacking an aircraft and led to an increase in air piracy. Luckily, no one was killed or injured during the otherwise violent hijacking of TWA Flight 840. Like others before them, the hijackers of TWA 840 were successful in hijacking aircraft because they were (1) able to quickly reach and control the forward area, (2) able to control passengers in the cabin by using the threat of violence, and (3) able to breach the cockpit door and enter the flight deck.

LONE-HIJACKER HIJACKING

On March 17, 1970, a McDonnell Douglas DC-9 aircraft (Eastern Airlines Flight 1320) was hijacked from Newark to Boston. Shortly after take-off, an individual armed with a .38 revolver stood up from their seat, quickly made their way to the forward area, and breached the cockpit door. Inside the cockpit, the hijacker struggled with the captain and co-pilot for control of the aircraft. During the fight, Captain Robert Wilbur Jr. was shot by the hijacker and bled profusely while his co-pilot, First Officer James Hartley, was able to shoot the hijacker three times before he himself was shot and mortally wounded by the hijacker. Captain Wilbur managed to relay a message to air traffic control, telling them that his co-pilot had been shot. Despite everything he had already done, the captain fought with the hijacker once again and was able to disarm the hijacker before lapsing into unconsciousness. Despite his grave wounds (and as the hijacker clawed at him once again), Captain Wilbur regained consciousness and landed the aircraft safely.