

Master's thesis in Change management



**Universitetet
i Stavanger**

Title:

Impact of Risk Perception on Security Airport Employees

In a change management and a societal safety management perspective

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Abstract

This research study examined factors influencing threat and risk perception of airport security employees in Norway. The results based on a qualitative approach (in depth interview and observation) showed that both external and internal factors are important in considering the perception of threat and what influences it. This researcher focused mainly on the latter one. The perception of threat exists and contains not only the risk of terror attacks (which can be said to be external) but also factors inside the organization at hand (internal factors).

Internal factors such as organization culture, safety culture, trust, possible destructive leadership, communication, and organizational learning appeared to be of high importance.

Acknowledgments

This thesis and study work for a Masters in Change Management has been a hard, strabismus struggle, but a highly rewarding one at that.

“I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand”

(Confucius, Chinese philosopher & reformer, 551 BC - 479 BC).

I, the author of this thesis, would like to use this opportunity to thank some of the people that have made all this possible.

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My list could go on, but my last thanks goes to my fellow students, who have been my discussion partners in different study subjects and inspired me to do my best.

I will leave you all with these words, before you read on; “To err is human, to forgive divine” (Alexander Pope).

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Introduction

Topic

“In order to understand threats to society it is of primordial importance to understand how different individuals and groups in different social settings appreciate and value threats” (quotation from the main project outline, see Appendix I). This thesis was part of a project called SORISK (The Social Determination of Risk) that looked at the cultural and societal determinations of risk and related these understandings to a case study from the Norwegian aviation industry (see Appendix I for more details).

In today's global society it is important that an organization learn how to adapt to the varying levels of risk. In this thesis I looked at an airport organization to see how they tackled this at an organizational and an individual level. The focus was on what influenced the individual's perception of threat and risk, and how this had an impact on the organization.

Background

First and foremost, the employees of the airport organization (guards) come in contact with all passengers and their luggage, and most of the airport's employees. These guards are the front line, stopping potential threats. The organization's service and work method also influences the passengers' perceived threat and confidence in the security system.

In the security industry there is a high rate of turnover, which has an impact on the organizational ability to learn and function at full capacity (Kaufmann & Kaufmann, 2003). Loss of experienced personnel and the training of new people are some of these issues. The organization's work is the most visible security work that a normal citizen experiences, since all air-passengers must pass the security control to be able to travel. How the organization tackles this role, how they can “comfort” the nervous traveler and how they do their job are important factors in how we as a society perceive threat when traveling (Coshall, 2003).

My last point is that this type of organization can be found in every airport all over the industrial world. The findings we can generate in this research can therefore potentially be relevant for all these security companies at all airports, and the industry as a whole. It is also important to look at how this organization can, through the findings, potentially improve or be aware of these issues. The following is a description of the security workers.

Diversity is a word that comes to mind when describing the security workers. They range in age from early twenties to seniors; and men and women are represented equally among the leaders and management. A relatively large portion of the workers come from minority backgrounds, and numbers provided by the company stated that there were 17 different nationalities and cultures represented. So it is fair to say that the work environment contains a good mixture of diversity that mirrors the Norwegian society. In fact it appears that they are succeeding in this diversity trend, as statistics show that many firms appear to have difficulties approaching even the minimum quota of diversity (SSB, 2009).

Here I will start this introduction with a hypothetical example. Imagine you are in the airport security area and get to observe a normal day of the guards' working day. The day has been full of cancellations, long queues and the passengers are angry and stressed. It is late in the day, the guards are tired. You can see it in their faces that it has been a stressful day for them also.

Now, imagine an elderly man coming into the security area, the guard finds a knife on him. It is a knife just inside the margins that is allowed. He gets to keep his knife because it is not big and sharp, and the man seems to be a nice elderly man who is well spoken. Imagine now that he has a long beard, and is wearing religious or cultural clothes, he appears to be arrogant and from the Middle East. The guard handling the situation is inexperienced, and there is no one to help her; everyone is occupied. The guard looks to you for help. "Do you think he should get to keep his knife?" What is your perception of threat and risk? Is it likely that this man is a man with bad intentions or is he just a normal passenger that would like to get home to his wife and family? This example illustrates some of the difficult decisions these security guards face every day.

What factors influence our perceptions? How do we as individuals arrive at our decisions in the specific situation in front of us, and what do we in fact do? These are aspects which were studied in this thesis. The organization's work boils down to individuals taking action, what concrete action they will take in the specific situation, and on what they will base their perception of threat and risk, in any given situation.

The risk and safety issues for this organization are that of a normal or more precisely a typical Norwegian organization/firm; however this organization has an extra dimension in that external threats and risk is their line of business. Their product is the security of airport infrastructure, passengers, cargo, and airplanes. Their risk and security concerns therefore contains a wider definition of this area than that of a normal organization.

So to be able to give an answer to the quotation from the main project outline ("In order to understand threats to society it is of primordial importance to understand how different individuals and groups in different social settings appreciate and value threats"), the research question was asked: **"What factors influence the perception of threat?"**

To answer this, I focused on the individuals (employees) in an airport security firm, the threat perception of these individuals and what factors might impact their perception in the internal and external spheres of the organization being studied.

The above described factors are important because, even though huge resources have been invested in security and safety at our airports, in any given situation the decision or judgment call is made by just a few or one person. The individual is the organization's weakest link, in that if the right individual fails to discover, stop or prevent in some way a person with a dangerous intent from performing his or her action, the risk could be realized through a dramatic disaster.

The rules and regulations, the equipment, the infrastructure and all the good intended effort is of little help if the individual fails in the crucial moment. So with this as my argument I looked at the individual, how the person perceived that crucial situation, how she resonated and concluded what her threat and risk perception was in that single moment can be crucial. Questions that revolve around the guard might be, is she confident in her own skills, does she trust in her own judgment? Does she trust that her supervisors and colleagues will know what to do? Can she ask them questions, and will they come to her aid if that is needed? Is this just a normal day with its daily tests, or is this the real thing? If she overacts and it is not real, will she be laughed at or get yelled at by her supervisors? Will she hear "good job", and be praised? The list could go on, but my point is that there are factors that will have an influence on this situation. This single guard is the one that makes that crucial judgment call.

The detection of some of these possible influences will be one of my main contributions in this thesis. By identifying these we can better prepare society, our airports, our aviation industry, our security industry and our individual guard's odds of performing optimally when or if the crucial moment presents itself. By knowing what can weaken or strengthen the individual guard or supervisors' decisions, we can better prepare the organization to give the right support, training, infrastructure and so on. The organization can then act as a team and strengthen the bonds between the individual, thereby making confident people in confident teams that know what to do and how to do it, making us all safer when

traveling. These are some of the possible contributions in the findings and conclusions of this thesis.

When I started to approach this area of study it was with the assumption that the individuals that I was about to interview and observe had a perception of threat that contained or revolved around “threat” as being threat of a terror attack, somebody hijacking an airplane or bombings at the airport. In other words, I approached this topic by thinking about external threats. During this research study my findings indicated that there are threats that appear to concern the security workers at work. The threat that was focused on by the individuals was not a terror attack itself, but the perception of safety and security they had and the trust they had in themselves, their co-workers and in their organization to be able to do their jobs when needed. These seemed to be important factors influencing the threat perception of the airport security employees. The threat was connected to the guards being able to have optimal work conditions in the organization, to perform and trust that the team and organization can perform as well. My assumption changed from concerning just an external threat, to include the foundation for which the individual stands and receives its support, namely internal factors that exist inside the organization itself (see also theory chapter). The external and internal factors influencing the individuals’ threat perception were the findings in this thesis through data gathering and field work. It is therefore the external and internal factors that are discussed in the following pages. As will be explained later I chose to focus especially on the internal factors.

The following chapters discuss the applied methods, the theoretical framework on which this thesis is based, and the findings in the analysis and discussion chapter and ending with some conclusions and recommendations for the organization being studied, and some reflections for future studies. I will start by presenting a short introduction of the organization that was studied.

About the case: the organization and its history

Securitas Transport Aviation Security AS is an airport security firm that has the responsibility for screening passengers and luggage at all airports in Norway (except the largest airport, Oslo Airport Gardemoen, which is handled by a different company).

In the Norwegian aviation industry, the state and government own the main airports and manage them through a company called Avinor. Avinor has the day to day responsibility of managing and maintaining the airports. Some of their responsibilities are then put out for bidding to private companies. One of these tasks or areas is security.

The company that is now called *Securitas Transport Aviation Security AS*, is a company with its traditions from the security industry and the company *Securitas*. This company had also before 9/11 handled the majority of all airports in Norway, but after the attacks of 9/11 in the USA, the need for tighter/stricter security arose. The government and Avinor requested that the same standard should be implemented on the main airports in Norway as in the EU. With this mandate *Securitas* then jumped into action and over night they managed to dramatically tighten the security at all its airports. The organization that existed before and the day after 9/11 was now radically changed, the routines were no longer a random check but now 100% of all people and goods were checked. The need for a larger workforce consisting of a more skilled and trained personnel was something that *Securitas* managed to put together in just hours after the magnitude of the attacks washed over Europe. This impressive accomplishment of managing this dramatic situation was not needed again until 2004 when the government demanded that all small airports also needed the same level of security as the larger ones. Also here *Securitas* sent its men and women off, in a matter of hours, to train new personnel and get them up to the level of expertise they needed to be at. There are a great number of these smaller airports in Norway some (26) with just a few arrivals a day. This was another example of this company's impressive management, where the company jumped into action within a relatively short time span.

Securitas is a security company that has a wide variety of types of security jobs. It arose from a need for a more specialized organization and after some years *Securitas Transport Aviation Security AS* was created.

The heightened threat level in the period after the 9/11 attacks was dramatic for the whole world. This was also true for Norway, even though there has not been any terror attack on Norwegian soil to present date. There has, however, been an incident internally in Norway's airspace on a smaller scale which was the axe attack on a pilot during a flight in

2004, referred to in the media as the Kato Air incident (29.09.2004). It was this incident that triggered the escalation of security measures at the smaller airports in Norway (Aftenposten, 2009).

This thesis focused on Stavanger Airport, Sola's branch of *Securitas Transport Aviation Security AS*. There has been a steady increase in work load and therefore also a rise in number of employees. The number of employees formally exploded from the 11th to the 12th September 2001. There are approximately 135 employees at present date and there are about 150 during summer season. As mentioned earlier, there are about 17 different nationalities and cultures represented in the work force.

This fast growth, from a relatively small organization to one of the largest in the airport, has perhaps left its stretch marks? Or have they changed the structure of the organization to cope with the new organizational situation? The organization has created several new positions, some in the administration and some in the daily coordination. So in that sense we see that there is focus on and acceptance of, there needs to be resources given to this area.

The security workday consists of guards manning different positions all over the airport area, with one guard-supervisor and a coordinator managing the workflow. The other functions are instructors, the learning department, and administration.

In the following I provide a short illustration of some of the tasks during an average working day for these guards and supervisors. I will do so without weakening the security of this airport. The guards are especially visible to us when we are passing through the security portals; we and our hand luggage get scanned, but this is just one of the many areas where they work. The part most of us do not get to see is our checked luggage that of course is scrutinized. The many airport employees themselves are also required to be searched. They conduct area control and even every bagel and perfume bottle is thoroughly scanned before ending up in the shops inside. These are just some of the many tasks a guard can perform in a normal day. Their shifts include both day and night work.

The next section outlines the methodology that has been used.

Methods

In this section I will describe the type of research design used and why it was chosen.

”It is not like that the data is neatly and easily accessible behind the scene just waiting to be collected by the skilled field worker that has succeeded in arriving there” (Aase & Fossåskaret, 2007, p. 36. Author’s own translation from Norwegian).

As previously mentioned the research question of this thesis is: **“What factors influence the perception of threat?”** In other words, the subjective perceptions of threat and how these perceptions influence elements in the employees’ everyday work life situation are examined. Using this approach however, the data are not easily measured or compared from one informant to another. What is dangerous in one’s view may be trivial for another. Base jumping can be an example of this, where one’s perception is that it is too dangerous to even consider, and for another it is just a fun adrenaline kick.

In this chapter the methods that have been used and the reflections and reasons for my choices will be elaborated on further in the paper. I describe my role, how I approached the field, the type of methods used and how I proceeded. The chapter is concluded with some reflections about my choices as a whole.

My role

Some of the following thoughts will overlap with the limitations of the study found in the conclusion section.

When I started this research I wondered to what degree the fact that I worked for this organization would be a limitation of the study. To me it seemed obvious from early on that when I was going to observe and interview that it was mandatory to think through how the relationship between the observer and the organization needed to be, in order to avoid bias. To what extent should I keep it a secret that I had a history from the organization, and knew a great deal about the culture and some of the employees, and to what extent can the observer and those who know him, separate the old roles and the new roles, of a former employee and a neutral, objective, outsider with neutral intentions of the happenings in the organization?

I have worked for several years in this organization being studied and have experienced the consequences taking place in the airport security industry since 9/11, and have taken part in this dramatic change. My experience derives from working for over 3 years at Stavanger Airport Sola and one year at Trondheim Airport Værnes. After that, I have been

away from the organization for nearly four years. This means that my expertise and knowledge of this organization is based on me being relatively well traveled in the culture of this organization with some knowledge of culture at another airport within the same company. This means that I am relatively knowledgeable of the “dialect” and how and what goes on, since I have experienced it first hand in my position inside the culture and in taking part in the inner life of the organization.

I am aware that there is a change in the organization, culture and people over time and that this can be an influence and a bias for me (Kaufmann & Kaufmann, 2003). This is an active concern when the analyses and the whole process of contact and data collection occur, so I have taken some active steps to balance these possible biases. One of these steps is that I have acquired some sparring partners so that there is an extra safeguard against the bias influence (Cozby, 2001). This is an excellent help to have, because these sparring partners can point out and question the actions and assumptions that I put forth. The knowledge and experience is a big strength and also an “Achilles heel” and can make the researcher “blind” (Cozby, 2001). Moreover, I have used and tested my assumptions and hypotheses before I wrote them down as findings (Argyris, 1996).

Aase and Fossåskaret (2007) state that the goal of every field worker is to come “backstage” and get access to study the processes that the bypassing observer does not see (ibid.). Wadel (1991) states that if it is possible for the researcher to go into a local position in the field of study, she can become a sociologist of herself and her own culture, in other words be her own informant (Wadel, 1991, as quoted in Aase & Fossåskaret, 2007). This can be an excellent position but it is not always possible to go into the position you would like (Aase & Fossåskaret (2007). It is more often the researcher who creates a short timed, half local status, which she can go into (ibid.). This status is then half local and half ad hoc, in that sense that the status/position not normally is to be found in the ordinary system of status inventory (ibid.). This means that the research is participating in a local position/status and at the same time is in an observer- researcher status (ibid.). The two roles can be kept apart, but in reality it will most often be a melding or blending of these positions (Aase & Fossåskaret, 2007). The field worker does not stand outside the stage and studies a limited object, but participator and observer gradually meld into one another (ibid.).

”The researcher acknowledges also in the choice of method that the field of study is plasticity, formable and moveable in the meeting point with science” (Aase & Fossåskaret, 2007, p. 35, the authors own translation). This insight should lead to the impression that the researcher is conscious and reflected on her forming power (ibid.).

For those who knew me from before, I became and took the role of a former colleague, for those who did not know me from before I varied between this role and a “novice” in the field (Cozby, 2001). In other words I did not “flag” that I had previous knowledge from the field. I did not conceal this information from the informant, but informed them during or just at the end of the conversation/interview. I then explained the reasons for not coming forth with this information at the beginning, which was that I did not want to hold things back in order to avoid contamination or bias. This explanation gave no visible negative feedback at all, in fact some pointed out that it was perhaps the best solution.

It occurred to me that informants I had interviewed or had dialog with at an earlier stage came up to me with elements or details that they for some reason did not do the first time. I experienced a great deal of trust and confidence from almost all dialogues and interviews, with just a few examples where people did not seem open, and this again could be related to other factors such as more than one informant being present during the dialog/interview. The fact that I also had this knowledge of the culture from before and understood the local “language”, was truly a decisive reason for this openness; another fact can also be a phenomenon called the “*Hawthorne Effect*”, where the employees open up because somebody wants to listen to them, that someone is interested in their point of view and the change from closed to open because of the researcher being present (Merrett, 2006).

The approaches

Quantitative and qualitative method has its own advantages and disadvantages (Blaikie, 2007). As Aase and Fossåskaret (2007) stress, it is among the main points in their book, *Skapte Virkeligheter* (created realities, author’s own translation) these two quite radical different approaches have an interest in different sides of the social phenomena. Some types of questions can best be answered by doing the study using quantitative approaches, where in other instances the qualitative approaches can give answers to other types of questions concerning the same phenomena (ibid). This can be important to keep in mind, that one is not better than the other and therefore there is no tug-of-war, but the researcher can choose which method is best to answer their study objective (the particular study) (ibid.).

Sometimes it is even helpful to bring these two traditions together, by focusing and stressing that they bring their own dimension to the knowledge about the society that we want (ibid.). This is done in order to strengthen the data, by using the advantages, and to minimize the weakness of each method (ibid.). I will not go into more detail of these three approaches, but I will explain in more detail the approach I in fact have selected.

In this study I wish to answer questions with a more subjective nature and in a relatively small scale. The individual's perception and a single organization with its surroundings is the case at hand.

Since I wish to have a focus on subjective and a case focus, and the data would be of a qualitative nature, it seems more natural to be using the qualitative method. I have therefore used a qualitative approach when gathering data in this study.

I will now illustrate some of the advantages of qualitative analysis.

The data collection techniques can be different types of observation and different types of interviews (Blaikie, 2007). Later on in this chapter I will look in more detail at the method that was selected.

In using a qualitative method we can say the interviewer and experimenter is gathering data (Aase & Fossåskaret, 2007). Another side is that the method is to be seen or understood as a process in where the research is called a *producer of data* (ibid.).

I mentioned earlier the quotation: "It is not like that the data is neatly and easily accessible behind the scene just waiting to be collected by the skilled field worker that has succeeded in arriving there" (Aase & Fossåskaret, 2007, p. 36, the author's own translation). The reason behind this statement is that data is always created through an analytic process as Aase and Fossåskaret (2007) state. Wadel (1991, as quoted in Aase and Fossåskaret, 2007, p. 36) states that data is conceptualized observation (Aase & Fossåskaret, 2007). This can be illustrated in this mathematic expression: observation + concept = data (ibid.). Data is created by the researcher, as she is placing the data in their respective categories that the researcher means it belongs to (ibid.).

In qualitative orientated research tradition the concept and categories are central analytic tools (ibid.). I grip a situation with a concept, and catch in this way its meaning (ibid.). For the researcher, the creating of meaning with the observation (the data) couples to the concept, in this way the observation first got their meaning when they are conceptualized and interpreted (ibid.). This is what I have done to the data being gathered in the field, I will conceptualize and interpret this and create through that meaning. I will in the following go through my interview method.

Interview

Most culture studies use interviews in one form or another to gather information and data (Bang, 1988). The most common type of interviews is half structured with open ended

questions. This is because this type is helpful in discovering the expressed or visible attitudes, motives and conceptualization or the types of terms being used (ibid.).

I will now give a short illustration of some of the drawbacks with this type of method and type of interview (ibid.). One downside by using open ended questions is dealing with the answers. Since the respondents can answer differently the answers are not easily comparable. Another problem can be that the question will differ from interview to interview since the researcher adapts to the interview situation and the informants response (Aase & Fossåskaret, 2007). This again will make it more difficult for the researcher to compare the responses. An additional drawback is it is a time consuming method and therefore cannot get a huge number of informants to study. Time is often a resource that is not in abundance, and the informants also have a job to do (Bang, 1988). By conducting most of the interviews in the work environment, disturbances and stealing precious time from the informants was avoided. Since some of the interviews were very long (2-3 hours) this meant that I was not able to interview a large amount of people every day. Some days there was only time for 1 or 2 interviews and few observation situations. This is because they were occupied with work tasks, and I needed to wait and pick the right time and moment for the different activities of study (ibid.). An example can be that in periods with low passenger traffic, there was little interaction between the employees. They were standing and waiting and then there was little interaction to observe in regards to factors influencing threat perception.

Another issue that one as a researcher needs to decide on is who are the informants and are they representative of the organization and workforce? This is a problem of generalizability and how comparable the findings are (Bang, 1988). To help with this problem it will not only be important to interview the leaders but key informants from all levels and diversities. With this I mean, men and women, respondents at different leader levels, informants with different experience, cultural backgrounds (native/foreign) and different positions in the organization (supervisors, trainers, tutors, coordinators, trainees and so on).

A serious problem is also that the information one receives is the expressed opinions and meanings, and not necessarily the real ones. I will go into this problem in more detail later when looking at Argyris & Schön's contribution.

The last problem area I wish to point out is that of the researcher herself. How the informants perceive her and if the interaction is open for trust or if the informant closes up, are important (Bang, 1988). Also the way questions and answers are perceived by both the

informant and the researcher depends on the background and history they have. I will go into more detail about this under the headline **my role**.

This interview method provides many advantages. The respondents get the chance to use their own words and phrases, in short use their own language (ibid.). The answer being given also does not need to fit into previously made categories and the researcher can stimulate the informant to freely express themselves in their own words and use their understanding and perceptions of the world and phenomena's around them (ibid.). It is the "informant" subjective perception that I am interested in. Another advantage is that this type of interview has a good deal of flexibility. An example can be if an interesting answer or topic arises one can follow it and go in detail and in depth in what one did not know existed before (ibid.). One can also test out hypotheses and theories as one goes. In this way the interaction is not just a weakness but also a strength, one may discover new elements (ibid.). An additional advantage is that one receives a massive load of information, which one can use to see what phenomena exist in the organization, what culture flourishes and how they perceive the world around them (ibid.).

This lays the groundwork for the hypothesis one can test in the next interview or in the next phase of inquires, such as by observing (Bang, 1988).

Observation

This is a method that is central when studying culture and is often used in combination with interviews (Bang, 1988). The definition put forth by Selltiz (1976) of observation is an adequate one. "Selection, provocation, notating and coding of that set of behavior and settings related to the organization 'in situ', and which are in coheres to the aim of science".

(Selltiz et al., 1976, p. 253, authors own translation). In this definition there are several important elements. The first is the acknowledgment of the fact that the observer is selecting or focusing on certain parts to study. It is nearly if not impossible to observe everything that is happening (Bang, 1988).

I will now illustrate some of the strengths and weaknesses with observation as a method. One of the weaknesses is that one gets the information of the expressed and visible expressions and symbols and not necessarily what lies beneath the surface in form of reasons why the respondents act and behave as they do, and what norms and values are in use. In short, one sees what is visible (ibid.). Also an expressed and/or observed act can mean different things in different organizations and in different settings in the same organization.

It therefore is important to be careful when we analyze categories and generalize (ibid.). One observation can be a once in a “blue moon” happening, and one must not make the mistake of thinking this is occurring every day. It is therefore important to test if this is something stable or just a chance happening. Here the knowledge and history of the researcher comes in, in having the codes to understand what is playing out in front of the observer and to know what is lurking under the surface (ibid.).

The biggest strength for me was that it was a brilliant opportunity to test and verify hypotheses and topics that arose from the interviews, these were presented late in the conversation so as not to lead or bias the informant. Also the observation laid the ground work for the hypothesis and forming of questions for the interviews. In this sense, the interviews and the observations were used to test one another and verify findings. A hermeneutic circle, in that the one puts light on the other, and progresses the understanding, that again was used in the analysis of the first and so on (Hollis, 2006). Another advantage is that we observe the culture and the life in the organization as it unfolds, and not retrospectively as we do in getting the information in an interview where somebody tells us about it, we see it with our own eyes here and now, we experience it firsthand (Bang, 1988). In a way we catch the organization “red handed” (ibid.).

My role in the observation

Here most of the reflections from the topic **my role** apply. The extension here consists of what role of observer the author takes on in the observations. The answer to that question is not a simple one, in that the role varied from the beginning where I used the more “blank” and searching observer, open-minded approach, to later on using a more specific search for confirmation of hypothesis and statements from previous interviews (ibid.). Another dimension was between participating and “fly on the wall” observer. The more we participate, the more insight we get into the dynamics of the situation unfolding in front of and all around us. The danger with this is that we become blind after a while, we are so part of it that we no longer “smell the roses” (see also **my role**). By being a “fly on the wall” observer we are outside looking in, and in this sense we do not run into the danger of being influenced and “blinded” by being too close to see the picture. And here we are at the dilemma again as in **my role**. In other words in which degree shall the observer be visible to the participants and participate in the situation.

A problem is for example that the observer becomes reactive in the sense that those being observed act directly, unnaturally or in some way differ from the “normal”, that the observation becomes worthless (ibid.). We can only hope that this is not that case, and that

we can discover it before it biases our conclusions. Here again comes the importance of using interviews and observations to test out each other's validity and "realness", in that we can compare findings against one another and by doing this prohibit making the above mentioned mistake (ibid.).

How I proceeded

When I developed and looked at ideas, I tested them in observation and in the dialogue with my informants. This led me to modify my ideas and what to look for, it modified my interview guide and so forth (interview guide Appendix F). This is a continuous process that in a way does not stop. We can always do more, dig deeper, and in a sense, that is research summed up (Bang, 1988).

In the beginning of this study the observation was more of an unstructured observation, in that I was more open for the field and did not want to be too colored by past history and knowledge about what to look for (see also under **my role**). The observation at the end of the observation and interviewing period became more specific in that I was looking more after specific details, to confirm or disconfirm findings from previous observations and interviews.

The advantage of this approach is that I get a richer data set than I would have if I came in with a complete set of hypotheses and a locked mindset of what I would and could find (ibid.). The more structured observation has its place when we more or less know what we are looking for (ibid.). And that was how I used these aspects to the study's advantage, and not being exclusive in choice of method.

Arenas for interviews and observation

One of the main criteria for choice of arena was a location where I could get an uninterrupted interview/dialog, with one informant at a time. In some incidents there were small groups of up to two to three informants at a time, but the most informative were those interviews with one informant present.

The arenas were the following: "wandering-guard", some offices (when the informant had one, like administration, leaders and so on), baggage (sorting area), shelters (outside guard posts), in the main security area (where the passengers are screened), employee control areas (where employees from different airport companies get screened), service entrance and different break and smoking areas.

As mentioned before one early discovery was that positions with more than one respondent were less fruitful in what came up. The informants seemed to be often distracted

or influenced by the others being present. These both in what they said and what subject came up. Some outright said so to me afterwards that this had been the case. As a consequence conversations and interviews with one-to-one were prioritized.

Criteria for selection of Informants

Most of the longer and in depth interviews were with key-personnel in the organization. With key-personnel I mean persons that have a special knowledge in some way (examples of key informants are “the union representative”, individuals with special roles like personnel or people that in some way or another have a unique knowledge or point of views to the questions at hand) (Bang, 1988).

The smaller interviews and dialogs were mainly with random informants, but I tried to get in diversity by including gender, age, seniority, length of service and ethnicity (ibid.). This gave me a rich data set, with the possibility of comparing findings and so on. The majority I contacted and asked for a dialog or an interview, but some came to me and asked to be interviewed (This last group was a small one). The sample was also influenced by employees being on the shift, the traffic situation at the given time, to mention some. In other words this sampling was a convenient sample (ibid.).

Method of conducting interviews and sample size

The equipment being used to gather the data was a tape recorder and a note book. I had three types of interviews based on duration, details, and depth. The details and amount of interviews were: Nine interviews two to three hours in length, six interviews with a duration of about 30 minutes (two were with persons that had left the organization), and 28 dialogues with about a 5 to 15 minute duration each.

Use of an interview guide

Since the area and most of the focus was set beforehand, the question was more how to ask the best questions, and get the best situation for an open and fruitful dialog and interview situation. I needed both an interview guide and a set of guidelines to keep a focus on the areas I wanted to get data on, and at the same time be free to follow up interesting leads and clues. Semi-structured interview was therefore the preferred method in this sense.

As mentioned earlier the interviews, dialogues and observations were conducted in the natural environment, at the work place. This is to capture the phenomena and the informants in their natural environment, but also to lessen the burden to the organization of having an outsider present (ibid.). This meant also that the organization did not need to redirect resources to comply with my needs and demands; I just followed the flow of daily routines. All this laid the foundation for a good tone and a good dialogue with the different leaders and

coordinators, and I got a great deal of support from the management. The feedback I received from the whole organization was in fact very good.

The interview situation

Here it was important with an open dialogue built on a safe and trusting situation, to make the informant more relaxed and willing to share their thoughts with me (see also **my role**). I therefore started by giving the respondents an introduction about what the study was about and why their participation was valuable. Besides, they were offered a free copy of the finished research study. The informants were also assured about their anonymity and the confidentiality of the handling of their answers. The respondents and I talked about the period they had worked in the organization so far, what experiences he or she had with the airport industry and how often they traveled in their spare time. This was a warm up or an ice breaker, but also a source of knowledge as to how long they had been in the organization and other reflections they had in general. After this opening and “small talk” session we began with the question areas. I kept the questions open and followed the informant’s path of thought (see also under topic interview in the same chapter). When I was nearing the end of the interview, I summarized and tried out some of the findings, so that the informant had an opportunity to fill out where it was needed and to correct misunderstandings that might have occurred (ibid.).

At the end I repeated how the data was going to be handled, when the report would be accessible for them and gave them my contact information. This “sandwich” method with a soft start, a harder or more “chewy” middle, and a soft ending was a method recommended by a previous University lecturer at NTNU, University in Trondheim (Andersen, personal communication, 2006). She stated that it was important not to leave the informant “hanging” by leaving him just after getting him to open up, then the situation is not optimal for any part, and one does not take good care of one informant’s dignity. The interviews all ended on a good tone and with an expectation of what my conclusions and findings would be.

My reflections on my choice of method

The hermeneutic usage of interview and observation to gradually sharpen the tools of science, to best grasp the “field of knowledge” with a qualitative point of view, was a method well suited to gradually uncover the data, hidden under different layers of obscurity. The process uncovered richness in findings, of which I will go into more detail in the chapters to come.

The method that was used would have been of little help if the findings were not combined with a theoretical concept as Aase and Fossåskaret (2007) argued. I will therefore in the coming chapter go into more details on the theoretical contributions that I used as a foundation for this thesis. This is to give a framework, so to better follow the arguments put forth and to be better suited to understand the categories, discussion and conclusions later on in this thesis.

The theoretical framework

In this chapter I will go into more details on the theoretical contributions being used in this thesis. First I will give a definition of the concept of risk in order to illustrate what risk and threat in this thesis imply. I will, after this is established, give a short elaboration on my theoretical inspiration and the starting point for this thesis, namely Turner and Pidgeon's (1997) contribution *Man-Made-Disasters*, and Pidgeon, Kasperson and Slovic's (2003) contribution *The Social Amplification of Risk Framework* or SARF. After this I will go into more details on the theories and concepts being used later on in the analysis and discussion chapter.

Towards a definition of risk and threat

What individuals or societies perceive as risk and decide to choose to concern themselves as risk are not shaped only by the objective state of risk, but are also shaped by social, cultural, and political factors – as well as the precision of our analytic tools for identifying risk in the first place (Pidgeon, Kasperson & Slovic, 2003, p. 56).

First it is important that we have a common understanding of the concept being looked at; it is therefore helpful to give a definition on this key concept before continuing. I will in this thesis use Risk as a synonym to Threat, in that they both concern in short the likelihood of something occurring.

The literature on the subject is contradicting about the words risk and hazards (Hood & Jones, 1996). The term “hazard” is generally related to phenomenon or circumstance perceived to be able of causing harm or costs to people and society. Hazard is, in other words,

here concerned with the perceived cause and consequence (ibid.). Risk is by contrast often a more diffused concept, and concerns the likelihood or probability of loss. In the definition of risk I use hazard as a component within risk. It is a combination of the probability of a defined hazard and the magnitude of the consequence of the occurrence (ibid.). Risk contains the perception of the potential of loss associated with the interrelationship between humans and amongst humans and their natural physical, technological, behavioral, and financial environment (ibid.).

When it comes to risk, and what it is defined as being, it is remarkable how little consensus exists over what in fact is meant by risk. On the one side we have those who define risk from a modern positivistic viewpoint. These view risk as having objective properties, and that it is possible to measure the probability with well-defined measures. On the opposite end of the scale we have those who have a constructivist paradigm as their standpoint. These argue strongly against the possibility of having an objective measurable definition of risk. In short one can say that it is quite opposite of those who have a positivistic standpoint. These state, that risk is relative and subjective (Pidgeon, Kasperson & Slovic, 2003). In today's industry and engineer practice (oil industry) the positivistic view is probably the most common approach to risk, but the risk research and risk management field, can be said to be in-between these two positions (Renn, 1998). Pidgeon, Kasperson and Slovic (2003) state that both of these positions are extreme positions, and by holding an exclusive viewpoint of subjectivity or objectivity one gets a poor description of reality (ibid.).

Based on this, I will use the following definition of risk in this thesis: "Risk is a situation or an event where something of human value, including humans themselves, is at stake and where the outcome is uncertain" (Pidgeon, Kasperson & Slovic, 2003, p 56). This contains the notion that risk is related to the human perception of reality and what is of value or interest to them (us) is at stake/risk. A second point made by this definition is that the outcome is possible, or real, it can have a real impact, and lastly this is related to the notion that there is some sense of uncertainty related to the possibility of this occurring. The ontological standpoint in this thesis is that risk is a specific aspect of the world, and that this part or aspect is conceptualized as risk (Pidgeon, Kasperson & Slovic, 2003).

This thesis focus area is on the individual subjective interpretation and influences; it can therefore be asked if this thesis is lending more to the more constructivist end of the scale. I will in short try to clarify my views. Even though I believe that many aspects of the world around us can be measured and objectified, my view is that the subjective perception is what has a real impact on people's lives. I will illustrate this by the following two examples.

Kaufmann and Kaufmann (2003) mention an example with the subjective perception of the gain and loss concerning money. When paying 1000 kroner more than necessary for a product that costs 3000-4000 kroner can give us a very unpleasant feeling of loss. Paying the same amount extra for a car costing 250,000 kroner on the other hand can be regarded as trivial. A second example can be the statistically low risk of being hit by lightning; (even though this fact is known) a person can be too afraid to go out into the rain. Even though the risk is marginal in an objective and statistical sense, what perception the individual has on the subject is what can predict if he will go out in the rain. The point I am trying to make is that we must use the definition or viewpoint that is most fruitful to help us understand and predict the area of study. So when dealing with societal and individual phenomena it is important to look at the subjective interpretations of the individuals and groups, so to better be able to understand and predict what the future outcome may be (Kaufmann & Kaufmann, 2003). I therefore place myself in the center with the main risk research, but closer to the constructivist view than the positivistic.

The theoretical foundation

The second edition of a well renowned and often referred to book in this field of risk and hazard research is *Man-Made-Disasters* by Turner and Pidgeon (1997). This book first came out in 1978, and has since then inspired a whole field of research. The main goals of the authors are to give an understanding of what the causes of the many disasters and accidents related to man are. The point being when humans are aware of where to look for the weakness in our midst we can understand them and thereby better be prepared for the catastrophes or better yet prevent them all together. The authors give several areas of focus, being the incubation periods, where accumulative effects of small and in themselves less than dangerous weakness build up and end up in a huge and for many unforeseen disaster.

The second big pillar that this paper rests on is “the social amplification of risk”. Here the authors Pidgeon, Kasperson and Slovic’s (2003) contribution to the field consisted of the “the social amplification of risk framework”. Here their aim is to:

Examine broadly, and in social and historical context, how risk and risk events interact with psychological, social, institutional, and cultural processes in ways that amplify or attenuate risk perception and concerns, and thereby shape risk behavior, influence institutional processes, and affect risk consequences, I wish also to examine where the amplification framework holds important lessons for contemporary risk policy and risk communication practice (Pidgeon, Kasperson & Slovic, 2003, p. 2).

I will concentrate on some of the areas pointed out by these authors, namely the last contribution of the focus of culture and organizational learning in *Man-Made-Disaster* and some of the aspects put forth by the “social amplification of risk framework”. These contributions represent the theoretical foundation for this paper.

There were and are to a degree today a wide range of contributions to the field of risk research. But these contributions were and are fragmented in their own discipline, such as psychology, sociology, media studies, and so on (ibid.). This model (SARF) or framework was created as an attempt to combine the research on risk perception and risk communication. The main goal was to make a framework that was able to account for findings from a wide range of studies. The SARF sought to describe the various dynamics related to the underlying processes of risk perception and risk response (ibid.). The main concern or focus is on the areas characterized as having low risk related to them, as a contrast to the high risk status risk, which gets more or all of the attention. This, the authors argue has the potential to lead to a risk amplification (ibid.). As can be seen in Appendix B, the SARF starts with risk and risk events. The assumption or the theoretical starting point is that, if a person does not observe and communicate the “risk event(s)” to others, the impact will be localized or irrelevant in their impact. An example to illustrate: Nobody knows that the reactor is starting to fail, and has therefore the potential to create a meltdown later on, if nobody sees and interprets it as a risk and communicates this. The risk event can consist of a new report on existing risk, actual risk or hypothesized accidents. As the authors puts it: “The experience of risk therefore is not only an experience of physical harm but the result of processes by which groups and individuals learn to acquire or create interpretations of risk” (ibid, p. 15).

As mentioned, my focus is on the individual level, the individual’s perception of threat/risk and how this is influenced, and influencing other individuals in an organizational setting. To help me with this I will use the theoretical contributions such as: Argyris and Schön (1978, 1998), Schein (1987), Senge (1991), Reason (1997), Kaufmann & Kaufmann (2003). These have highly relevant contributions to the understanding of the individual, their relations between individuals and between individuals and the organization, culture and organizational learning.

I will in the following go into more details of which theories I have chosen to apply and how they help to explain the field at hand. I have divided this chapter into subchapters where the two main dimensions are External and Internal factors. The first will be briefly discussed in this thesis as a whole. My main focus will be on the internal sphere and its

factors. The external sphere is crucial in that it forms the borderline to the internal sphere, and it is from these areas the case organization receives and delivers its product of security. In this thesis I will elaborate on some of these borderline factors, but not go into great details since my focus is on the inner dimensions of the case organization. I will elaborate more on this later on in this thesis, in the conclusion and discussion section.

My main dimension as I said above is internal. This dimension or subchapter is divided into in-depth chapters called: organizational culture, from organizational culture to safety culture, safety culture, learning culture, trust, the core elements of trust, trust and learning, loss of trust, acknowledgments, communication and organizational learning, personal mastering, mental models, learning in groups and teams, and a mutual vision. These are the areas that I will elaborate more on in the coming chapters and they are the areas that I found in my field of study.

External

My main focus in this paper will be on the internal sphere. My point here is to show that the problem area is also affected by external factors. I will not go into greater details and the theories being presented here are also of a lesser magnitude and depth than I will use in the internal sphere.

The SARF has, as pointed out earlier an interconnection influence from different areas that impacts the risk event (ibid.). These can be divided into internal and external areas. In this paper the external is represented by other airport firms and organizations and their employees, governmental agencies (police and Avinor can arguably be in the above group also), and the passengers. This last one can be said to represent many different and conflicting interests. Here they can represent the risk event (terrorism, or people being drunk and violent and therefore presenting dangerous behavior); they can represent society, social protest, stake-holder groups and local communities, just to name a few. I will now go more into the internal sphere, where the majority of my focus will be in this thesis.

Internal

In Turner and Pidgeon (1997), culture, communication and organizational learning were pointed out to be important when considering the incubation, preparing and preventing man-made-disasters. My main focuses will here be on organizational culture. Under this main topic I will look at one aspect of the culture, more precisely the safety culture. Under this the communication and organizational learning topics are organized, and are in this way a part of

the safety culture. Other key areas under these topics that will be focused on are trust, trust and learning, loss of trust, acknowledgments, personal mastering, mental models and destructive leadership. This is to better explain and show the importance of the small and in themselves perceived week impacts have when accumulating and influencing the main areas, bringing the potential of a bigger incident or disaster (Tuner & Pigeon, 1997).

Organizational Culture

The individual base of work and support comes from the organization, how this organization performs, supports its members and how it is perceived by its members is the organizational culture (Kaufmann & Kaufmann, 2003).

A standard definition of culture would include the system of values, symbols, and shared meaning of a group including the embodiment of these values, symbols, and meanings into material objects and ritualized practices. The “stuff” of culture includes customs and traditions, historical accounts be they mythical or actual, tacit understandings, habits, norms and expectations, common meanings associated with fixed objects and established rites, shared assumptions, and inter subjective meaning (Sergiovanni & Corbally, 1984, p. viii).

In the studies related to the field of organization culture, there is a discussion on what culture is. The discussion revolves around those who state that organization has culture and those who argue that organization is culture. The different views have an impact on how we can look at the phenomena of culture, and if we are able to control it or not. Schein (1987) argues that culture is something that groups form over a long time. The culture will therefore be relatively stable and hard to form and control. But even though Schein (1987) defines organizational culture as being stable, there is in his definition room and possibility for change.

Schein (1987) states that it is necessary to keep the socialization process through the different forms of learning as an element to understand how organizational culture can be developed. Culture is made up of knowledge, experience, competence and values that can only be received through socialization in the actual values and behaviors, and where both the individual and the organization need to learn (ibid.).

To change an organization's culture is both challenging and demanding; you need to devote a lot of attention over time and at different levels to have a chance to succeed (Jacobsen, 2004). An organization's culture can also consist of several subcultures and conflicting cultures to the main one, which can complicate the picture dramatically (ibid.). In most establishments which are of a certain size and with a variation of positions and work stages, there will be subgroups that have their own subculture (Jacobsen, 2004).

From organizational culture to safety culture

Safety Culture: As other parts of the culture, safety culture develops and evolves by the people and by the social group and work units in an organization. The focus and development of the safety culture is an important and continuous effort that never stops. It can therefore not be seen as an ended process. Even though there are problems in identifying and eliminating the dangers and risk factors, it is the best way to go to improve safety in an organization (Reason, 1997; Appendix D).

An organizational safety culture can be a latent condition for incidents and accidents over time (Reason, 1997). To be able to do something about this, we need knowledge about how to examine, understand and how to develop the existing culture. Latent condition that can inhibit and/or stimulate this must be made visible. First, when this is accomplished it is possible to construct a good safety culture that will represent a significant barrier in the organization's safety system (ibid.). Reason (1997) states that if there is a barrier that does not work properly or is faulty in some way, this weakness then represents a hole in the safety system. If nothing is done about it, this will be a latent condition that will increase the possibility that an accident can occur. An organization can try to minimize the dangers by minimizing latent conditions; in other words filling in the holes. However, it can never be totally safe because when you increase safety it often heightens the complexity, thereby creating more possibilities for latent conditions/holes. However, with a good safety culture one is best prepared, so investing in a good safety culture is to invest in safety (ibid.).

Safety culture is important also when considering **organizational learning**.

As the leaders are, so are the employees carriers of the safety culture (Karlsen, 2007). Their attitude and their behavior decide to a large degree the safety cultures, what it contains and where it is heading. They are also the experts of their working situation. They have insight, experience and information on possibilities and weaknesses. It is crucial that leaders and employees work together to insure the best safety culture (ibid.).

The safety culture of an organization is the product of individual and group values, attitudes, competencies, and patterns of behavior that determine the commitment to, and the style and proficiency of, an organization's health and safety programs. Organizations with a positive safety culture are characterized by communications founded on mutual trust, by shared perceptions of the importance of safety, and by confidence in the efficacy of preventive measures (Reason, 1997, p. 194).

To prohibit and reduce the potential for accidents, it is essential to map the conditions that lead to those accidents occurring (Reason, 1997). It is important to create a culture that makes its members feel safe, and that they will not be punished when pointing out faulty and possibly dangerous weaknesses (*ibid.*).

Above all, it is mandatory that the employees have trust in their leaders (Reason, 1997). It is important to discover dangerous situations and weaknesses in the system without dividing blame. If there are reporting forms, one also needs to take into consideration the length and format; this can in sum be notably affecting the rate of reporting (Reason, 1997).

A culture based on fairness and justice, is built on the ideas that sanctions need to be perceived as being reasonable in relations to the seriousness of the error and the consequences it may have. It is in other words important that the leaders and management's behavior as well as their sanctions be perceived as being fair and legitimate (*ibid.*). Reason (1997) also states that it is necessary that the whole staff has the same perception of what is acceptable and what is not acceptable behavior and errors. He goes on to say that it is in the fewest instances necessary to find the "guilty" or find a "scapegoat". When people in spite of this do wrong acts and do not follow procedures, punishment is then right and understood by all, and the behavior is condemned and thereby showing that this behavior is not acceptable (*ibid.*).

Reason (1997), mentions that organizational learning is central in all safety cultures. One needs to establish a learning culture where observation, reflection, planning and implementation are crucial for the organization. A good safety culture is a culture where knowledge and experience is shared and accumulated, and where this creates the foundation for the organizational behavior (Reason 1997).

Buch & Vanebo (2000) state that many scientists agree on the fact that management and leadership's level of engagement is very important in establishing and maintaining a

good safety culture. This is because any attempt to improve it has little chance to succeed in the organization if leadership and management do not support it both with word and action. It is important that they keep focus on this over extended periods of time, until change occurs. Management cannot just have nice and lofty goals of safety values and norms, they need to live and abide by them (Buch & Vanebo, 2000).

Safety culture is about the collective understanding of what is dangerous, what the threats are and how one can contribute to reduce the risks (Aven, 2008).

Safety measures are measured by economic and time based measures. The organizational safety culture can play an important part when shortcuts and easy solutions are picked instead of a good focus on safety goals (Aven, 2008).

To invest in a safety culture will be seen by many organizations as heightened economic cost and not an area of possible economic gain (Karlsen, 2007). Investing in safety needs to be put on an equal footing as another economic consideration (ibid.). All organizations need to balance between safety and production. Often safety is in the consciousness of the management and the leaders' right after accidents and serious incidents. One needs to focus more on proactive goals for safety (Reason, 1997).

Safety culture and system focus

To best improve the safety it is first and foremost the system we need to map and evaluate. When one seeks to explain human error it is imperative to study the context and the underlying factors (Reason, 1997). Human error is often a consequence of the condition one is working under (Reason 1997). This means that individuals and group behavior, in the lower part of the organization, depend on the priorities that are taken further up in the hierarchy. An example can be economic versus safety (ibid.). The priority that is taken depends on who is in position to implement them. Here we see power, control and authority come into play. The use of power can influence a given safety culture in a positive or a negative direction (ibid.). The individual or group with the power get to define what is acceptable behavior or results. This may not be the optimal action in relation to achieving a safest possible environment (see also destructive leadership) (ibid.). Another aspect is when accidents or disaster strikes. There is often a search for one to blame, an individual that has made a mistake and needs to be reprimanded or punished in some way (ibid.). This is not optimal when considering preventing that action in the future (ibid.), or as Kohn (1995) states: "The focus must shift from blaming individuals for past errors to a focus on preventing future errors by designing safety into the system" (Kohn et.al., 1995, p. 5).

How to handle mistakes and errors is to minimize the damage done, learn from them and to hinder it being repeated. One needs to look at errors and accidents as an opportunity for learning, instead of dividing blame (Reason, 1997).

System focus or system thinking is a discipline where the goal is to see the whole picture and a fundamental premise when one is working with a learning organization (Senge, 1991). System focus concerns the ability to understand complex and dynamic relationship and connections, and thereby be able to create something new (ibid.). The end result can be enormous for both the individual and the organization. So to see the whole picture, it is crucial to work with the above mentioned areas simultaneously and in parallel processes; so as to achieve an optimal culture of safety (ibid.).

Hood and Jones (1996) state that as early as 1967, Drabek and Quarantell warned, that to concentrate on personalized fault for disaster distracts attention from structural problems.

I will now go more into the internal sphere and show the areas (or parts) that I have concentrated on.

Trust

In the article “Risk, Trust, and Safety Culture in U.K. Train Operating Companies” Pidgeon (2006) states that trust is both an underdeveloped concept and is likely to be important in organizations that deal with risk and the possibility of serious consequences. This means that as a consequence, models of safety culture can be usefully supplemented with explicit recognition of the operation of elements of trust (ibid.).

Trust can be defined as an individual’s expectancy of another person or an organization’s future action that is in accordance with and not against one’s own interests (Robinson, 1996, p. 576, as quoted in Kramer, 2001, author’s own translation). We can also as Lewicki & Bunker, (1995) do in their definition, include risk and risk perception. We are vulnerable and open to risk, in that by trusting we lower our guard to the danger of being let down by the other party. A third dimension put forth by them is the relationship between individuals in an organizational perspective. They are put together to work towards the same goal, and therefore are dependent on one another thereby also showing the need for trust in the other (Lewicki & Bunker, 1995).

The core elements of trust

Kaufmann & Kaufmann (2003) present a model (“trust-lock”) based on what they have found to be the five core elements of trust. They are integrity, competence, consistency,

loyalty, and openness. I will explain them shortly in the following. **Integrity** reflects the amount of coherence between what a person says and what he in fact does. In this model it plays a crucial part on how we judge one another's honesty and credibility (ibid.).

Competence, expertise and knowledge are also important elements. Those have to do with a person's professional and interpersonal knowledge. Does the person know what he is talking about or is there a gap in the knowledge? If this is the case the trust-relationship will fail. This means that if people do not have a competence or trust in him, they will not trust that he can deliver or follow up on agreements, or they may worry that he does something totally different and wrong (ibid.).

Consistency, consistence and consequence in action are other different elements in this trust lock. Here it is about if a person is consistent from one situation to another. Can we trust that they will behave a certain way or mean a certain thing, or is it up to chance? It is important that we can trust and know where we stand and what we can expect from ourselves and others (ibid.).

Loyalty is the willingness a person has to stand up for a person or organization. Loyalty here refers to the fact that we can trust in another to be there for us, do the "right thing" and not act opportunistic in relation to those he is supposed to be loyal to (ibid.).

Openness is the last element and refers to, if we can trust in that they tell the truth and the whole story and do not hold anything important back (ibid.).

Kaufmann & Kaufmann (2003) state that all these above mentioned factors are important and interlock, lack in one influences the whole trust dimensions.

Trust and learning

A trusting and safe environment can be a good starting point for the possibility to learn (Senge, 1991). The relationship of trust is developed through an open dialog and an atmosphere of respect (Senge, 1991). Through this openness, develops a greater understanding for each other's mental models, and gets a greater sensation of mastering the situation and the daily work situation (ibid.). Another aspect is that change in the organization will also demand change in behavior, and in this regard trust is an important variable to insure and influence learning in the organization (Davenport & Prusak, 1998, as quoted in Dymock, 2003). McElroy (2002) states that trust is an important factor to have to be able to share knowledge and information, both in an individual and organizational aspect. Without trust the members of an organization will become passive and reluctant in their actions, and thereby hinder learning in the organization (Costigan, Ilter & Berman, 1998).

Loss of trust

Trust is vulnerable in that it takes a long time to develop, but needs little time and effort to destroy (Lewicki & Bunker, 1995). Kaufmann & Kaufmann (2003) state that if there is lack of or breakdown of trust, co-workers and employees will become apathetic and passive and thereby not being influenced by the leader. The relationship of trust is in this regard the foundation that the leader bases his efficiency and functions as a leader on (ibid.). As we see trust as an important component in most if not all aspects of individual and organizational interaction, and as we see in the theories presented in this chapter that to underestimate or forget the importance of trust is to weaken the whole framework both in the individual's internal relations but also the organization as a whole. Trust is an important component in power, without it, power will soon be reduced (Skogstad & Einarsen, 2006). This leads us over on my next topic namely leadership behavior.

Leadership behavior

“To lead is to use power” (ibid, p.195). The popular notion about leaders and leadership is a person with a great deal of power and influence; but the reality is often different (Skogstad & Einarsen, 2006). Leaders without some level of power, authority and influence cannot fill his or her function as a leader (ibid.). Power and the use of power is not just desired, it is also necessary for the success of the leadership role (ibid.)

Organizations are themselves power instruments and arenas for politics and the use of power (ibid.). Leaders are players in these arenas, and are in themselves a source and a manager of power (ibid.).

There is an abundance of literature on the subject of leadership and positive leadership behavior, but very little on the more negative aspect of leadership and leadership behavior (ibid.). Some of those who have written about this subject are, the authors Kaufmann and Kaufmann (2006) and Skogstad and Einarsen (2006). I used in this thesis Skogstad's (1997) contribution about what he calls destructive leadership. He states that destructive leadership behavior is more than just the absence of positive leadership behavior. Skogstad (1997) states that this leadership behavior comes through actions and behaviors or absence of certain behaviors, which are directed at their subordinates. This behavior has a real or perceived negative consequence for the subordinates (ibid.).

We will now go on to other important factors for safety culture.

Acknowledgments

Those reactions (feedback) we get to our actions are those that lay the foundation for how we act in the future (Fischer & Sortland, 2002). One of the most basic for a human being is a positive self image (Hogg & Terry, 2001). A person gains this through receiving acknowledgment and through comparing oneself to others and to group(s). This process can contribute to reducing the feelings of insecurity and insecurity called self-exaltation (Hogg & Terry, 2001). The individual seeks acknowledgment of the attitude and actions from the leaders (Fyrand, 1994).

What climate concerning trust and the leadership does not exist in a vacuum, but in an interaction of individuals? It is therefore important to look at the communication taking place in the organization (Kaufmann & Kaufmann, 2003). The communication type that is present is again closely related to the quality of organizational learning taking place in that organization and interaction of individuals (Argyris & Schön, 1998). This brings me over to my next point.

Communication and organizational learning

In its simplest form, the process of communication consists of a sender and a receiver, with its basic parts of message, medium, channel, noise, feedback and context (Fischer & Sortland, 2002). The communication is verbal and non-verbal; this means that we communicate all the time, even when we do not say anything. The way we stand and look at somebody can be just as informative for the other person as what we in fact say. Sometimes there is even a mismatch between the two, and we can see they are lying or mean something different than what they say. Even the tone in our voice gives the texts different meanings, the use of irony is an example of dual-meaning (ibid.).

The context where communication occurs is significant in many ways (ibid.). Some of the factors are the degree of trust and the relationship between the parts, the existing climate, and if it is it one of safety and openness (ibid.).

Schön (1983) describes how to reach organizational learning in an optimal way, which he calls double-loop-learning. Here he attacks the theory-in-use with his weapon of openness and testing. He starts the process that he calls organizational inquiry. This is an inquiry process with a mix of acting and reflecting. During this process he questions the fundamental trust that has been unquestioned before, makes the people test out these truths and makes them reflect on different values and behavioral schemas. This process is organizational because it makes the organization and individual think through and restructure

the-theory-in-use and how they interact. The quality of this process determines the quality of organizational learning, according to Schön (1983).

Argyris (1978, 1996) proposes a theory of behavior, which he called “Theory of action”. This theory applies to organizations or individuals. The theory of action consists of “espoused theory” and “theory-in-use” (Argyris, 1996). By “espoused theory” it is meant the theory of action which is advanced to explain or justify a given pattern of activity. By “theory-in-use” Argyris (1996) implies the theory of action which is implicit in the performance of that pattern of activity. In short the theory we say or use to justify our action, is not necessarily the same theory that’s being used. An organization or individual can be aware of this discrepancy or it can be unconscious. The point is that there is a mismatch between what one says and what one does (ibid.). With the concept of “theory-in-use”, being the theory that is being used in the behavior and not necessarily the theory that is being expressed (ibid.). As Schein (1985) pointed out above, this can even be unconscious from the expresser(s). In short, it means that there is or can be a gap between what we say we mean, or what expresses as reasons for our behavior, than we in fact do. An illustration of “espoused theory” and “theory-in-use” can be the following fictive episode. George says (“espoused theory”) women and men can do the same job. But when the light bulb needed to be changed he pushed Dolly aside, because this is a man’s job (“theory-in-use”). In this example George says one thing (women and men can do the same job) but his action (he pushes the woman away since he is man) is different. The “theory-in-use” is not a given, in that since it is not always in plain sight what theory is in use at a given action (ibid.). It must be carefully deducted from observation of action and from the pattern of action in questions (ibid.).

I will in the following focus on some of the core disciplines that Senge (1991) has linked to the concept of a learning organization.

Core disciplines linked to concept of the learning organization

These are personal coping/mastering, mental models, learning in groups and teams, a mutual vision and a system focus (Senge, 1991). Reason (1997) argues also for a flexible culture, the organizations need to adapt to change. This means that the culture cannot be to set in its ways and locked. The employees need to have an open relationship where exchange of knowledge and working against the same goals is emphasized.

Personal mastering

One of the central concepts in the field learning psychology is self-efficacy, or subjective mastering/coping. The theories on this subject arose from the learning psychologist

Albert Bandura from Stanford University in the USA, who is a central contributor to the development of social cognitive psychology (Haggbloom, Warnick, & Warnick, 2002).

Self-efficacy, or subjective mastering/coping, can be defined as an individual's self perception of their own ability to present and exercise influence over what impacts their lives (Bandura, 1994). Mastering is a decisive state to have and helps them to a great degree in how they feel, think, and motivate themselves and how they act. People with high subjective coping and mastering see themselves as being competent, setting high goals for themselves and taking on tasks that are challenging. Highly subjective mastering reduces stress and vulnerability of depression. People with low subjective mastering, doubt their own ability, and therefore avoid difficult and challenging tasks. They look at every challenge as a threat and therefore have a low commitment and involvement. Moreover, low subjective mastering can lead to a higher stress level (ibid.).

Research shows us that subjective degree of mastering has a big impact for the learning and how one achieves (Kaufmann & Kaufmann, 2005). It is important that leaders make room so that the co-worker can have the opportunity to unfold, regulate his own learning without too much interference and guidance (Kaufmann & Kaufmann, 2005).

Bandura (1994) points out several sources to regulate one's own learning, and by doing so strengthening and increasing the subjective perception of mastering; past successes build up one's own self image as mastering the situation. Simultaneously as one develops these experiences, one develops robustness and a hardiness, which makes the person take on bigger challenges in the future (ibid.). Social modeling, or observing other people and comparing their success to one's own, can also influence and strengthen this subjective mastering (ibid.). Bandura (1994) mentions also that social influence through positive feedback can strengthen this subjective mastering, but also planning, adjusting and accommodating the tasks so the individuals competence contributes to one's own self-perception of success (ibid.).

Mental models

The members of an organization often have different ways to see and interpret the world around them and they have different mental models (Senge, 1991). Mental models are subjective and simplify ways of how to look at problems and understand the world around them (Kaufmann & Kaufmann, 2005). These mental models are a link to how we think and our mindset, as well as how we act and how we process the information we gather from our surroundings. Some examples of mental models can be generalization, assumption, idea or conception, images, and histories (Senge, 1991). A lack of a common understanding of how the work is and how to interpret it can be the source of conflicts when individuals and

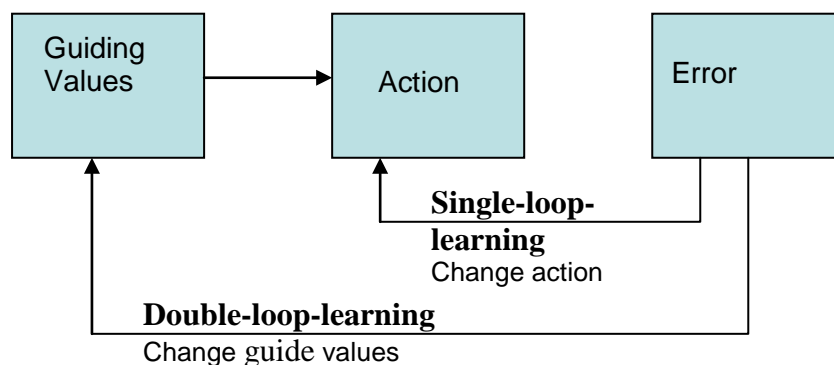
organizations are trying to communicate and solve problems (ibid.). The degree of awareness of our own concept and understanding of the world around us and how we act and how we are dealing with other people is important when it comes to us being able to learn (ibid.).

The goals of a learning organization are to develop a common mental model of how to think, act and understand the reality surrounding the organization (Kaufmann & Kaufmann, 2005).

Argyris and Schön (1998) have developed a theory of organizational learning. This consists of elements starting with the individual and personal insight up to the organizational insight into their theory-in-use (ibid.). They describe types of learning that occur in the organization and give us a recommendation of how to achieve this. Argyris and Schön (1998) present the type of learning that occurs in the organization in two models. As mentioned earlier, their models are called single and double-loop-learning. I will now give a short description of what these models imply.

Single-loop-learning is about adjusting behavior or routines mainly by identifying mistakes and errors (Argyris, 1996). The purpose is not to test out basic trust and reasons underlying the problem or lack of solutions. Argyris (1996) states, that we just become better and better at what we are doing without digging deeper in the underlying factors. So they do not question why the behavior needed to be corrected. This hinders the optimization of the result of the learning circle and that the defenses of change are still standing strong.

Double-loop-learning is the optimal learning style for organizations. Here the fundamental trusts and underlying perceptions, norms and goals are questioned (ibid.). It is a laborious process where the focus is on identifying the problem, reducing the organizational defenses (this should not be mixed with safety defenses), participation, engagement and openness. The goal being, to promote and encourage learning by developing a new organizational set of norms, values, and a focus on efficiency (ibid.).



Model I: Single and double-loop learning (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2002, p. 335)

Organizational Learning: Challenging Theories of Action.

Essential in all theories on safety cultures is organizational learning. Therefore a learning culture needs to be established (Reason, 1997).

According to Argyris and Schön (1998), the success of an organization depends on the ability to see things in new ways, gain new understandings, and adopt new patterns of behavior. These things must happen continuously and engage the whole organization. In defining and studying the term organizational learning, these authors try to look at both the behavioral world in the organization, and the individual theories of action that reinforce and are reinforced by it. The individual practitioner is seen as a crucial element, but the interaction between individual and organizational learning is complex. The framework of Argyris and Schön (1998) can be read to deal with cognitive and cultural learning modes as conditions for behavioral changes. Their focus is on the individual, group, and organizational levels, especially on how individual and interpersonal processes underlie organizational behavior (Argyris & Schön, 1998).

Argyris and Schön broadly define learning as the acquisition, by any means, of understanding, knowledge, techniques, or practices of any kind (Argyris & Schön, 1998). It is not good or bad in itself. For learning to be of use, it should lead to improvements in the way an organization fulfils its tasks. Instrumental learning occurs when an agent deliberately tries to improve organizational performance by thinking and acting, and when the action that leads to the improvement can be identified.

The concepts of single and double-loop learning have become widely accepted as useful perspectives in the way organizations learn, or learn effectively. Single-loop learning occurs when strategies of actions are altered, but the values of a theory of action remain the same. Theories of action are the conceptions that are held about the situation one is in, what consequences are seen as desirable to obtain in that situation, and what action strategies are seen as necessary to produce those consequences. Theories of action can be either espoused or tacit theories-in-use. These two need not be the same. It is quite possible for an organization to present one theory as being what they act upon, and at the same time actually act according to a different, tacit theory. Instrumental theories-in-use may be norms for corporate behavior, strategies for achieving values and assumptions that bind strategies and

values together. As we shall see in the discussion of organizational defenses, theories-in-use may remain tacit because they are indescribable or seen as indiscussable.

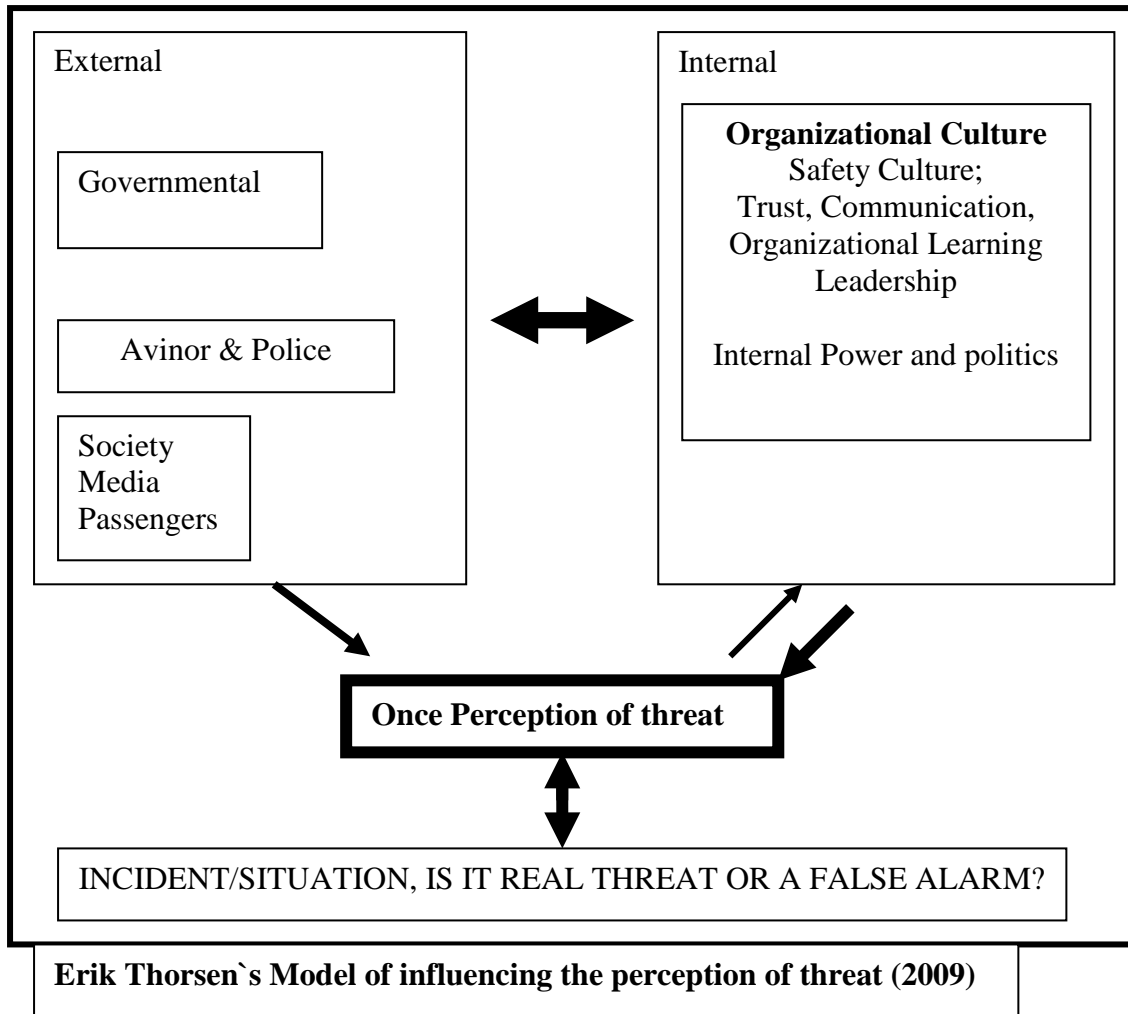
Double-loop learning is learning that results in a change in the values of a theory-in-use, as well as in strategies and assumptions. Argyris and Schön maintain that this type of learning is necessary because it allows individuals or organizations to critically examine whether the values and norms that govern their theory-in-use are desirable. If organizations are acting on theories-in-use that are on a colliding course with important factors in their environment, ability for double-loop learning can secure that this is detected and amended.

Learning in groups and teams

Small groups and teams are the cornerstones of organizational behavior (Harris, 2002). Teams and groups can develop mutual goals and thereby working toward these common goals (ibid.). These collective ambitions will be followed by the members trusting in one another and thereby completing the individuals' strengths and weaknesses in an optimal way. This will insure that it becomes a win-win environment, where everybody works for the good and in so doing insures that the individual, the group and the organization receives optimal conditions and learning (Senge, 1991). One of the signs of an effective group is one that has received a high degree of commitment and ownership from the individual member (Goodall, 1990). Ownership in the group does not necessarily contribute to the organization; it is just as important that the team feels ownership and commitment to the organization (Cannon-Bowers, Tannenbaum, Salas & Volpe, 1995).

An individual that feels a fellowship and sense of belonging to an organization or group can, through communication, develop common mental models (MacShane & Von Glinow, 2005). How one communicates internally in the organization is the key (ibid.). In a dialogue one communicates around one's own premises and assumptions (Senge, 1991).

I will now sum up this chapter, by showing how these theoretical contributions coexist and interact in my model. All of the theoretical contributions I have presented in the above chapter are focused in this focal point. I will now go in more detail on my model presented below. This model shows the interaction and the influence patterns I found in my study of this case organization. I chose to design this model in order to illustrate the findings in my study.



My model (above) illustrates an influence on the perception of threat at the individual level. My point of view is mostly an organizational psychology one, with strong influences from multi directional change management and risk management, and last but not least sociology.

By looking at the individual's perception we can say something about the way the individuals who were interviewed reflected on the subject. These are arguably few individuals in a relatively large organization, but the organization is made up of individuals and by looking closely we can more easily see the "cracks" and imperfections, which one does not normally see when one looks solely at the big picture. These individuals can in this way show us how the different factors influence them, so we can propose theories of how these factors could influence the organization as a whole.

The individual is influenced by situational, external, and internal factors. Situational factors relate to how the specific situation appears to the individual, who is involved, and how real is the likelihood of the threat being real "today"? In short, everything that is special about the given incident. External factors relate to factors outside the organization and the

individual control. Some of the factors can also be internal and situational depending on the specific incident. Governmental factors are clearly outside the organization and individual control. Avinor and the police are national as well as local, so they can be in both categories. Passengers are the largest group related to an airport, and it is from this outside group the potential for the most positive and negative effects on the organization comes from. The internal is the one I have focused on and gathered most of my data from. This is therefore my strongest category. The internal factors relate to the inner factors of the organization and all the way down to the individual. Here we find factors like culture, communication, trust, and organizational learning. This internal sphere is the foundation and the safety net for the individual. It is from this area that the individual is a part of something larger; a work group, a team, friends, co-workers, bosses, and the organization as a whole. Here we have the subcultures and more dominant and political groups, and so on. In the work situation, it is from here the support, education and training comes from.

The theoretical and methodology chapter has led up to this final main chapter, where the findings are presented and discussed in light of the above chapters before I discuss my conclusions and final comments. It is arguably here the most interesting “dance” (or interaction) of theory and data combine into findings that again provide insight into the phenomena being studied (Aase & Fossåskaret, 2007).

Data Analyses and discussion

This chapter outlines the data analysis and discussion section. In this chapter I present my findings and analysis in subchapters. Discussion in each chapter is added with a summary for each part. The organization is to ensure that each finding gets the attention it needs, and because the complexity of the findings can make it difficult to see the overall picture. I therefore found it best to make it less overwhelming by taking one category at a time, and not to jump back and forth and risk being lost in the complex and narrow and winding pathways of the internal structures and phenomena being studied.

The first apparent finding that surfaced was that the perception of threat was not an “easy and clear cut” phenomenon. In fact there arose a number of things that influenced and laid the foundation for this, and there seems to be a different perception in different situations.

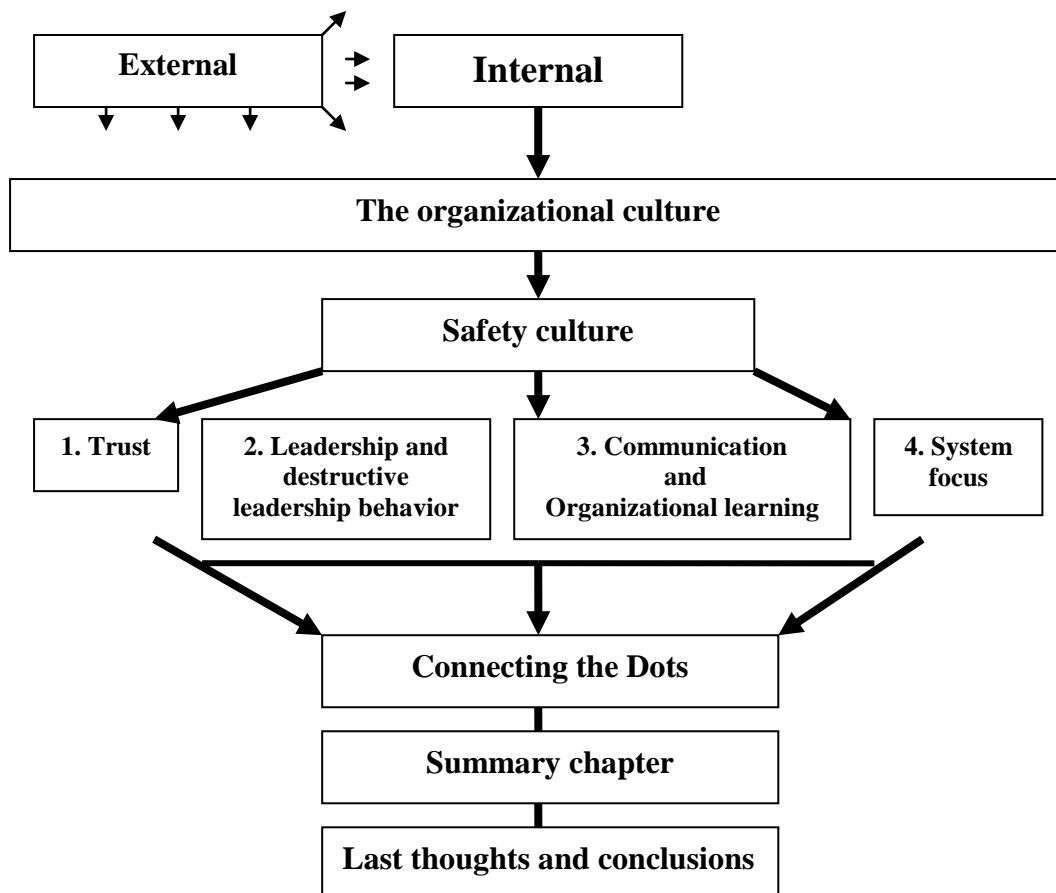
As pointed out in the introduction chapter, the threat and risk concerns do not just contain the terror threats, but organizational and infrastructure concerns as well. In other words, the threat does not just concern an attack per say, but the threat of not being able to perform adequately, being confident in one own skills and trust that one’s fellow workers and supervisors know what to do and can perform with adequate skill. It is imperative that the organization, with its infrastructure, training, resources, and focus lives up to its responsibility as a safety net for the individual guard.

The need to reduce and simplify is crucial not to be lost in details, but the essence and some crucial details are kept. I have created a model to summarize and to better provide an understanding of what I have found to exist in this field. The main dimensions I found can be divided into an internal and an external dimension. Internal is a wide definition; it contains individual factors and organizational factors that lay a foundation for the individual’s perception of threat in a given situation. This is shown in my model presented in the theory chapter and in Appendix A: The perception is also influenced by an incident or how a given situation is perceived. So, in other words, even if there is a higher or a lower level of general perception of threat, a given situation or incident can get a different action. So to clarify the perception of threat influenced by internal, external and situational factors, I have showed this in my model. As mentioned earlier, my main focus will be on the internal dimension and the external will just be looked at superficially. The external dimension needs more attention in the future and I came to the conclusion that I did not have sufficient data to do more than

point out areas of concern. The internal sphere is where the majority of findings arise from; the subjective perceptions of individuals in the case organization. It can therefore be regarded as natural that the focus will be in this area.

As the model shows (Appendix A) I will go into more details on the following: the first and smallest area of focus is the external, with the subareas; the passenger, media and other organizations at the airport. The second and most in-depth category is the internal sphere, with the following subcategory; organizational (the status quo of the organization as the leaders and management see it). Other aspects are: the organizational culture which consists of the safety culture, underlying trust, communication and organizational learning, and system focus. Figure 1 illustrates the relationship of these elements. After illustrating these, there is a chapter called connecting the dots, where I will show how all these factors influence one another, and what my findings indicate. Lastly, I will sum up the main findings and conclusions in the summary chapter before the final thoughts and conclusions.

Figure 1



This figure also illustrates the depths in my model, found in the theory chapter. The external is shown as sending out its signals, some random and some directed at the internal sphere. Under the internal sphere, the culture of the organization is found, with its layers and subareas, which interact. I have selected some key areas on which to focus, that are particularly important, but there are more areas that would be interesting to focus on in future studies. I will now move on to the external sphere.

External

My main focus is on the internal, but it is important to see this in relationship to the external. I therefore present some of the findings from this borderline area between these two. My findings are presented under the following:

The Passenger: A blessing and a curse.

Media: Working with or against the same goals?

With or against: Police, Avinor and other airport companies.

The Passenger – A blessing and a curse.

This is absolutely the largest group associated with airports and traveling. It is also therefore the largest representative factor for possible dangerous incidents. It is from this group that most attacks on airplanes outside war occur. Here we find the terrorists from 9/11 and the unstable loners like the axe man (described earlier in the introduction), the lone attacker who nearly succeeded in killing a pilot.

It is also this group that represents the main income and reason for having airports in the first place. It is mainly this group that the security measures are there to protect and keep safe.

In my study I have found that it is this field that most informants' examples and histories came from or were closely connected to this group. The reason why the perception of the passengers is both a **blessing and a curse** (as several of the informants called them), can be explained by the fact that it is the passenger they are working for. It is for them the guard has his job and purpose, and it is from them one receives probably the most threats, stress and real dangers. So in this study it is probably the most important external factor when looking at what influences the perception of threat. This category does not contain all aspects of the passengers' interactions. Some are under different categories, but this would also be interesting to look closer at.

I will now discuss the positive side of the passenger-guard interaction. It was a common perception that most passengers felt safe, that some even commented that they felt safe because the guards were there, and that they trusted and acknowledged the job they were doing.

There were even examples where passengers advocated strongly for the guards' job. An example of this can be the incident with a "misguided" pilot, who would not comply with the security rules and made a big scene in the security area. A lady passenger went up to him and looked him deep in the eyes and said loudly "I hope YOU are not the pilot of my plane!" This may indicate a passenger having a better acceptance and understanding of the safety rules than an airplane pilot. At least the pilot's behavior made the passenger so uncomfortable that the passenger clearly felt it necessary to make her opinion known to him. This episode where the passenger showed acceptance for the rules and empathy with the guard's job was perceived positively by the guards. It has become a history strengthening the safety culture and thereby reinforcing their values. This is in agreement with the theory of organizational culture mentioned in the theory chapter. (In Appendix G under media, there is a link to an article on pilot's frustration related to the security measures).

Most informants also stated that the contact with the passengers was one reason that they found the job interesting. "*Every day is different and can be full of surprises*", as one informant mentioned. As the instance above illustrated the interaction with the passengers can be perceived very positively.

I will now point out the possible **negative aspects of the interaction with the passengers**. Many of the informants stated that passengers nowadays did not seem to remember past attacks and dangers related to flying. One commented that the passengers were more scared of going past the security check point. "*Oh I hope I don't set the alarm off*", was a statement they typically heard every day. By some passengers not taking the rules seriously and accepting that everybody needs to be cleared, the informants felt that several times every day someone did not understand why they needed to be cleared the same way every other passenger did. The following statement came from several participants and can be an indication of a passenger tendency: "*Do I look like a terrorist?*" So their threat perception is more on being kept from entering the "lounge" than on recognizing that there is a collective attempt needed, where everybody is subjected to the same level of security. (For more examples from the media, please see Appendix Gunder media, where articles on passengers' statements can be found).

The passengers' behavior as a specific point was mentioned and highlighted by a majority of the respondents. Here their threat perception and lack of acknowledgement and trust in the job the guards were doing, reveals another side to the passenger that shows that this group consisted of many diverse opinions. The informants stated that the most common deficiency was lack of knowledge and ignorance on the part of the passengers (as mentioned earlier, Appendix G contains examples, media coverage and passengers' statements on this topic).

However, the bad behavior of the passenger could also vary, from drunk, angry–threats (psychic, mental), to emotional and unstable persons. In fact all informants mentioned that they perceived an unstable individual as the most likely threat to the security and wellbeing of themselves and the other passengers. I was even told of an example of a disturbed woman running past the security area with a big knife heading for the airplane; she wanted to travel and kill someone at the destination. I will go in more details on this incident under the media section.

Make threats against guards: Some of the informants (both men and women) came with examples of incident types that they perceived as serious threats that were made against their person or someone in the near vicinity. These threats came from passengers in the form of verbal threats, and were a source of great discomfort to the guard being attacked in this way. I will mention some of these verbal threats. One was expressed by a doctor “*If you are ever on my operating table, be afraid,*” the doctor said. This threat came from a person with a position of great status and trust in society, and people pay a great deal of respect to people in these positions. Another threat came from a normal but respectable passenger, whose last words to the guard were “*remember this face.*” This gave the person an uneasy feeling to say the least. The point is that the informants perceived the verbal threats as being a source of heightened threat against them as persons and citizens and not to their role as a guard. The informants stated that there was no type of follow-up or debriefing, after this disturbing incident. I will return to this under internal factors later on in this chapter.

The last finding under this **more negative side of the passengers'** part reveals a terrorist or person with dangerous intentions related to the airports and planes. This group was perceived as less than likely to happen at an airport in Norway by all the informants. But most of them agreed that this was one that needed to be taken very seriously if only to prevent someone thinking of this airport as a possible target. A majority of guards declared that prevention in the form of making potential terrorists see that it would be difficult to succeed here. But as over half of the informants pointed out, the threat to Madrid or Tokyo

before the train (The March 11, 2004 Madrid train bombings) and gas (1995 nerve gas attack on the Tokyo subways) attacks was also perceived as low. So even if the guards all perceived this (terrorist) threat as having the lowest likelihood of occurring at their airport, they still look at it as one of the main areas of focus.

But with the focus on the above mentioned areas, it can appear that the verbal threats made towards the guards themselves would have less priority. I will follow up on this topic later under the trust and destructive leadership. But first let us focus on what the last two areas under the external sphere include. I will start with the media, the source of information and the happenings in the world in which we all live.

The Media

Here the media plays a more indirect role in that they are the main or an important source of information to the public, what is happening abroad and inland and how it is portrayed. In short what risk perception do they send out? This is an important factor in everybody's risk perception that most of the informants agreed on.

Several of the respondents stated that they felt that the media was not neutral in portraying the airport security and the job they do. In fact they felt like they were always portrayed in a bad light. They related several examples which could have been formulated or portrayed in a more neutral way without losing the story, but where the media almost made a joke of their jobs and what they do (in Appendix G under media, articles on airport security and people's opinions can be found). One informant stated the following:

It is strange that we only get media coverage when there is something to put us in a bad light, like an episode with a boy with a knife that passed us. And when we do our job and stop the man with the knife, you read that someone missed their flight, because of just a little knife. We don't get credit when we succeed like we stopped a crazed woman with a huge knife that she was going to take on a plane and travel to kill someone. We stopped her; it would be nice to hear 'good job' or at least an acknowledgment that we had something to do with it

This quotation can be seen as a confirmation that acknowledgement or positive feedback is important for humans, as mentioned in the theory chapter. The guards felt misinterpreted and misunderstood by the media. They received bad attention and felt they were not given positive attention for the (important) job they are doing every single day. The above mentioned statement can be interpreted as a lack of positive acknowledgement and good dialog with the media.

The findings from this area as a whole may be seen as a strong indication that the media in fact is a significant part related to the passengers' threat and risk perception, and also related to the media's impact on the security guards themselves. I will not elaborate more on this, even though it may be seen as an important source of influence. My focus is on the factors directly related to the airport and the organization that is the subject of this case. I will next look at factors at the airport.

Other airport organizations

Working for the same goals? Police, Avinor, and other airport companies.

The airport police have their main task revolving around passport control and immigration related issues. They are the ones who take command in incidents involving life and death, for example fire emergencies and other evacuation situations. They interact with the security firm when their presence is needed. An example where the police and the security guards interact can be with drunk and difficult passengers or unattended luggage. It is in these situations that the police evaluate the situation and have the mandate to implement the proper procedure or procedures. It is the police who make the decision if unattended luggage presents a significant enough threat to call in the bomb experts. Overall they carry out normal police work at the airport.

The interaction with the case organization is related to situations when the mandate of the security firm is not adequate and there is a need for a higher authority. These situations consist mainly of handling difficult passengers, interrogating individuals that have expressed threats (for example, mentioning a bomb), and as mentioned above they evaluate unattended luggage that the security guards have reported. In evacuations and similar situations the security guards are the ones who usher the passengers out of the airport, and the police supervise the situation as a whole. They also represent the authorities, but the side that is directly related to the airport management.

Avinor is a government owned company with the mandate to oversee and manage airports in Norway. Some of the tasks involving operation of the airport are given to private companies and contractors, such as security and buildings maintenance. One of these areas is airport security; this is the case organization's product. Avinor insures that the organization delivers a high standard of security; and does this by testing them regularly and by demanding that the organization train and certify their own employees. All this is done to insure that the quality of security is of the highest standard. Next I will clarify the interaction of these two and the other groups represented at an airport.

At an airport there are several groups working side by side and sometimes together.

These groups are the police, Avinor, and other air companies and their employees. A final group that I can mention is work firms that are there to do smaller jobs. These are seen as the most likely threat since they are there for shorter periods and with less security clearance. But I will focus mostly on the other groups, since they are always present and because all informants talked about them influencing their everyday life at the airport.

I would like to start by outlining other companies and their employees at the airport and discuss how they fit into this matrix of perception of threat. Two informants said that they felt like the other employees at the airport have little or no understanding for the job they are doing, and they feel like they are not respected at all. There are other views on this. One informant stated “*It depends on how they are handled and treated, they do understand but need acknowledgment and trust too, like us*” (they also need acknowledgement and trust like we, the security guards). This informant stated that people skills are an underestimated skill in the training of guards and guard-supervisors. I will come back to this under internal factors later on in this chapter.

Team with other groups – police. Almost all the informants reported that they had a good team experience with the police at the airport, especially in regard to handling difficult passengers. At this point all informants agreed. They all had experienced the police as always taking their side and supporting them in situations with difficult passengers and in alarm situations. Another side to the experience with the police was incidents with unattended luggage or bags. Here several of the informants stated that the police seemed to have a different threat perception than the guards. A majority of the informants stated that there were clear instructions on what to do when encountering unattended or suspicious luggage. But when they contacted the police they seemed not to take this at the same level of urgency as the informants. This was expressed in the way that the police seemed to take their time coming when contacted and also how they handled it when they arrived. Some of the informants stated that they, because of previous experience with the police on this type of incident, did not hurry to contact them anymore, but instead waited to see if the situation resolved itself. Some said that they had waited for up to an hour before reporting it to the police. The informant resonated that if the police do not have a higher threat perception, why should ‘I’? “*They have a higher degree in training and information on threats against us*”, one pointed out.

Avinor (as mentioned earlier) is the company that owns and maintains the airport. A majority of the informants reported that they perceived Avinor personnel as having a good attitude and performing as role models in that they, although important stakeholders, also

volunteered for the security clearance and did it with a smile. By doing this they set the standard for all others. One respondent stated that if this group did not do it like this; they would undermine the whole point that the other organizations should do it, so he was glad that they recognized and took this role seriously. But there were some areas that several of the respondents pointed as being lacking (this was mostly topics related to HSE).

One area of deficiency that most of the informants pointed out was infrastructure; buildings and health safety and environment issues related to this. For example, complaints about noise level, a high number of back and leg problems due to standing for long periods of time, just to mention some of the complaints put forth by the respondents. Another area reported by the respondents was safety drills. The majority of the informants could not remember taking part in an organized fire drill or heard of one being held. *“We have training in theory, on courses, but never an organized drill, held by Avinor”*. Some of the informants came with direct criticism to what they perceived as an unequal focus on some areas. One informant confirmed the above mentioned critique by stating: *“They put a lot into testing us in our security job by testing and drilling us every day, but never have I heard of an organized fire drill being held”*. Another respondent said that they were very good at what they prioritized, but they failed to see the whole picture, in that fire drills were not present. This may indicate that some friction exists in the borderlines between these two organizations.

As I have showed the external sphere interacts with the case organization and the individual members of this organization. Their perception can therefore have the possibility of being influenced, to some degree, from this sphere. I will look more on this under the ‘connecting the dots’ topic later on in this thesis. My next topic is the internal. It is here my focus has been the strongest in the theory chapter and in the data that has been gathered, and for this reason, it is also my biggest in-depth area.

Internal

In this category there are a wider variety of under categories than external, since internal here is internal in a very wide sense. With this it is meant that personal and organizational factors are organized here. This is because there are findings that relate to internal factors in the individual person and there are factors internal in the organization. They are under the same main category because they seem to have a significant impact on

one another and make together the foundation for how the individual handles and perceives stimuli from the external sphere.

The organization and fellow coworkers are the safety net of the individual, and the individual is what the organization is made up of, so this is a circular coexistence.

I will now go into what emerged from the internal sphere. I found a complex area that needed to be divided into several sub areas to better see the individual part, and thereby be able to see what that part contributes to the study at hand. I have divided the internal sphere into an opening, where the organizational and the status quo of the organization are presented, and a main part where the organizational culture and the sub chapter safety culture are presented. This last chapter has the following sub topics: trust, communication and organizational learning and system focus. The first in line is the organizational and the status quo of the organization, where some of the findings from the leaders and the management level personnel, in the case organization are presented. This to show the answer that is unique to this level of the leadership in the case organization. This is interesting because the leaders and the subordinates have their own roles to play, where the leaders have a larger overview and a management perspective, and the subordinates have a more hands-on and a practical perspective.

Organizational

The respondents from the guard-supervisor, coordinators and top management are here put in to one big group to ensure anonymity. It can be argued that this should be split in to the respective levels, but my argument is that this does not necessarily give us a new dimension or other findings. The data from the different informants is there, so no information should go lost, and also because the informants from lower levels often referred to this different level as just management or leaders. I am therefore confident that the findings will be sufficient to give a good answer to the research questions being asked.

I had some general questions for these leaders. The questions included for example, how do the informants from the leader levels perceive the organizational state/health, what are their thoughts on the high turnover and are there some important competences that may be lost. These questions are relevant in that they provide insight into their perception that the leaders of the organization have to uphold the status quo as well as some of their opinions about turnover and the consequences this can have. This is also directly relevant to the perception of threats, in that they give us some of the dangers that can weaken the organization ability to act sufficiently.

The status quo of the organization:

How do leaders, at different levels in the organization perceive the organization? From all the informants in this group there was an understanding that an **organization is a work in progress**. With that, they meant that it is never a complete and finished job. There always are areas that can be improved and so on. They all stated that there had been significant work done on improving the overall organizational functions over several years and that they meant that they had come a long way in many areas. But as one stated “*things take time, we do it step by step, but we are getting there*”. This summed up the views from most of the group, that they had a job to do, but that they had a plan or a vision of where they were going. There were also several examples from some of the informants, to show that this was more than empty words. One of the concrete examples was splitting the responsibilities of the guard-supervisors in two, thus creating the coordinator position, and with that handling the daily workload became better. A second example was getting three persons in contrast to just one in the past doing the management and administrative jobs. A third example was the information system. Here one of the informants stated that “the information system was getting better, but it is still almost non-functioning, it is better with the coordinator position. Here information is best spread”. My next question was: what is the status quo, how is the situation today?

The first topic that arose was **high turnover**. First, here is some general relevant information about this area. The organization has a forum where these areas and other important topics are addressed. This forum is held at least once a month. This seems to indicate that these areas have a great deal of attention from the organization and management level. When the topic of **high turnover** arose, there was a difference of opinion in the group of informants. Some looked at it as a natural occurring which one could do little about. Another stated “*the only thing you could do, is in the hiring process*”. Another stated that they had a good team spirit in the organization, even with the high turnover. But they all agreed that the turnover was high and that there was a loss of knowledge and know-how, which was hard to replace. It was also costly in that a guard was now more expensive to train and vastly more expensive than a normal security guard. Two of the informants mentioned there was money to be made by getting better at keeping good employees, but that the security industry had an old culture of high turnover and that this mindset was hard to do something about. One respondent stated that it was normal though that high turnover was good for business in that you had young students with low salary expenses. The same respondent said, “*The problem is that now we need people with experience and know-how,*

and they are now expensive to train and hard to get, so it is no longer true for the airport security anyway“.

People Knowledge

The area of people knowledge arose from the statements above. Here the focus was on the knowledge about how to treat people; passengers, colleagues and other airport employees. One informant implied that this knowledge strongly influenced whether a situation was handled in a good or bad way, in that the situation escalated more than it needed to.

The responses or more precisely the expressed opinion from the informants above, may be seen as a strong indication that there is a high degree of reflection, attention and effort put into addressing the challenges that the organization faces. Now I have shown some of the leaders' and managements' expressed thoughts, reflections and wishes; they are, like the subordinates, all part of the culture in the organization. This is my next topic.

The Organizational Culture

Schein (1985) states that:

...we usually note that they represent accurately only the manifest or espoused values of a culture. That is, they focus on what people say is the reason for their behavior, what they ideally would like those reasons to be, and what are often their rationalizations for their behavior. Yet, their underlying reasons for their behavior remain concealed or unconscious. To really understand a culture and to ascertain more completely the groups' values and overt behavior, it is imperative to delve into the underlying assumptions, which are typically unconscious but which actually determine how group members perceive, think, and feel (Schein, 1985, p. 3).

How is the organizational culture in this organization characterized? Is it a climate of openness? How is the individual and organizational learning possible in this environment? These are important questions that need to be answered. As mentioned in the theory chapter, culture is a complex and not easily accessible phenomena. To get a significant enough amount of data to say and explain the organization's culture is an enormous task; with it layer upon layer of visible and non visible factors, a number of subcultures and so on. Even though I had some insight into the knowledge and understanding of the organization and some of its

cultures and subcultures, I found that I needed more data and a longer period of study to do this area justice. I will in the following show my findings, but it may be necessary to point out that I will only look at some aspects of the culture that are present and some areas that influence the phenomena I try to answer. Furthermore, I can only look at those areas that my data set has the possibility to provide answers for (as I will also point out in the conclusion and recommendations for future studies, this is one of the areas that needs to be studied more).

My findings consist of important parts in the organizational sphere, and give us a good idea of how well the culture is doing in terms of helping or hindering the individuals to interact and do their jobs and how it supports or weakens the foundations and support/safety net for its members.

The main category is **safety culture**; this consists of **trust**, communication and **organizational learning**, and **system focus** which will be explained below.

Safety Culture

As mentioned earlier Reason (1997) states:

The safety culture of an organization is the product of individual and group values, attitudes, competencies, and patterns of behavior **that determine the commitment** to, and the style and proficiency of, an organization's health and safety programs. Organizations with a positive safety culture are characterized by communications founded on **mutual trust**, by shared **perceptions** of the importance of safety, and by confidence in the efficacy of preventive measures (Reason, 1997, p. 194).

Out of this statement I find that an atmosphere based on trust, mutual respect, open-communication, shared perception of goals and organizational learning is important.

My findings have found support for this as the following categories rose to the surface: trust, communication and organizational learning, and system focus. Where the category of trust contains some answers to some of the areas that Reason (1997) pointed out in his statement; these are individual and group values, competencies, patterns of behavior, commitment, trust, communication, and shared perception. In the following I will go into more details on the topic of trust. I have divided trust into several subcategories; these are: integrity, competence, consistency, loyalty and openness (Kaufmann & Kaufmann, 2003). But I will first start with trust.

Trust

As noted earlier, trust is an important factor that lays the foundation and plays a part in many areas concerning interaction both between individuals, groups and the organization as a whole (also between organizations, but I will not go deeper in this in this paper). As mentioned earlier, trust is a fragile element that consists of multiple facets and is influenced in many ways. So the data I collected seemed to concur with the five elements that Kaufmann & Kaufmann (2003) presented in their “trust-lock” model. This model showed that trust consists of the five core elements: integrity, competence, consistency, loyalty and openness. I found in my data that some of these overlap and I have therefore combined some of the elements under the same category. I will in each category present the findings and conduct a short analysis, and at the end I will discuss in greater detail the findings and what their implications might be in a summation category, **communication and organizational learning.**

Competence

Competence, expertise and knowledge are important elements in trust. They have to do with a person’s professional and interpersonal knowledge. Does the person know what he is talking about or is there a fault or gap in the knowledge? If this is the case the trust-relationship will fail. This means that if people do not have a competence-trust in someone, they will not trust that he can deliver or follow up on agreements, or they might worry that he will do something totally different and wrong (Kaufmann & Kaufmann, 2003). I found that this competence-trust also had two subcategories (empowerment and acknowledgement); this relates to how trust or distrust in the competence of their employees or the leaders is expressed. It gives us a good indication of how the trust or lack thereof relates to competence. This can be illustrated by the following questions: Do the leaders have faith and trust that the employees can do their job? Do the employees trust in the competence of their leaders, do they give them workspace?

Several of the informants stated that they felt a lack of trust in their ability to do their jobs. This was due to the fact that the leaders often overburdened their judgment. Another point was the lack of consistency on the part of the leaders’ behavior (consistency will be deepened later in this thesis). The same informants stated that this feedback resulted in them not trusting in themselves, and that they did not make their own conclusions, but always needed someone else’s approval. Some of the informants with a longer work experience stated that it was very annoying and hindered them in doing their jobs, when they needed to constantly make conclusions on behalf of others, since they did not trust in themselves and

their abilities. *“They are so scared of making mistakes that they are passive and almost not doing anything at all”* the informant stated.

Several of the informants reported that they did not trust in the leaders’ ability to have an “over trying role;” they argued that the lack of consistency was a confirmation of this (more about this under consistencies).

Empowerment and acknowledgement emerged as topics when interviewing the management and leadership levels of the case organization. This was a general tendency among the leaders I interviewed, *“We wish to motivate our employees better”*. There was an acknowledgment of what they state as a fact that the organization was “a work in progress.” Several of them pointed out that they had come a long way, but it was a slow process *“is on its way”*. Most of them agreed that it is very important to have an exchange of knowledge. Some stated that it was through the instructions that this could best be done. *“We have made instructional schemas for every position, and all feedback about this is taken into consideration, and if updating needs to be done it’s done”*. The instructional schemas are an example for the leaders’ efforts and acknowledgment of the employees’ feedback in that they were open for this; at least they would consider the feedback they got. There appears to be a genuine effort to improve organizational areas. There were some informants from this level that uttered comments in different situations during my observations, which could be seen as an indication that the leaders did not trust in their subordinates’ competence. *“If we had more resources and people we could take out some of these guards and pare them up with a trainer, then they could drill all day on ‘follow-up-checks’”*. Another commented *“You need to watch them all the time, see that they are doing their jobs properly, they need to be focused”*. *“Some can be too sloppy; those you need to keep an eye one”* another stated. These findings can be seen as an indication of leaders being concerned and wishing to stimulate and guide their subordinates to do a good job, but it can also be seen as an indication of a lack of trust in the subordinates’ skills and competence. If it is the first or the second one, or even a third variance, the subordinates’ perception of their leaders’ motives is what can impact the response and the overall attitudes between these two groups. As I have shown in the theory chapter the *perception* of a situation may be the best predictor of action and attitudes. I will in the following show how the subordinates responded when these topics were pushed forth.

Most of the informants from the guard level stated that they could not remember receiving words of encouragement, but they all stated that if they did something wrong or not good enough they received negative feedback or were called into the office for a reprimand. *“I can pass the test and do a good job for weeks on end, but I never hear a positive “good*

job”, but if I fail once they point out my lack of competence at once; “bad job, you need more training” one of the informants mentioned. Another stated “*The only feedback I get on my job is when I fail or they disagree with my conclusions*”. Some of the others also pointed out this lack of positive feedback and acknowledgment. This can indicate that the leaders’ focus is not on the system but on the individual, as I showed in the theory chapter (safety culture and system focus). It can also be seen as a strong indication that there is lack of trust, or lack of expressed trust from the leader to the subordinates concerning the subordinates’ work related skills. A third area this may indicate is a closed communication style, where the participants do not test out their assumptions and perceptions. Argyris and Schön (1978, 1998) call this model I theory-of-action. This area will be elaborated on later in this thesis. This may be interpreted as an indication of destructive leadership, but I will go into this later.

The perceived lack of acknowledgement that several of the subordinate informants reported, may indicate that there may be a mismatch related to the leadership statement about the support and acknowledgement of their subordinates. Some of the respondents stated that there was not adequate focus on bringing the employees with long work experience up-to-date on the courses and education that the new employees got. These informants continued to say that this made them feel less important to the organization, and that they did not have the same up to date knowledge that their newer co-worker had. Other informants reported that they perceived that there was less or little focus on their personal safety; this was in HSE areas, but also interaction with difficult passengers and work positions where the guards were alone and far from support. The examples mentioned earlier with a doctor threatening a guard personally or the example “*remember this face*” can also be seen as examples for this. In both verbally threatening situations the guards were not offered debriefing or support. A majority of the informants expressed strong wishes for more acknowledgement and more possibilities for heightening their skills and knowledge through more interaction and contact with other airports (knowledge exchange). This last area is related to the competence area in that the informants reported that the lack of follow-up by the leaders and management was due to lack of competence and understanding of the ‘job’ and the needs of the workers. This lack of trust in the leadership level can be seen as a response or a ‘safety event’ to the subordinates perceiving that the leaders have a lack of trust in their work skills.

One of the informants stated “*A passenger threatened me; the guard supervisor said it wasn’t nice, but let the passenger continue on.*” The informant used this as an example to show what the informant perceived as a lack of competence on how to handle such situations. There were other informants who reported that they have had similar experiences where they

perceived the leaders lacking the competence and skills to handle the situation adequately. All of the above findings can be seen as a strong indication that there is a significant lack of trust in competence, both by leaders down in the organization and from the subordinates and up. In my next subcategory I will discuss trust related to openness and integrity as explained in the theory chapter.

Openness and Integrity

In this category my findings overlapped to such a degree that it became natural to just combine them into one category. **Openness** refers to if we can trust that people tell the truth and the whole story and do not hold anything important back (Kaufmann & Kaufmann, 2003). **Integrity** reflects the degree of coherence there is between what a person says and what he in fact does. In this model it plays a crucial part in how we judge one another: honestly and credibility (ibid.). Argyris and Schön (1998) contribute strongly here; they state that openness in testing the theory-in-use in oneself and others we can test for discrepancies between what we say and what we in reality do. This they say is the foundation for achieving the optimal type of individual and organizational learning, (this will be deepened later, under the category of communication and organizational learning).

Some of the leaders and managers stated that they valued the fact that they treated everyone the same. One said *“we report employees when they break the rules, but we also report ourselves if we see that we have been at fault”*. Here we see an outspoken value from the leader group. Is this based on integrity and openness or is there a mismatch between what they say and what they do? Argyris and Schön’s (1998) contribution is relevant here, in that we cannot say anything about the reasons and motives for why people do as they do. We can just see the consequences, and this can be quite different than those they intended to send.

There were some critiques toward the supervisors; some were even quite harsh in their statements. Some stated that there was a huge mismatch between the strict treatment of the employees and how they acted themselves. *“They do what they please when they are in charge”*. *“They lack consistency– it varies how rules are followed, and how instructions are followed; it depends on who is the guard- supervisor at a given time”*. The informant went on to state; *“there seems to be little knowledge exchange between those who are set to supervise us, and little consequences when they make mistakes”*. One balanced the statement saying *“Too many employees and guard -supervisors make their own rules.”* This may indicate that it is not just one group that is doing this, ‘bending’ of rules. The harshest statement was about the support of the team when incidents occurred. *“The guard-supervisors are supposed to be our safety net in that they oversee what is going on in the security area, but if a situation*

occurs with a difficult passenger, they suddenly disappear into the office or go do something 'important'. If this is the case, there seems to be a dramatic mismatch between the intention and what occurs in the everyday situation. The above findings can be strong indications of a lack of trust related to openness and integrity. And as I will now show, it is not just a subordinate or a leadership level phenomena, it seems to be found in both levels. The following statement may be an indication of this. One informant stated that there were several areas that needed the management's attention "*The N need to come down there and see for N self!*" I then probed a bit and tried to find out if the person had in some way reported this or shared this with the management, given this information and given feedback on it. The informants reply was "*No, I have not given them any such information*"..."*it is obvious and they of course know...*" This reply was in essence how several of the informants replied to this question. This can be an indication that the lack of openness and integrity is not just a phenomena found in the management and leader level, but is also a guard phenomena. In other words it seems to be a phenomenon occurring both on the horizontal guard and leader level and the vertical level. This may be seen as a strong indication that model I, explained earlier in the theory chapter, is the dominant theory-in-use on all levels of the organization and not just on the leader and management level. My next subcategory under trust is about trust and consistency.

Consistency

This category is about consistency, consistent together with consequence in action. It means if a person is consistent from one situation to another. Can we trust that a person will behave a certain way or mean a certain thing, or is it up to chance what that the person says and does at a given time? It is important that we can trust and know where we stand and what we can expect from ourselves and others (Kaufmann & Kaufmann, 2003). To create trust requires a great deal of commitment, but action speaks often louder than words; here it is important that the theory in use is consistent with what we say and do (Argyris & Schön, 1978). Several of my findings showed an overlap between the above categories and this one, in that the responses related to some or all of these subcategories simultaneously. One of the difficulties was related to where to place the findings; was it a lack of consistency, a lack of integrity or was it the result of a lack of openness or maybe a mixture of these? These were issues that needed to be addressed. This is something I will tackle in more detail in '**connecting the dots**', but the category needs to stand apart from the above in that the findings were strong and important in their own right.

Here, as for the category above, the leaders and management were quite in unison about the importance of being consistent in their management of employees and rules and regulations. One stated *“I try to be an example, so if I am at fault I report myself also”*. This can be seen as a strong indication that the leader and management level wishes to be consistent. In my observation I did not find any indications that this was not the case, but as pointed out in the methodology chapter, my presence could have contaminated and influenced the daily behavior to some degree. The fact that the observation situation is just a snapshot of the situation may therefore indicate that it does not show the whole picture. My point is that I did not find any direct data that contradicts the statements and expressed opinions from the leadership level, until I looked in the subordinate level. Here I found some indications that there might be a difference in espoused-theory-of-action and the theory-in-use, as explained in the theory chapter.

I will in the following show **the lower levels response** to this same area. Several responses from the subordinates stated that there are many good leaders and most situations are consistent with rules and regulations. But they also stated that this was not always the case. In fact almost all these informants stated that there were several situations where they observed a lack of consistency from supervisors. This consisted of variance on how rules were followed, and how instructions were followed. Two informants stated that some did this as a “power” statement, and they gave me an illustration by giving me this reenacting statement: (the following was according to them a statement made by a leader) *“Is it me or you that is the guard –supervisor? I am in charge and I say what goes and what does not”*.

Some of the informants mentioned that there were some differences in the team at work; some did a good job, with good support from the leaders, but several of them also recalled incidents with difficult passengers where the support of the leaders were lacking. *“The guard-supervisors are supposed to be our safety net, but when difficult passengers make a stand, they run and hide and you are left there to fend for yourself.”*

These findings can be an indication that the leaders and management are not always as consistent as they wish they would be. But as I will now show there seems to be not only inconsistencies in the interaction between the different levels but in other areas too, as my next findings may be seen as an indication of. Several of the informants from both the subordinate and the leadership levels pointed out that there is a strict focus on some safety areas and rules, but that there were other areas that were lacking this focus.

We can evacuate the airport in minutes if there is a passenger that's un-cleared; everything is clean cut and easy for us, but there is little focus on HSE (Health, Safety and Environment – HMS in Norwegian). There are glass windows looking into the security area so you can never relax; we stand and walk everywhere. It hurts our backs, there is not any good focus on fire drilling, I could go on...

This statement may be seen as a strong indication that there appears to be an inconsistency in the organization and airport infrastructure as well as in the internal safety routines of the airport. I will look more into this in the main in-depth section later on in this thesis. My next and last subcategory under trust is trust and loyalty.

Loyalty

Loyalty is the willingness a person has to stand up for a person or organization. Loyalty here refers to the fact that we can trust each other to be there for us, do the “right thing” and not act opportunistic in relation to those one is supposed to be loyal to (Kaufmann & Kaufmann, 2003). Here the findings on loyalty point more to the support (or lack of) that is received when situations with difficult (and possible dangerous) passengers occur.

Some informants reported that they experienced behavior they perceived as disloyal acts from their supervisors. Some of these incidents were related to interaction with difficult passengers. *“When a difficult passenger appears, you are suddenly alone; the guard-managers are suddenly off doing something very important”*. Another stated that: *“A passenger was very scary and he threatened me, it shook me up and I am not easily scared, but the guard supervisor said to the passenger “that wasn’t a nice thing to say”, but let the passenger continue on. I felt that there was no loyalty at all”*. These quotations can be seen as a strong indication that there is a lack of trust related to loyalty, from the subordinates toward some in the levels above. But as I now will show this is not the only area that appeared to experience a lack of trust-loyalty. Several of the informants perceived a lack of loyalty not just from their leader but also from the instructions and rules themselves. *“If somebody uses the B word (bomb), we have clear instructions, and the passenger risks being interrogated by the police and being kicked out of the airport. But if it is us the passenger threatens nothing is ever done; isn’t my safety worth anything?”* This may indicate that there is a lack of trust-loyalty towards not just the leaders but also towards the rules and action plans of the organization. Numbers from the Norwegian society as a whole show that these type of threats (threats of violence and violence), have a higher threat level than other threat types (SSB,

2009). So the respondents' fear may be justified when we see them in this societal context. I will connect the findings from the trust category as a whole and discuss it in more depth later in 'connecting the dots'. Next I will look closer at leadership behavior and how this may impact the individual in the case organization.

Leadership and destructive leadership behavior

One interesting finding that arose as the analysis of the data was coming to an end was the behavior of the leader. I found that even though I did not intend to look specifically at the leaders' behavior, it would be seriously neglectful to my findings not to point out this area's impact on the individuals and the organization. My next area of focus is therefore leadership behavior.

At a time when the general statement (or value) is to be found in many companies in the western business world; "*our employees are our most important resource*" is starting to be a fact in many organizations. Destructive leadership is an area of focus that needs more attention both from the organizations themselves and from the organizational researchers (Skogstad & Einarsen, 2006). I will in the following look at this area, but related to normal individuals' leadership behavior. By this I mean not to look at the more extreme individuals with narcissistic or psychopathic tendencies or that in some way have a destructive agenda even though these are shown to be present in many work environments (ibid.).

There has been a great amount of study on the topic of good leadership; what makes a good and effective leader. The result being that the only focus that has been left related to bad leadership behavior is just lack of the good leadership behavior (ibid.). It is just that in later years the focus on this subject has increased, and we now have the area of destructive leadership as its own topic (ibid.). Skogstad and Einarsen (2006) argue that destructive leadership is not just absence of good and positive leadership behavior. They argue that it is a behavior that is directly related to, and has negative consequences for the subordinates (ibid.).

As early as 1960, McGregor (as quoted in Skogstad and Einarsen, 2006) first published his findings on leadership behavior related to destructive leadership. His findings were based on his experience from consultation work in the field. One of his findings resulted in the creation of an archetype of bad leader, "theory X leader". The leadership type referred to as having this "theory X" attitude was that subordinates in general disliked working, that they would avoid responsibility, and that the subordinates needed to be supervised and controlled. The leader also believed that the subordinates to a small degree could be expected to take on a positive initiative on their own (ibid.).

In Appendix H, I provided an overview of what the literature on destructive leadership had to offer. These are summed up in fourteen categories (author's own translation, *ibid.*, p. 238).

Skogstad and Einarsen (2006) state that one can find a consensus in the literature on the negative effect that this type of leadership can have. Some of the areas that can be impacted are the employees' motivation, well-being and contentment, and performance and efficiency (*ibid.*). Ashforth (1994) argued that this type of leadership would create a sense of helplessness in the employee. Skogstad and Einarsen (2006) state that by working against and by closely monitoring and supervising them and their work, the employees will reduce their sense of independence. Some of the findings I have placed under trust were informants with more experience, who complained that some co-workers were passive and had little self-confidence, may be relevant here also "*...they don't trust in their own abilities, so they ask us with more experience, all the time for help...*", "*They are so scared of making mistakes that they are passive and almost not doing anything at all*". What this quotation indicates is that there is a sense of helplessness in their co-workers. "*They watch over us, and point out all our mistakes, but never when we do a good job*". This perceived lack of trust that the leader shows, or that is perceived as such from the subordinate, can lead to reduced independence. So if we follow Ashforth (1994) and Skogstad and Einarsen's (2006) contribution, we can see this as an indication that there is some destructive leadership behavior that can be at the core of these findings. I will in the following discuss if there can be found more indications of this destructive behavior in this-organization.

Skogstad and Einarsen (2006) argue that by being inconsequent and inconsistent, the leader creates a work environment and a work situation that is unpredictable for the subordinates. Here we can look again at the findings under the category trust. "*They do what they please when they are in charge*". "*They lack consistency– it varies how rules are followed, and how instructions are followed; it depends on who the guard- supervisor is at a given time*". These amounts of data, which came from several of the informants, can be seen as a strong indication that the behavior that Skogstad and Einarsen (*ibid.*) classify as destructive has a tendency to occur. The authors go on to conclude that when all these are combined, it can lead to anxiety and helplessness, which again can lead to reduced efficiency, quality of work and well-being (*ibid.*).

The consequences for the organization can be high turnover, high rate of sick leave, low sense of belonging and ownership, and lower quality in the individual and group's work performance (*ibid.*). Other areas are: higher cost on recruitment and training of new workers

and low utilization of resources (ibid.). High turnover and sick leave is not something that I have focused on in the theory chapter, but it is mentioned by most informants to be the case for this organization. This can be seen as another indication that destructive behavior is occurring. There is also one more indirect cost related to this type of leadership. The fact that this behavior is present indicates that the leader neglects one of the most basic leadership tasks, namely the development and attending to the organization's human resources (ibid.).

I will next show **what may be the reasons** for this destructive behavior. Most individuals when presented the leadership role do not intend to or set out to have a bad or destructive leadership style or behavior. (Here I do not take into account abnormal or hidden agendas, such as narcissistic or psychopathic tendencies or goals, even though these are highly relevant, when discussing destructive behavior) (ibid.). Often the resulting bad or destructive behavior can be related to lack of training, no coaching or good role models (ibid.). When destructive behavior is not stopped or in some way shown to be not acceptable, the behavior can act as a model for others to follow. We can then get a contentious effect that has the potential to spread through the organization, vertically and horizontally (ibid.). Just as important as the leaders' personality and the situational factors and contexts, is the leaders' assumption, values and attitudes to other people and their relationship between them (ibid.). This is something I wish to address in the following category.

Communication and Organizational Learning

Human error is often a consequence of the condition one is working under (Reason, 1997). How is the communication in the organization and atmosphere between the coworkers, and how is the relationship between employees and different leaders and the leader levels? Is it characterized by integrity, competence, consistency, loyalty and openness or is there significant lack and shortage in some or all of the above?

Based on the findings presented in the trust and destructive leadership sections there seems to be a significant indication of a closed and defensive type of interaction taking place in this case organization. Those reactions (feedback) we receive to our actions are those that lay the foundations for how we act in the future (Fischer & Sortland, 2002). But when the feedback we received is based on false assumptions and misinterpretation, which are not tested in the open, the behavior and action taking place will most likely continue and reinforce itself (Argyris & Schön, 1998). The type of interaction taking place is important for several reasons, as I will show in the following. Trust or the relationship of trust is developed

through an open dialogue and an atmosphere of respect (Senge, 1991). Also, a trusting and safe environment can be a good starting point for the possibility to learn (ibid.).

I will in the following go into more details about Argyris and Schön's (1998) contribution to organizational learning. This consistence of elements starts with the individual and personal insight up to the organizational insight into their theory-in-use (ibid.).

As mentioned earlier Schön (1983) describes how to reach organizational learning in an optimal way or double-loop-learning. He attacks the theory-in-use with his weapon of openness and testing. Schön starts the process that he calls organizational inquiry. This is an inquiry process with a mix of acting and reflecting. During this process he questions the fundamental trust that has been unquestioned before, makes the people test out these truths and makes them reflect on different values and behavioral schemas. This process is organizational because it makes the organization and individual think through and restructures the-theory-in-use and how they interact. The quality of this process determines the quality of organizational learning (Schön, 1983).

The possible effects of a lack of communication and organizational learning can be a reduction in the level of quality being delivered by the organization, and problems with –how to keep knowledge, development and learning at a high level. But other dangers lurk when trying to prevent this danger, as I will show in my next finding: “*We are tested so many times that if a real incident occurred I think we would think it was another exercise and not the real thing*”. There we see what may be the results of too vigorously trying to keep a high quality level and prevent loss of knowledge, where the assumption from the leader's level is that more is always better. This effect is something that Perrow (1999) warns about, making the organization's safety system too complex. He warns that safety measures that heighten the complexity simultaneously heighten the likelihood that something will go wrong (Appendix C). To simplify it, the more parts in a system, the more the likelihood of one of those parts failing (ibid.). As my findings above may be an indication of, in that ‘too-high’ a rate of testing and training can have an unforeseen effect; that they will fail in a real situation because they will still think it is a test. So even with good intentions it is possible to go wrong. I will next look at other areas that can have unforeseen ‘side effects’.

Some of the points about trust, destructive leadership and dialogue have already been discussed, but there are still some problem areas that can hinder whether this process of learning and development can be optimally successful. Cooperation and contribution is a part of an openness-atmosphere and culture; they give us the rules and norms about for example, what is ok and not ok to say in this organization. Ezzy (2001) and Hatch (1997) state that an

open dialogue and a cooperative climate is just for show, and that when push comes to show, the leader still has the last word, thereby making cooperation just wishful thinking and not a real fact (Ezzy, 2001; Hatch, 1997). Politics, power, legitimacy and authority are factors that influence the communication climate; these factors can help or hinder a dialogue and communication based on openness. The theory-of-action that Argyris and Schön (1978) call “the-model-I-theory”, is thereby the result, and thereby upholds the status quo.

Another danger is that communication and cooperation can be driven by individualistic and narcissistic motives, and thereby lead to the consequence of selfish, self-centered and egotistic behavior (Ezzy, 2001). In an area where a skin deep atmosphere of openness and trust exists, there may be real dangers to those who trust falsely in their fellow man (ibid.). These are some of the arguments from those who criticize Argyris and Schön’s (1978) contribution.

I will in the following show my findings relating to what I showed in the theory chapter as system focus versus individual focus.

System focus

When one seeks to explain human error it is imperative to study the context and the underlying factors (Reason, 1997). Kohn (1995) states “The focus must shift from blaming individuals for past errors to a focus on preventing future errors by designing safety into the system” (Kohn et al., 1995, p.5). I will in the following show my findings related to the organization and individual’s reflections and experience concerning this topic. From the leadership and management level there seems to be a common attitude towards reporting, and taking the fault or mistake up with the individual that is ‘guilty’. The importance of reporting was stressed by several, in that if nothing is reported, the organization cannot deal with it and thereby loses a learning possibility. *“If one has made a mistake it is important that it is reported, so we can prevent the mistake from occurring again”* one informant stated. This was a strong value in the leadership level, in that several stated that if they were the ones doing the mistake, they would report themselves. One finding presented under trust illustrates this; *“I try to be an example, so if I am in fault I report myself also”*. These findings may indicate that the leadership level is aware and reflects on this aspect of system focus, in that mistakes must be catalogued so the organization may learn from it. But if there is a system focus concerning what Reason (1997) and Kohn (1995) point out; that the focus must shift from blaming individuals to concentrating on preventing by focusing on what is in error in the system, it is not so easily confirmed or disconfirmed with findings from this level. It is

therefore necessary to look at the findings from the lower levels, to see how the subordinates perceive the focus to be, if they perceive a system focus or a hunt for the 'guilty'. When analyzing the data there seems to be a mix of perceptions concerning this area. Some informants' expressed stories of incidents where supervisors reprimanded the guilty in front of all passengers and other employees. Other respondents talked about this or similar stories as being something that happened in the past and that there had been action taken from management to prevent this type of incident recurring. These, at first glance, contradicting finds may not be contradicting at all, but may be seen as an indication that the organization has and is working on these areas, as the leaders expressed under the status quo segment earlier in this thesis. But as my next finding may show this is a work-in-progress and not a finished one.

Some informants reported incidents where someone broke what they saw as a minor rule, where there would be no consequence of that action. When someone discovered the action, instead of correcting the person at fault, they ran up to the leaders and the management to report them. This was stated as examples of how 'bad' some individuals were in dealing with minor mistakes and faults made by their fellow colleagues. The informant stated that it was not wrong to report the rule breaking, but it was unproductive not to help their colleagues by pointing out their error, and also giving them a chance to explain the reasons for that action. They stated that there was little learning taking place if one did not understand or get to explain their reasoning, there could be a good reason, which the observer did not know about.

One respondent stated that "*I don't report people, I take it up with them directly*", the informant followed up by stressing the point of not report co-worker because there would just be blame and punishment given, and not help and coaching. The informant stated that this was the reason from not reporting, and that if the 'guilty' action needed to be corrected or pointed out, that the informant then took them aside and talked calmly about this to them in person. This may be an indication that there is an avoidance tendency in the subordinate's level of rapport with their fellow colleagues. Additionally this avoidance is due to the perception that there will be an unfruitful outcome of this and that internal correction and guidance was to be preferred.

These findings may indicate that there is still some way to go for the individuals and the organization conserving the system focus, and focus shift from blaming the individual to learning and implementing the mistakes made into an organizational learning opportunity. System focus or system thinking is one of the cornerstones when working with the learning

organization (Senge, 1991). System thinking concerns the ability to understand complex and dynamic processes and by having this ability is able to create something new. The end results can be enormous for the individual but also for the organization. So to be able to see and understand the wholeness it is important to work with all these disciplines in a parallel process (ibid.).

I will now gather all these findings and show what they may tell us when they are combined into one picture.

Connecting the dots

I will in this chapter connect and present the findings and how they interact together influencing the perception of threat and risk, as I have shown in my model presented in the theory chapter.

Pidgeon, Kasperson and Slovic (2003) state that there are many small weaknesses in an organization with most of them not having any noticeable impact on its own, but as the number of this small and hardly measurable weaknesses stack up, this sets off an escalating effect that in total possesses a significant risk (Pidgeon, Kasperson & Slovic 2003).

If we look at **the external** areas of impact first, here we have the passenger, other organizations and employees at the airport and the media.

Most of the risk, if not almost all, is posed by the largest group using the airport, namely the passengers. The interaction with this group is therefore very important. Is the quality of the security work as high as it could be when the queues are growing, the passengers are angry, the gates are closing and Avinor is breathing down their necks saying “pick up the pace”? It is probably more comfortable for a guard to let the difficult passenger pass, and be spared the abuse. Does he give in or does he stand his ground? Does the nice and handsome person get special treatment in that they are not so methodically searched? Does the difficult passenger get all the attention and the quiet one gets forgotten? My point is that the passengers as a group and as individuals can press at the security workers like waves, and sometimes they can breach or make cracks in the safety wall. There is a potential for weaknesses for every passenger passing the security area.

Do the other companies see the security workers as colleagues with a common goal of safety or is it an annoying and unnecessary extra work load for them to always “take off their shoes the seventy times they pass per day?” Do the police take them seriously when they call for help concerning a suspicious briefcase, or do they take their time because their report says the threat level is nearly null? So as we see how the interaction between these parts can

influence and weaken the security people's focus, by letting the other organizations' employees pass to keep the peace, or delay them calling for the police because "they are too busy anyway".

The media plays a special role in that it is a main source of information and news (Morley, 1992). The media presents the threat and risk, who are the "dangerous" ones, and so on (ibid.). What is on the news or in the papers, how the passengers and others perceive the security people and the job they are doing, but it also influences how the security workers perceive themselves; these were reflections the informants themselves put forth. The media's focus or how they for example portray the guard and their work, if they portray them as playing an important or just an annoying role in the airport is also an important factor (Appendix G, media cases). Is the safety work important or just a waste of time; there is no risk here at all, or is the job an important and preventative one, are some of the questions several of the informants ask themselves when they are portrayed in the media. So in this way the media seems to play an important role in setting the stage for the interaction of the **internal** and the **external** spheres.

If we follow Pidgeon, Kasperson and Slovic's (2003) theory of escalation, a single incident from the passenger group, not just one story portrayed by the media and not just a few episodes with the police, Avinor or other organizations, is significant on its own, but in total their impact on the case organization and the single guard can be considerable, and the breach in the security wall can be a fact (ibid.).

The internal

When studying organizations and organizational culture, we need to bear in mind the complex and intricate relationship that may exist inside. Areas that seem to have easy and cut answers related to what influences and to what degree it does so, may have several other factors related to them that is not discovered at first glance. Essential in all theories on safety culture is organizational learning; a learning culture needs therefore to be established (Reason, 1997). A common perception of the importance of security and belief in the organizational safety goals, and in combination with communication based on trust, is central in creating a safety culture (ibid.). I will in the last parts of this thesis show some of these interactions and what they may lead to, and how they all influence the individuals' perception. First I will show the combination of the findings and discussion from the following standing areas Trust, Communication and Safety Culture.

Trust, communication and safety culture;

The balance between dialogue and discussion can lead to productive conclusion and behavior (Senge, 1991). But this demands the reflection of mental models one has. Groups and teams that master reflection and self awareness can change conflicts into learning and productive situations (ibid.).

Trust is an important factor when considering the climate and culture, where the individuals interact (Kaufmann & Kaufmann, 2003). As illustrated earlier, trust can be divided into five distinctive areas (competence, openness, integrity, consistency, and loyalty)

Trust is far from being a straight forward concept in that there is a complexity of areas that influences it. It is a phenomenon that is, as mentioned earlier, time consuming to build but relatively easy and quick to distort. Trust can be trust in oneself, in their co-workers, in their leader, in their management or in the organization, its instructions, rules and infrastructure (ibid.). Lack of trust in oneself is a serious element, in that it impacts how one looks at oneself and what self-image one has. There is another consequence for the organization and the other co-workers of that individual in that it taxes resources and lowers the efficiency, because the person is more passive and avoids taking action (ibid.). The low self-esteem in short pacifies and overworks those who are able to take action.

As shown in the findings some informants stated that they were scared of making mistakes, and others said that they needed to answer questions and take action because of the insecurity that some of their co-workers had. *“They are so scared of making mistakes that they are passive and almost not doing anything at all”*. This may be seen as a weakness and a potential for great improvement, that is if the organization could strengthen the individuals’ self-image and personal mastering, their efficiency and the quality of work could greatly improve. The will seems to be there; the leader and management level state seems to be crystal clear; *“We wish to motivate our employees better”*. Here they acknowledge that something needs to be done, that there is a potential for improvement, and that they know it takes time, but as they say; *“it’s on its way”*. As illustrated under the leaders’ status quo section, the leaders have reflected on this and expressed a will to do something about it. So why are they not succeeding at a faster rate, if the employees know that it is work in progress and that the leaders and management are working on it? A part of the answer may be that the informants and the leader level are using a model I approach and are thereby using defensive methods of communication and interaction. A plausible scenario is thus: the subordinates do not know the leadership’s goals, because they are not expressed to them in a way that they have understood or they have misinterpreted the information given. All this may prevail with

a model I, because nobody tests out their assumptions, and therefore they do not discover the discrepancy.

One indication that this was occurring came from statements from some of the informants from the lower level, that there was little or no encouragement and positive feedback received from their leaders. This is in contrast to the leaders' statements and expressed wishes that they try to do this, and that they seek to increase this.

I will now give a fictitious scenario where I put this together in a story line to illustrate what may be happening. The illustration goes as follows: when a guard does a good job, the leader reasons that it is not necessary to point it out to them; their reasoning may be that "it is so openly clear that everybody sees and knows, it is obvious for the individual that they have done a good job". But when the leader does not express it to the guard, the guard perceives that the leader did not acknowledge that fact (that the guard did a good job). These are strong indications of what Argyris and Schön (1978, 1998) call model I theory of action is in use. Here the mismatch persists. The leader thinks it is not necessary to say, they "know it;" the leader has a defensive approach by not finding out if the guard has the same perception of this as the leader. The consequence being that the employee does not receive his encouragement and so gets confirmation on the fact that leaders do not encourage. The guard seems also to be acting out of the same model I theory of action, in that he does not confront or try to find out if they have the same understanding/perception of the situation; he also acts defensive. This model-I-theory-of-action gets even more strengthened when leaders point out the faults they do. The leader can point it out in the belief that the guard does not see the mistake, or has too low work-skills, and that the leader does this to help and encourage the employee. But what comes across to the individual guard is the perception that only their faults are pointed out. So when we combine these illustrations we get what seems to be a match in my data; *"I can pass the test and do a good job for weeks on end, but I never hear a positive "good job", but if I failed once they point out my lack of competence at once "bad job, you need more training"*. As is shown in my illustration, and by my data above, the model-I-theory-of-action seems to have a tendency of occurring in the interaction between leaders and subordinates. The result may be that the mismatch is in a conformational circle, or more precisely a single-loop-learning cycle, as Argyris and Schön (1978, 1998) call it. Argyris and Schön's (1978, 1998) contribution of model-II-theory-of-action and double-loop-learning has the potential to change this bad leader/bad employee circle into an opportunity of learning. By having this model II approach, with a dialogue based on openness' and trying out assumptions like Argyris and Schön's (ibid.) recommend. By a simple 'why don't you

point out when I do a good job?’, the leader could correct or at least explain the reason why. He could get the chance to become aware of his theory-of-action. The mismatch and the learning output could then be greater; this because it had been closer to the model II communication style and thereby nearer to achieving model II learning (ibid.). But my findings may be seen as a strong indication that the model I is in use. As I will show in the following there is more evidence of this being the case (that the organization has a tendency of defensive and closed communication pattern occurring).

Some of these findings are the critique from the guard level on rules and on routines. Some of the respondents pointed out several areas where they meant that the leaders and managers did not do a sufficient job. One stated *“They need to come down here and see for themselves, they need to do the job...then they would understand that this is just not adequate”*. Another stated; *“the leaders need to listen to us, and take action to better the situation, as it is now, it is just not good at all”*.

But when I investigated this by asking them how they have brought these concrete arguments to their leaders, the answer I received was often that they had not confronted the leader directly themselves but that the leaders clearly must of course know about this. I will argue that this is quite similar as the point above where the guards desired positive feedback, but here it seems that the guard does not point out the areas that need attention. (It seems that the guards use the same reasoning as the leader in this illustration above). This can be a strong argument for the point that there are defensive communication methods in use (model I theory-in-use), not just in the leader level and down in the organization but also upwards from the lower levels. But are the answers that the other part has low competence just due to the lack of a sufficient and open dialogue? There are other factors such as power and politics in an organization. This can be because of frustration from the leader level up to the management level. Because of the model I this frustration can crystallize in a demonstration of power and dominance over the guards under one’s command. *“N yells out when someone is doing something wrong or that N does not approve of, this is embarrassing and degrading when it occurs in front of the passengers”* one subordinate stated.

Another informant mentioned:

One colleague of mine had cleared something and said that the passenger could take the thing with him. Then the supervisor came and yelled and stopped the passenger and the guard, and denied the passenger the thing. This was not a big dangerous thing, it was a little tool, so it posed no threat and it

was not forbidden by rule, here the supervisor just had a power demonstration. I (the informant) know because the next day the supervisor cleared the same type of tool.

This short story and the statement may be indications of the fact that an open dialogue can win some ground, but factors like power can make such winnings more difficult to achieve. This leads us to my next area.

Possible and negative sides of the organization

I have earlier in this thesis showed and discussed possible negative traits that may exist in this organization. Two of these were: possible destructive leadership and system focus. I will not elaborate more on these areas even though they are important. The main focus was to see what influences the area of study, the influencing of the perception of the individual, but these as I said were important areas that needed to be made known. The main goal makes the individual and the organization aware of these areas, tests out the theory-of-action and openly discusses the findings. This drains power from the negative effects, and thereby makes room for a more positive climate and an optimal situation for learning and development of oneself and the organization (Argyris & Schön, 1978, 1998).

This leads us to my next point of organizational learning.

Organizational Learning

A question that is central in the discussions of organizational learning is, can an organization possess the ability to act and learn, or is it just the sum of all the individuals acting and learning that gives the impression of a learning organization? This is certain; organizations consist of individuals, and cannot act or learn without them. But as Argyris and Schön (1998) point out, organizations do not simply learn when the individuals or a group of them learn; in fact over time it may also learn more than the individuals in that knowledge is in a way embedded into the organization through the procedures, structures, and memories that are accumulated.

Organizational learning occurs when individuals within an organization experience a problematic situation and inquire into it on the organization's behalf. They experience a surprising mismatch between expected and actual results of action and respond to that mismatch through a process of thought

and further action that leads them to modify their images of organization or their understandings of organizational phenomena and to restructure their activities so as to bring outcomes and expectations into line, thereby changing organizational theory-in-use. In order to become organizational, the learning that results from organizational inquiry must become embedded in the images of the organization held in its members' minds and/or in the epistemological artifacts (the maps, memories, and programs) embedded in the organizational environment. (Argyris & Schön, 1998, p.16)

Individuals and groups of people can learn to think and act in ways that inhibit organizational learning. Normally people are not motivated to produce unintended results, but in the production of errors this is sometimes exactly what happens (*ibid.*). According to Argyris (1990), many leaders and managers on all levels in organizations can create environments that are opposite to what they say they would prefer, and opposite to the responsibility they claim to have as leaders. In a way they seem to be trapped in a set of processes that keeps them from changing what the leaders themselves think needs to be changed. So can we conclude that the leaders and management fundamentally is just not in control at all?

Argyris (1990) proposes an alternative explanation for the way leaders and in fact most of us think and resonate. He proposes that the individuals and organizations are free to act and do as they wish. But when they still act opposite to their own interests, defensive reasoning is to blame for the resulting mismatch. The case being that, such reasoning occurs when individuals, without being aware of it, act on premises that are not necessarily valid. So, from these premises they, again without knowing it, make a logical consequence conclusion from these premises that do not necessarily follow from them. The final problem is that the conclusions that are made are not properly tested. In fact they could never be properly tested, because they are framed in ways that make them impossible to test (*ibid.*).

Argyris (*ibid.*) states that from early on in life, people are taught how to act in controlled ways. This ability is especially important dealing with threatening or potentially embarrassing situations. So when these skills and values are embedded in theories of action, they come to represent rules for how actions are designed and implemented later on. He claims that the theories of action and social norms combine to promote defensive reasoning and actions that are skillfully done, but at the same time produce unintended consequences.

This is what Argyris (*ibid.*) calls Model I theory-in-use. It instructs individuals to seek being in full control, to win, and not to upset other people. To achieve this, one needs to use an action strategy that is persuasive and that saves the face of both oneself and others. To save someone else's face from embarrassment it is important not to show that this is what is happening. So to effectively implement Argyris and Schön's (1998) Model I, the other person needs to be passive and dependent, which is the opposite of the Model I behavior. This Model I behavior is the normal or most used type of strategy in the western society. In fact it is supported by social norms such as caring, support, respect for others, strength, and integrity (*ibid.*). So the consequences being that when individuals in the organization act according to the Model I theory, the practical results may be that it is very hard to reach agreements. It is important to get one's own view across, to win, but never in a way that could upset others or openly cause them embarrassment. This influences drastically what ideas and alternatives are put on the table for discussion. Both Argyris and Schön (1998) state that even though other people notice this kind of behavior, their own Model I assumptions lead them to cover it up, to not cause embarrassment. The behavior hardly seems as rational as we would like to think of ourselves to be. But why is the pattern still repeated? Argyris and Schön's (1998) answer is that the actions are highly trained and skilled, they have become integrated, automatic, and taken for granted, much in the same way as we have learned manners or motor skills like walking up stairs (you do not need to think, you just act). It makes us efficient in doing those actions; we can run up the stairs while talking on our mobile phone. The price for acting skillfully and efficient in this way however is unawareness.

Argyris and Schön (1998) state that what this means for the organization is that the action strategies in Model I lead to organizational routines where embarrassments and threats are minimized or bypassed, and the fact that this is the case is covered up. The problem is that while threats are bypassed, so is also the opportunity to identify and get rid of the basic reasons for such threats. It is not possible to deal effectively with issues if they cannot be discussed openly. When defensive routines remain untested and not discussed, they will continue to dominate the interaction, and as a result learning will be impeded because so many issues cannot be examined properly. Double-loop learning becomes especially hard to do, but also weaknesses in the "security wall" will not be discovered, for even if one or two see the weakness, they will suppress it to themselves as well as to others (*ibid.*).

Argyris and Schön's (1998) theories are useful in the sense that they closely examine the people who ideally should learn on behalf of the organization, and points to why these

individuals possibly act counter to how they should if learning were to take place, thereby weakening the quality of security even though their goal was to strengthen it.

So all of this may lead to...

A weakening of the support and foundation that the individual guard is dependent on, as my fictitious example in the beginning of this thesis was meant to show. The individual guards need to feel confident and know that when help or assistance is needed, in the form of advice, coaching, adequate training, or the mere presence of the team to tackle difficult passengers or risk situation/incidents it will be provided.

Although many of the areas here can have a noticeable impact on their own, it indicates that the area as a whole has a potential for a substantial escalation. This could also be because most of the areas are so interconnected that weakness in one, such as trust could have the potential to snowball and take with it the whole structure (Pidgeon, Kasperson & Slovic, 2003).

Limitations of the study

The fact that this study is based on a convenient sample which means that not all employees, leaders and managers had the opportunity to participate in this study, can be seen as a limitation of the study. I tried to compensate for this by selecting key individuals at all levels, employees with different backgrounds, and I also interviewed those who desired to be interviewed, as illustrated in the methodology chapter.

Another bias can be the fact that I worked for this organization. Moreover, all the interviews were conducted in Norwegian and translated into English by the author who is not a native English speaker. This could be seen as an additional limitation.

The external sphere contains several interesting areas just to mention a few, like the passengers, the other organizations and employees working at the airport; these are areas begging for more research. I see the significant impact this external sphere has on the study objective. This needs to be looked into more at a later date, but could not be more than superficially covered in this thesis because of the time frame of this thesis.

The internal area provided a rich data set that pointed out several important findings, but because of the limitations in time and capacity, I needed to select some key areas to focus on. This could be regarded as a limitation of the study since some areas received more attention than others.

But I will argue that my main findings and conclusions would remain the same even if I had studied more areas. The model would probably be more complete, regarding the factors

influencing the focus area. One of the areas that could be added is power and political goals. These are areas that I found to be important, but could not elaborate on. These need to be considered in the future. So in future studies it would be interesting to go more in depth and supply the model with a more complete overview of the influences to the perception of threat and risk.

Summary Chapter

In this thesis I focused on areas that laid the foundation and interaction with the individuals' perception of threat and risk. The concept of threat perception is essential in this thesis. As mentioned in the introduction of this thesis, threat contains internal factors such as organizational culture and subcategories such as trust and communication to mention some. These have been elaborated on in the discussion.

In other words the perception of threat exists and contains not only the risk of terror attacks (which can be said to be external) but also factors inside the organization at hand (what I call internal factors).

The risk the individual perceives or experiences in a given situation can be decisive in evaluating the situation and making the right decision and action. My model shows a simplified representation of the interaction and influences on the individual. This was to make a complex area more easily accessible and manageable for study and for understanding and trying to understand the phenomena at hand, so in that respect it is a tool. So to this purpose it is an adequate one, but it needs to be seen as a tool and not as an answer, in that there may be other important influencing factors that the model does not contain.

Pidgeon, Kasperson and Slovic's (2003) contributions to the field and the study at hand were very helpful, in that they provided a good framework to put the pieces in to make and see the whole picture. Their focus area and their conclusions that small parts can combine and make a stronger impact on and influence the organization and the future outcome of incidents, was a strong argument to take a closer look at some of the smaller parts. These parts that in themselves have a seemingly confined impact on the organization can make the safety "dam" crack and rupture in a dramatic way.

When I concentrated on these smaller areas (parts), I found support for the theories I used in that my findings correlated with what the theories said to expect to find which may indicate a strengthened validity.

Concluding with this thesis, this has been a valuable process for me as a student researcher trying out theories and studying a thrilling area like the security industry.

Conclusions and recommendations

As Pidgeon, Kasperson & Slovic (2003, p. 2) note "*...how risk and risk events interact with psychological, social, institutional, and cultural processes...*" are important

issues concerning the SARF (Appendix B). I therefore argue that these factors are important and influence the perception of risk.

This again will influence the behavior of the individual and the organization. The individual and organizations' readiness level is thereby directly affected. At the end it is this that lays the foundation for the effects and consequences a real incident will have when it occurs. But as I pointed out earlier in this thesis, to have too high a focus and intensity just in a small area may give unforeseen effects. As one of the respondents stated "*I think that because we exercise and do tests every day, that if we come across a real situation we would not take it seriously because we would think it was just another test, and that is dangerous*". With this I will argue that it is crucial for the security and the quality of the security product, that the focus be broadened to implement the impacts of the threat and risk perception of the individual represented.

Recommendations for future studies

My contribution is of an individual focus, and I tend to disagree with some of the criticism that arose to the "social amplification of risk framework" (SARF) (1988), that there was too much attention given to the individual level and too little to the social alignments, the mass media and social network. My findings, I argue, show that the individual level is an important area when considering amplification effects in relation to risk to and around organizations, related to airports. The social relations and the organization as a whole, and we could go one up to complex organizations and societal levels are in their smallest part made up of individuals. We can also see in history that the individual definitely can play a decisive role in the outcome of an episode. I therefore argue that to neglect the individual level and factors related to the individual, we run the risk of missing crucial factors that could help us find the answers to many of these complex questions.

How trust and a climate of openness influence the individual and groups of an organization is an example of a more "soft" area of focus that can be of great importance to the understanding of the organizational phenomena as a whole. The area of organizations and the area of risk the individuals and the relationships between them is underestimated in that there is little focus on these subjects. In the future these factors would be interesting to look more closely at. Therefore my recommendation for the future is that the theory and hypothesis making takes into account a more psychological approach and less on large abstract explanations that lay people have a hard time relating to.

Recommendations for the organization

A theory's worth is in its ability to explain, predict and in this way control the phenomena it seeks to shed light on (Cozby, 2001). It should therefore be a goal to give some of this knowledge back to the field that has been studied. It is with this notion that I, based on my study and based on the literature presented in this thesis, end this thesis by trying to give back some of this thesis knowledge in a conclusion and recommendation that is directed back at the organization that has so graciously given me the opportunity to study it.

The culture needs to be reporting, righteous, flexible and learning (Reason 1997). There needs to be dialogue and discussion to create a climate of openness. We need to start with ourselves, to understand our own goals and motives, then look to see if we communicate this in such a way that the message we wish to convey is delivered intact, and lastly that this signal or message is consistent with what we do (Argyris & Schön, 1978, 1998). In other words we need to understand ourselves before we can understand others (ibid.). Argyris and Schön (1998) give us a neat package of concepts, that range from and start with the individual and their theory of action, and from there works its way up to the organization and the type of communication and learning that is optimal. If the individual in an organization and the organization as a whole can be aware and understand their own theory of action, they can start to change their communication and learning strategies from Model I to Model II. This will in turn assure the quality of the work and the chance to discover weaknesses and find solutions in a more efficient way (Appendix E). This is not the total solution but a strong start, and gives the organization the tools to tackle the many and unseen threats in the future. This will cost a great deal of work on the part of the individual and the organization, and a good portion of guidance (ibid.).

The learning organization gives people the opportunity to perceive themselves and the world around them in a new way. Both individually and together, man can learn to change their own, others and the organization's reality (Senge, 1991).

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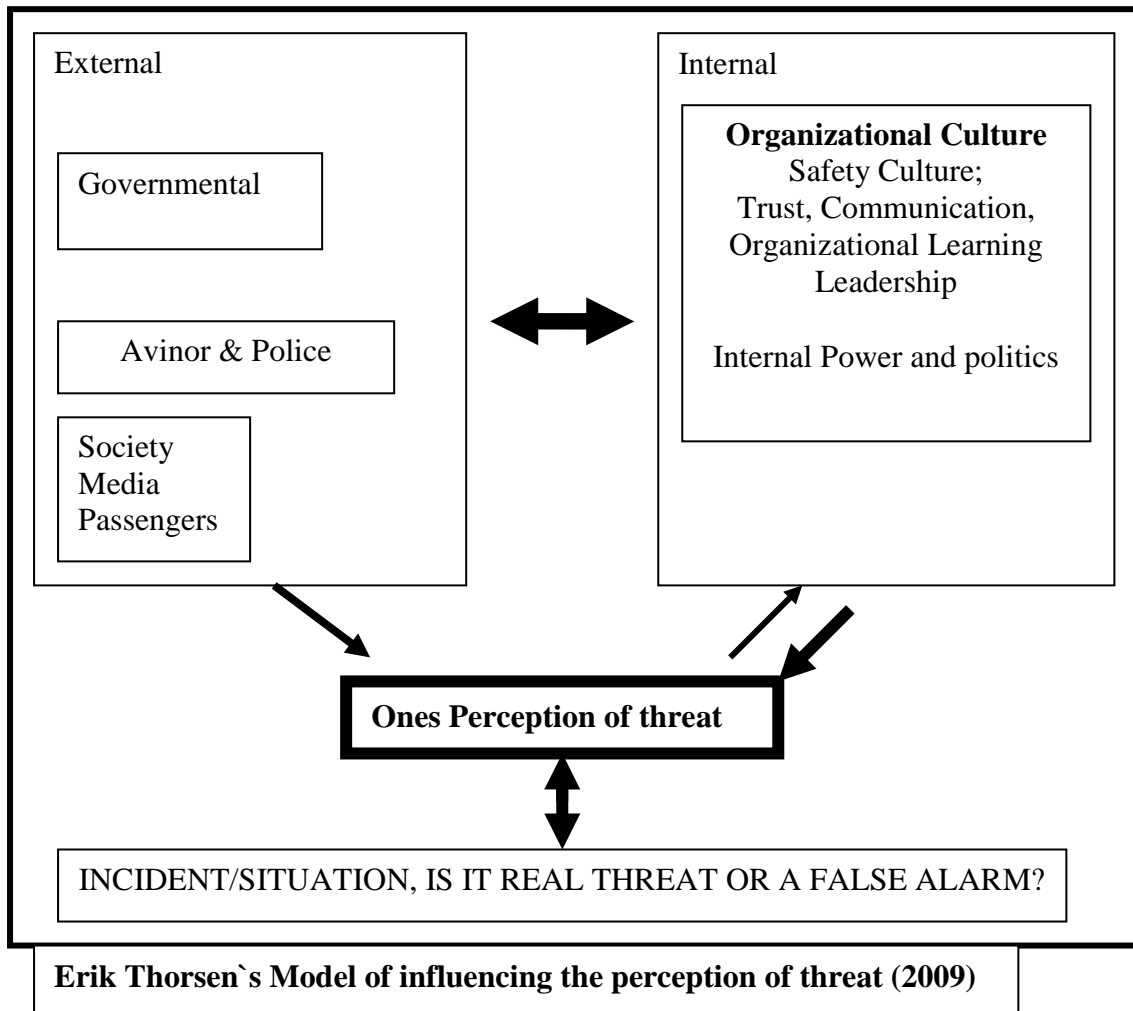
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Appendix A



Appendix B

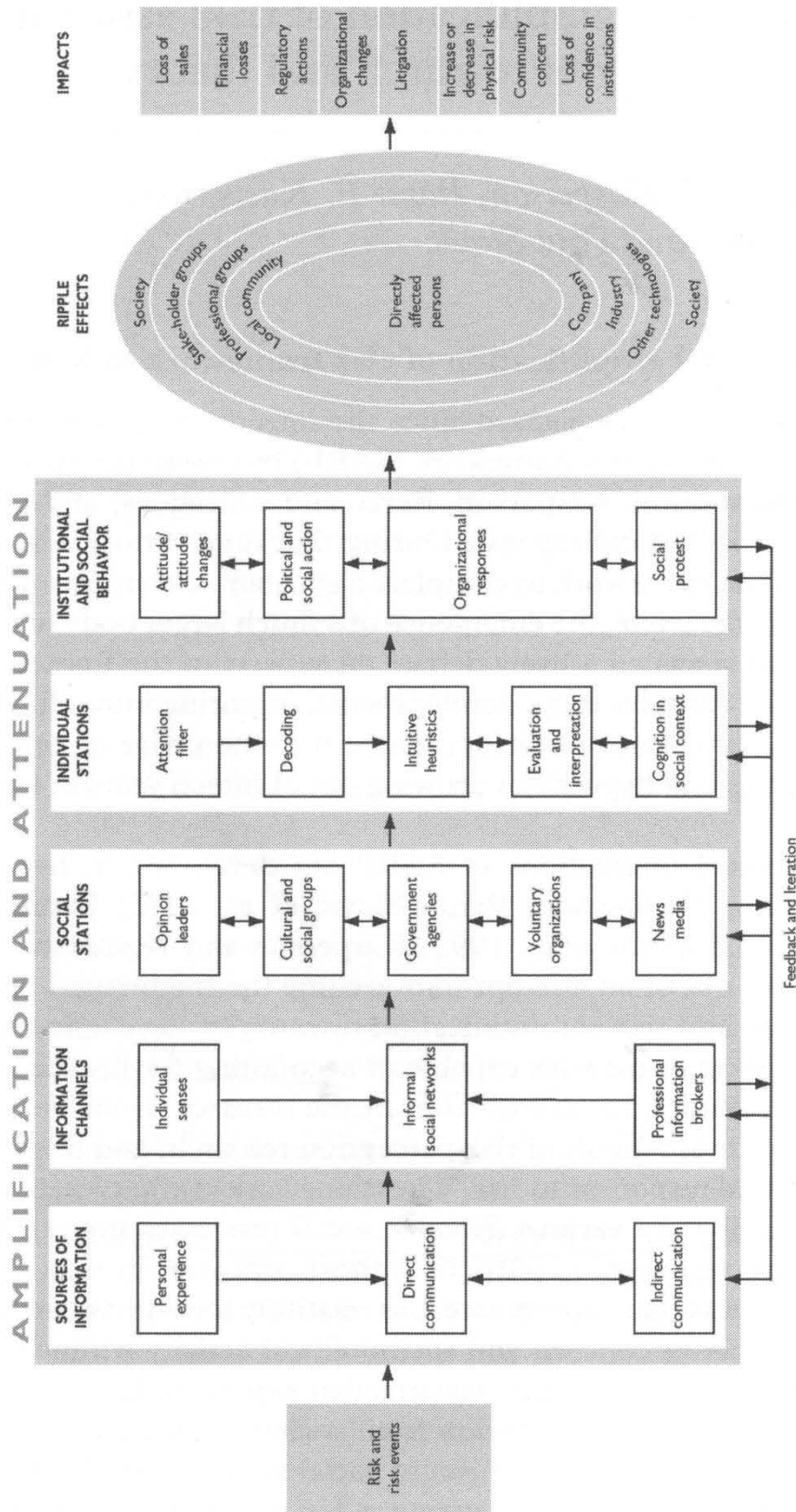
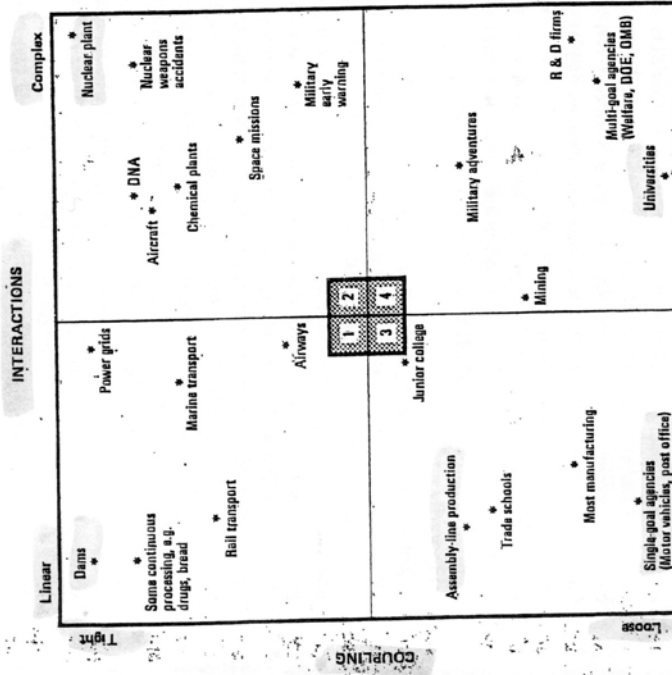


Figure 1.1 The social amplification of risk framework.

Appendix C

Complexity, Coupling, and Catastrophe

FIGURE 3.1 Interaction/Coupling Chart



to the underwater bank of a channel), tides and current flow, wrecks and rocks, bridges, tows and other ships, a crowded radio channel, and navigation lights mixed in with the lights of highways, industrial plants, and distant towers. The high seas and the channel systems are very different. With "flying" we mix commercial airlines with recreational or sport flying. Mining includes strip mining, which should be closer to manufacturing, and underground mining. These ambiguities are a problem, but for the sake of a general argument I think the rough placement of vaguely defined systems is still useful.*

*One serious problem cannot be avoided, but should be mentioned: To some unknown extent it is entirely possible that the degree of coupling and type of interactions have been

NORMAL ACCIDENTS

TABLE 3.2. Tight and Loose Coupling Tendencies

Tight Coupling	Loose Coupling
Delays in processing not possible Invariant sequences Only one method to achieve goal Little slack, possible in supplies, equipment, personnel Buffers and redundancies are designed-in, deliberate Substitutions of supplies, equipment, personnel limited and designed-in	Processing delays possible Order of sequences can be changed Alternative methods available Slack in resources possible Buffers and redundancies fortuitously available Substitutions fortuitously available

thing more complex but similar took place at Browns Ferry. The industry claimed that the recovery proved that the safety features worked, but the designed-in ones did not work. In both accidents the critical safety features were disabled.

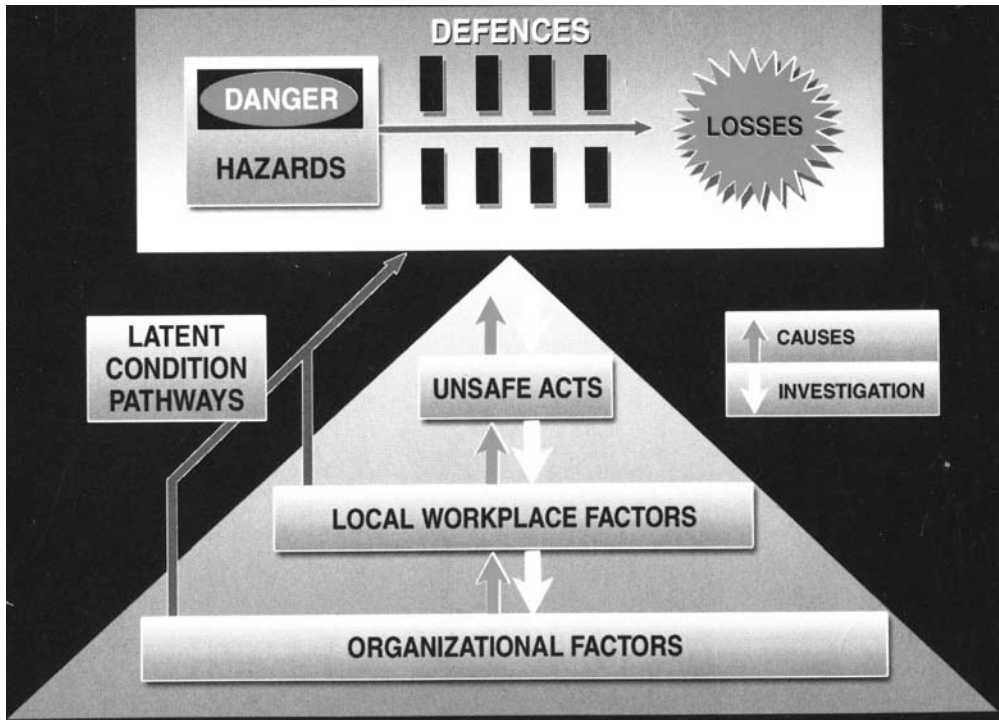
What is true for buffers and redundancies is also true for substitutions of equipment, processes, and personnel. Tightly coupled systems offer few occasions for such fortuitous substitutions; loosely coupled ones offer many.

The characteristics of the two systems are summarized in Table 3.2. These are tendencies; no system has, for example, absolutely invariant sequences. Nor is a system likely to have all of the various characteristics.

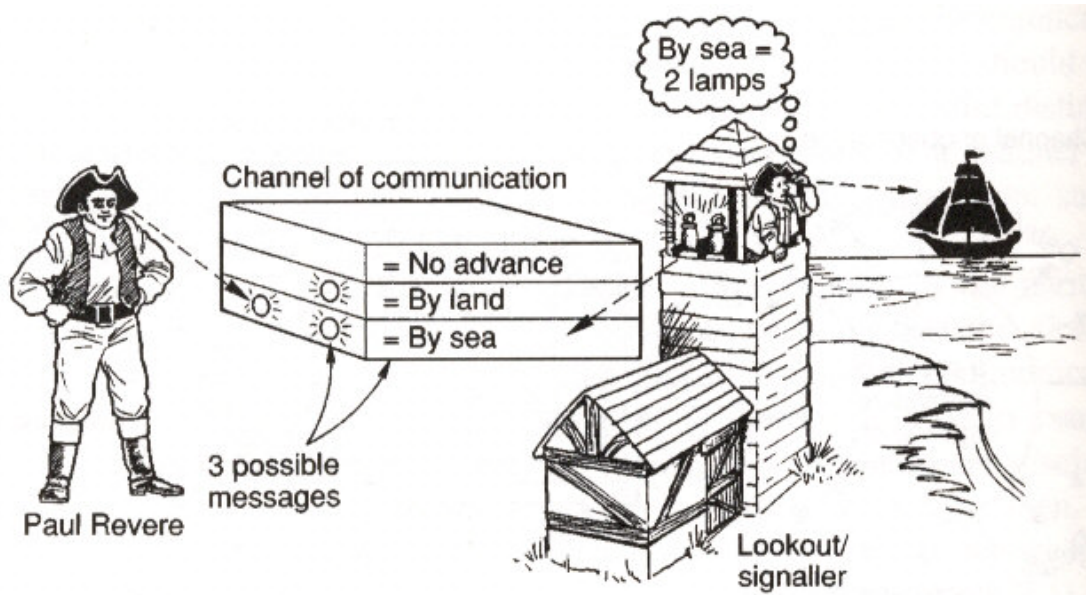
The Organizational World According to Complexity and Coupling

Figure 3.1, the Interaction/Coupling Chart (I/C chart) puts interaction and coupling together in a two-variable array. The placement of systems is based entirely on subjective judgments on my part; at present there is no reliable way to measure these two variables, interaction and coupling. One may well quarrel with the placement in the figure. One good reason for a quarrel is that there is no precise specification of just what constitutes the system. Consider marine transport. On the high seas the system includes the ship, radio communication, the weather, and perhaps one other ship. But as the ship enters a crowded channel, we have not only the weather, but have to affect the situation created as the ship masses close

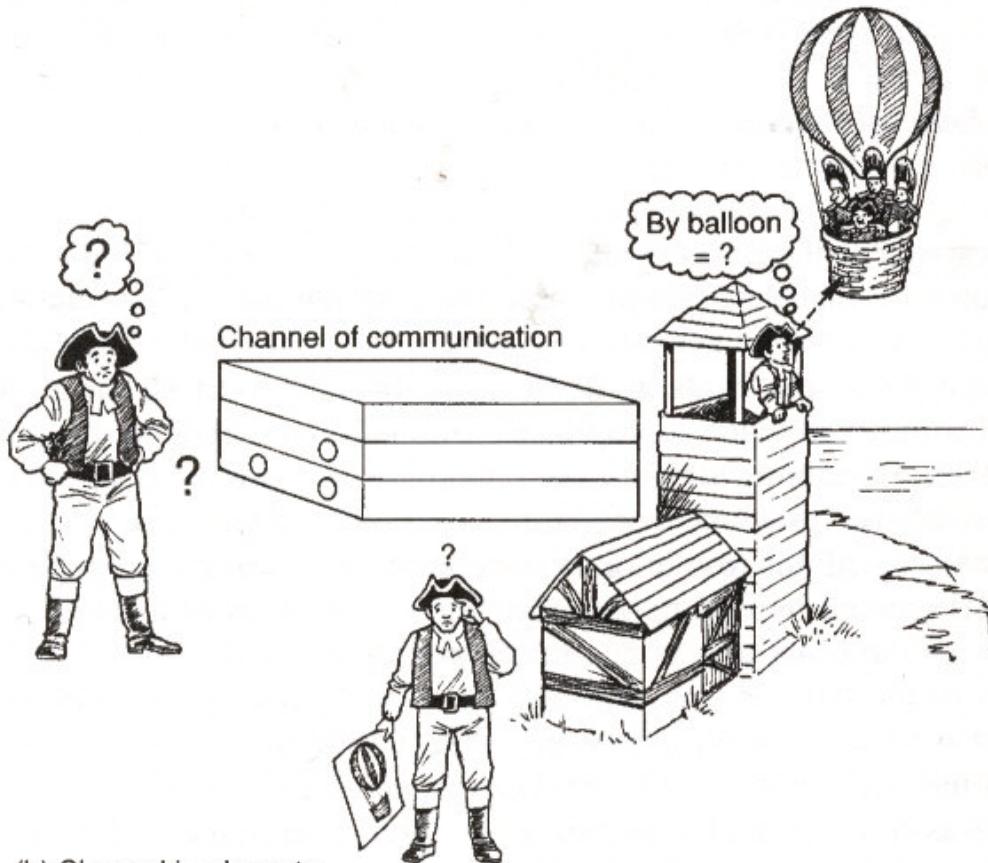
Appendix D



Appendix E



(a) Channel adequate



(b) Channel inadequate

Figure 8.2 Paul Revere: adequate and inadequate channels of communication.

Appendix F

Interview Guide

Method: Interview / Dialogue/ observation

NB! Questions are not absolute – adapter/adjust; they are just tools to reach the goals in each area .NB!

First, an introduction to the study (about the study, confidentiality, material use).

Topic: A Threat and risk perception study

Goal: Who is the respondent?

- The informants' status with the organization, position, how long in the company, other...
- Probe to find relevant info and where the individual is placed related to skill and experience with the security field of work.
- Follow-up...

Goals: Get General information about how the informants perceive work, attitudes to colleagues and subordinates and supervisors

- How has this day, week been related to the job – see how the informant responds – flow up on interesting leads...
- How is the work, what do you do?
- How are your relations at work...? Get along or not... Others...are some Friends outside work? How about teams, shifts, colleagues, leaders, subordinates...
- Follow-up...

Goal: Reflections that the informant has on perceived threat and risk

-Need to be connected and follow-up with information gathered above...

- Is there risk related to working here?
- Have you personally experienced anything – Seen/heard others...
- What do you perceive as being realistic dangers/risks for an airport such as this one?.. Elaborate... Why do you think that?.. Probe and follow-up...

Goal: Interaction with other organizations and other company's employees at the airport
The biggest user of the airport, the passenger, what jumps to mind?

Reflections that the informant related about these groups, and interactions.

- Other companies, what is the experience interacting, day to day situations –Good – Bad- Other... why do you think it is like that?... Elaborate...
- Follow-up... experienced/know of incidents/examples of team efforts/work together...

Ending:

Other relevant areas that come up.. Follow-up, Other comments?

Sum up and step back to areas that have been talked about, to see if the informant has anything new, after talking about all this...Check to see if the answers have been correctly understood.

Thank you for participating, your answers are valuable to the study at hand!

Appendix G

Media

Pilot, no more security madness. /Pilot orket ikke mer av «security-galskapen»

<http://www.aftenposten.no/nyheter/iriks/article2062209.ece>

Terrorism and Brest-nipples/ Terrorismen og brystvortene, nesten absurd teater til tider. 80 år gamle damer, småbarn og handikappede (til og med folk med utlagt tarm) blir sett på som potensielle terrorister og nærmest trakassert.

<http://www.leserglede.com/zett-utenfra/terrorismen-og-brystvortene/>

Police clown stopped in the security area/Politiklovn stoppet i sikkerhetskontrollen

<http://www.vg.no/reise/artikkel.php?artid=545663>

Uverdige sikkerhetskontroll, Venstre krever full gjennomgang av flyplassjekken

<http://www.vg.no/reise/artikkel.php?artid=190800>

Security failed their test at .../Sikkerhetskontroll til stryk på Gardermoen

<http://www.boarding.no/art.asp?id=29437>

No cake in the hand luggage/ Nei, ikke bløtkake i håndbagasjen!

<http://www.klikk.no/reise/opplevelse/article274456.ece>

Blogg

<http://www.dagblogg.net/dagblogg/den-sjokoladen-kan-de-putte-en-viss-plass/>

http://ffktingen.blogg.no/1211107563_she_is_a_rebel_shes_a.html

Appendix H

Tabell 1 Eksempler på atferd som karakteriserer de 14 kategoriene destruktiv ledelse funnet i litteraturen

Kategori	Eksempler på atferd
1. Dårlig lytter	«har ikke hørt etter når du har henvendt deg» «er ikke åpen for toveiskommunikasjon»
2. Personmotarbeidende atferd	«har ydmyket deg eller andre medarbeidere» «bruker økenavn/klengenavn på deg eller dine medarbeidere»
3. Manglende sosiale ferdigheter	«har ikke tatt dine eller andres problemer alvorlig» «har bagatellisert dine eller andres følelser»
4. Oppgavemotarbeidende atferd	«har tilbakeholdt viktig informasjon som du eller andre har hatt behov for i forbindelse med ditt/deres arbeid» «har tatt æren for ditt eller andres arbeid»
5. Sint og impulsiv	«har sinte utbrudd» «roser/straffer ut fra hans/hennes humør»
6. Kontrollerende, ikke-delegerende	«dobbeltsjekker ditt eller noen av dine medarbeideres arbeid» «har gitt deg eller dine medarbeidere dårlige eller uønskede råd i henhold til arbeidsoppgaver»
7. Autokratisk	«har brukt uttalelser som dette i en diskusjon: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • det er jeg som er sjefen • det er jeg som bestemmer • det er jeg som har makten»
8. Arroganse	«opphøyer sine egne forslag framfor de ansattes» «har ignorert deg eller noen av dine medarbeidere»
9. Hensynsløs og makt-søkende	«har tatt noe som tilhørte deg uten å spørre om lov» «har påpekt dine eller andres feil i nærvær av andre»
10. Beskyldende og kritisk	«har beskyldt deg eller noen av dine medarbeidere for å lyve» «har gitt deg skylden for feil som andre har vært ansvarlige for»
11. Trusler og fysisk vold	«har truet deg eller dine medarbeidere med oppsigelse»
12. Isolering	«har utestengt deg eller noen av dine medarbeidere fra en sosial aktivitet» «forlater rommet når du eller en av dine medarbeidere kommer inn i rommet»
13. Løgner og forvrenging	«har betrodd deg negativ/konfidensiell informasjon om dine medarbeidere» «har fortalt historier som ikke var sanne»
14. Appellere til dårlig samvittighet	«tar til tårer når han/hun er frustrert» «pålegger deg eller andre ekstraarbeid og begrunner dette med fraser som f.eks. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • yte til fellesskapet • dette er til det beste for alle»

Appendix I

Main Project - The Social Determination of Risk - SORISK

The following paragraph was retrieved from: <http://www.prio.no/SORISK/>

The Social Determination of Risk & The thematic pillars of the project

The Social Determination of Risk

Critical Infrastructure and Mass Transportation Protection in the Norwegian Civil Aviation Sector

In order to understand threats to society it is of primordial importance to understand how different individuals and groups in different social settings appreciate and value threat. The SORISK project contributes to this understanding by mapping out and differentiating the cultural and societal determinations of risk and relating these understandings to a concrete case study from the Norwegian aviation industry.

The principal objective of the project is to formulate a socially based theory of risk and apply it to aviation security in the Norwegian setting. This objective involves three primary segments:

- the theoretical development of a socially-based theory for risk analysis;
- an adaptation to the social and cultural setting particular to Norway; and
- a case study applying the theory to the Norwegian aviation industry, in collaboration with AVINOR.

The SORISK project is a collaboration between the University of Stavanger's Department of Risk Management and Societal Safety and PRIO's Security Programme. The project will run from 2007 through 2010 and is part of the broader SAMRISK programme on Societal Security and Risk, funded by the Research Council of Norway. The premise of the SAMRISK programme is based on the importance of understanding underlying causes of crises and preventing them from taking place. Thus, the programme aims to enhance knowledge about threats, dangers and vulnerability as well as crisis prevention and crisis management, whilst upholding and respecting basic human rights and privacy.

The thematic pillars of the project

Risk is implicitly related to human values. It reflects a certain understanding of human life, of individual and collective hopes and fears, of expectations about what might be lost and what is worth keeping, about what one is willing to sacrifice, and indeed about what one is willing to fight or even die for. Thus, risk is a concept with social, cultural, even ethical dimensions. Risk research should therefore not concern the physical aspects of life alone. Rather it should also focus on the social dimensions of life, health, welfare, and security. Risk has traditionally been associated with material and technical aspects of life alone because these tend, more and more in our age, to protect and embody the values of individuals and society. They should however not be confused with life itself. Understanding risk presumes that one understands the socially determined values and motivations of those who would do harm.

Sound, meaningful, and cost-efficient security research therefore requires attention to and a thorough understanding of the social forces that shape the values determining what is understood to be at risk as well as guidance in determining effective, appropriate and just response to threat. It must focus on the development, analysis and adoption of practical procedures for democratic management of risks in society and seek to find means of linking the scientific generation of knowledge and human values. The proposed project therefore aims to support and strengthen the field of risk research by clarifying approaches to research in which social dimensions can be integrated into the security research agenda, and in particular how they can be used as a tool for addressing security issues in the aviation industry.

The key themes of the research are organized into three broad work packages, listed below.

WP 1: A social theory of risk

WP 2: Societal security and risk management in the Norwegian setting

WP 3: Security risk protection of mass transportation in the Norwegian civil aviation system