

**BAA is the world's leading airport company. It owns seven UK airports and has management contracts at a number of international airports. A third of BAA staff are employed in airport security, and they have their own 460 strong fire team who provide airside support. They are one of the largest commercial landlords in the UK, providing commercial accommodation for around 900 airport retailers and are one of the construction industry's largest clients, continually investing in new, often state-of-the-art buildings such as Terminal 5 at Heathrow.**

### **The Business Challenge**

In September 2008 BAA announced the start of the sale process for its London Gatwick Airport as required by the Competition Commission. In the months following the announcement as the sale process progressed, Gatwick has pushed forward with its development plans. Gatwick is the busiest single-runway airport in the world and the second largest airport in the UK. Its development strategy for the future focuses on the airport's expansion as a single-runway, two-terminal airport, as it grows to handle around 40 million passengers a year by 2010/2011. As part of its overall strategy, Gatwick wanted security staff to make performance improvements in their operations in both throughput and quality of service for airlines and passengers (in terms of customer service and security) and in compliance to Department for Transport requirements. These improvements would be made by driving behavioural changes, enabling security teams to work consistently across shift patterns.

Specific changes to be introduced included:

- Introduction of an enhanced security process instilling key principles of the operation and the importance of their delivery
- Emphasis that quality as well as throughput drives a smooth and effective security process that meets the demands of our passengers
- Introduction of the concept of monitoring and measurement by Team Leaders and support for individuals and teams to understand what good looks like and how it would be measured
- Increasing employee engagement by involving them in making suggestions that would improve the security operation and managing their expectations about the changes needed
- Creation of a team-working culture
- Introduction of key passenger interactions at each stage of the security process

### **The Solution**

Hunter Roberts worked with senior managers at BAA to analyse the business need and designed a one day event to be attended by over 1000 Security Officers. Each event accommodated a

crew from each terminal along with their Team Leaders. The event was designed to deliver a creative yet intensive and important message of how an optimal security central search process should operate.

Whilst security crews already benefited from high levels of both classroom and on-the-job technical training, the initiative was a completely new approach for the staff and was designed around a number of team challenges aligned to each stage of the security process.

Dubbed *The Gatwick Factor*, the event was modelled on the re-launched TV programme, *The Krypton Factor*. Key aspects of the initiative's success were endorsement by a senior manager at the beginning and end of each event and participation by each crew's Team Leader. The senior manager also led an important walk through of 'what good looks like' at each event and the team leaders, as well as getting involved in each of the challenges with their crews, demonstrated monitoring and measurement during the afternoon's 'Go Live' session, giving feedback on the crew's performance at the end of the day.

The creative team games and challenges provided opportunities for team building and for some friendly competition between the crews and a team prize was awarded at the end of the day to the crew with the highest score. *Teams gave their ideas and suggestions for continuous improvement at all stages of their security process. The senior management of security operations considered all the suggestions and published regular responses in Gatwick Factor Feedback documents. Some of the security officers' suggestions were implemented immediately whilst others needed more time for review.*

In preparation for the event Hunter Roberts ran facilitation skills training for the internal training team to enable them to work alongside Hunter Roberts' facilitators and as the initiative progressed the trainers with the aptitude and motivation to develop their skills further were coached in facilitating part of each event and were accredited as facilitators by Hunter Roberts, ensuring that skills were transferred internally so that the momentum of the Gatwick Factor could continue after the Hunter Roberts consultants exited.

Hunter Roberts deployed a small team of consultants who worked flexibly within the security operation shift patterns to deliver *The Gatwick Factor*. Changes in the performance of crews were evident immediately. For example, the Business Improvement Team had provided optimal timings for each of the stages of the security officers' process and in a number of cases the security officers, on average, were spending less time than optimal and so were asked to take longer over their interaction with each passenger, providing them with more information about the next stage in the process and making the journey through security as friendly and stress free as possible. This is particularly important given the high number of body searches and bag searches conducted by security officers.

### Measuring Success

Outcomes achieved by the programme included:

- Improved teamwork
- Greater consistency across teams
- Improved communication
- Benefit from full day off the job spent with the Team Leader
- Appreciation by the security officers of senior management time and input
- Security officers engaged fully with the opportunity to contribute to continuous improvement within their operations and the momentum to continue after The Gatwick Factor initiative.
- Increased satisfaction from the security officers that their views were being listened to and that feedback was produced promptly
- Increased confidence by senior managers in security officers' capabilities
- Improvements against key performance measures. The Gatwick Factor provided data for the business on what was needed next to keep up the momentum of the initiative for both crews and team leaders. Moreover, the programme proved to highly motivational for staff, team leaders and senior managers at a time of major change in the business.