

# Book Review

## Aviation & Maritime Security Intelligence

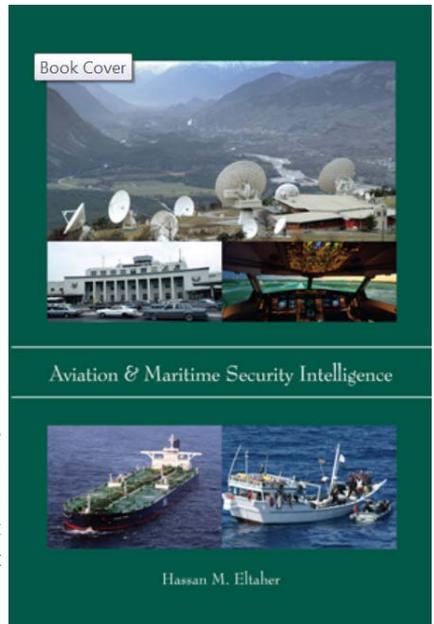
by Hassan M. Eltaher

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242 pages

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Risk-based security. The term sounds good to the ear and it looks good in a white paper. But the truth is that security that is driven by risk requires both broad knowledge of the threat one seeks to defeat and timely injection of actionable intelligence. It sounds easy enough, but the Devil is in the details. Mr. Eltaher takes both intelligence novice and sage,

skillfully shares a vision of Western intelligence organization models, and presents a vision for a cooperative intelligence organization that can provide timely intelligence to those who need it.

No stranger to the worlds of aviation and intelligence, Mr. Eltaher is the former Chief of Civil Aviation Intelligence for the Canadian Department of Transport and prior to that post served several years as a senior analyst for threat and risk assessments. His book clearly shows the value of pushing the application of intelligence outside of the airport terminal building. As he writes on page 81 of his book, "... [We] need to remember that detection equipment can only be useful as a last resort when the bad guys are literally at the gate. Intelligence, however, is the long-term tool to stop terrorists before they even leave their bases."

The book is broken down into three parts. The first, Understanding the Role of Intelligence, develops a common ground on intelligence as both a function and an organization. The second part, Applying Intelligence to Aviation & Maritime Security, takes the foundation laid in the first part and constructs a method to take information, transform it into—as Eltaher describes it—a *probabilistic mosaic* of actionable intelligence, and deliver it to the organizations that need it. The final part, though not listed as one, is a beefy appendix filled with thoughtful examinations of hot spots and topics in the security intelligence world.

Some American readers may take exception to the author's point of view on particular elements involving U.S. combat operations in support of the original War on Terror; however, Eltaher provides the reader with facts and the research and opinions of other notable scholars in the fields of security and intelligence to support his position.

As a parting thought to those who are still on the fence about reading this book, I offer a cogent and germane warning contained within the book. On page 150 the author warns against overreliance on the analyses of existing threats and their assessments to the exclusion of emerging threats. This nugget of intelligence gold, among the many contained within his book, is one that I offer as evidence of the reader's return on investment for taking the time to read and thoughtfully contemplate this book.

D.H.