

CONCEPTUALIZING THE HIJACKING THREAT TO CIVIL AVIATION

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OVERVIEW

An unsupervised analysis of tactics, techniques and procedures employed in aircraft hijackings across the globe and over the past three decades uncovered four distinct types of attacks with definitive characteristics, outcomes, and implications for governmental countering.

METHODOLOGY

A variety of clustering techniques were tried; k-means with four groups produced the clearest set of hijacking types. "Interaction" inspired analysis of the resulting four groups was performed in order to accentuate inter-group differences.

FINDINGS

Four groups were differentiated based on whether the attackers were armed, operating alone or as a group, and whether their motive was terrorism.

FUTURE RESEARCH

Applications of the findings to future hijackings can be used to inform government response. Other forms of violent attacks should be explored to discover whether latent typologies can be extracted and analyzed.



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