

Inside The U.S.
Transportation Security Administration

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About the Editor

Michael Erbschloe has worked for over 30 years performing analysis of the economics of information technology, public policy relating to technology, and utilizing technology in reengineering organization processes. He has authored several books on social and management issues of information technology that were published by McGraw Hill and other major publishers. He has also taught at several universities and developed technology-related curriculum. His career has focused on several interrelated areas:

- Technology strategy, analysis, and forecasting
- Teaching and curriculum development
- Writing books and articles
- Publishing and editing
- Public policy analysis and program evaluation

Books by Michael Erbschloe

Threat Level Red: #Cybersecurity Research Programs of the
U.S. Government (CRC Press)

Social Media Warfare: Equal Weapons for All (Auerbach Publications)

Walling Out the Insiders: Controlling Access to Improve Organizational
Security (Auerbach Publications)

Physical Security for IT (Elsevier Science)

Trojans, Worms, and Spyware (Butterworth-Heinemann)

Implementing Homeland Security in Enterprise IT (Digital Press)

Guide to Disaster Recovery (Course Technology)

Socially Responsible IT Management (Digital Press)

Information Warfare: How to Survive Cyber Attacks (McGraw Hill)

The Executive's Guide to Privacy Management (McGraw Hill)

Net Privacy: A Guide to Developing & Implementing an e-business
Privacy Plan (McGraw Hill)

Introduction

On the morning of September 11, 2001, nearly 3,000 people were killed in a series of coordinated terrorist attacks in New York, Pennsylvania and Virginia. The attacks resulted in the creation of the Transportation Security Administration, designed to prevent similar attacks in the future. Driven by a desire to help our nation, tens of thousands of people joined TSA and committed themselves to strengthening our transportation systems while ensuring the freedom of movement for people and commerce.

The Aviation and Transportation Security Act, passed by the 107th Congress and signed on November 19, 2001, established TSA.

TSA comprises nearly 50,000 security officers, inspectors, air marshals and managers who protect the nation's transportation systems by screening for explosives at airport checkpoints, inspecting rail cars, and patrolling subways with law enforcement partners, and working to make all modes of transportation safe. There are more than 450 locations nationwide including field offices, airports and at headquarters in Virginia.

The Office of Global Strategies mission is to identify, analyze, and mitigate risk. OGS assesses vulnerabilities at international locations to determine risk, evaluates risk impacts to determine mitigation activities and executes mitigation activities to reduce those risks to the United States. When a new threat or vulnerability emerges, OGS coordinates with foreign governments, airlines and international organizations to implement responses that will effectively mitigate the likelihood of a successful attack.

The Office of Law Enforcement/Federal Air Marshal Service deploys federal air marshals on U.S. aircraft world-wide; conducts protection, response, detection and assessment activities in airports and other transportation systems.

The Office of Acquisition Program Management is responsible for building TSA's capabilities by managing the acquisition, testing, deployment and sustainment of security technology and other acquisition programs.

The Office of Requirements and Capabilities Analysis safeguards the nation's transportation systems through the qualification and delivery of innovative security capabilities and solutions.

The Office of Security Operations provides risk-based, adaptive security that includes airport checkpoint and baggage screening operations, regulatory compliance, cargo inspections and other specialized programs designed to secure transportation.

The Office of Security Policy and Industry Engagement is responsible for developing security policies and plans that reduce the risk of catastrophic terrorist attacks.

The Office of Strategic Communications and Public Affairs facilitates understanding of the TSA mission and activities by strategically communicating with internal and external audiences in a timely, accurate and transparent manner.

The Office of Training and Development oversees the development, delivery and evaluation of training and development programs for TSA employees as well as industry and international partners.

TSA at a Glance

Aviation Security

- Responsible for the security of nearly 440 federalized airports
- More than 43,000 transportation security officers keep people secure
- More than 600 aviation transportation security inspectors ensure regulatory compliance
- Nearly 60 percent of TSA officers have five years or more experience as counterterrorism professionals
- Nearly 20 percent of TSA employees are veterans or still serving
- TSA screens more than 2 million passengers daily and over 700 million every year
- TSA screens 1.3 million checked items for explosives and other dangerous items daily
- TSA screens 4.9 million carry-on items for explosives and other prohibited items every day
- Responsible for the security of over 20,000 domestic flights per day
- Responsible for the security of over 2,000 outbound international flights per day

Checkpoint Security and Risk-Based Security

- There are more than 900 advanced imaging technology machines with privacy protecting software at airports nationwide
- In 2016, officers detected approximately 3,391 firearms at airport checkpoints, averaging nine firearms per day
- TSA conducts over 12,000 assessments a year to improve hands on training with transportation security officers
- TSA risk-based security is based on the understanding that the vast majority of people traveling pose little to no threat to aviation and applies an intelligence-driven approach focusing on higher risk and unknown passengers. Through risk-based security:

There are over 350 TSA Pre® application centers open nationwide

TSA Pre® is operating at approximately 200 airports

More than 6 million passengers each week experience expedited screening

Over 350 application centers open nationwide

Inbound International Aviation

- TSA inspects approximately 280 last point-of-departure airports (those with direct flights into the United States)
- There are 109 countries with at least one last point-of-departure airport
- Responsible for securing nearly 700 foreign repair stations
- Approximately 10 billion pounds of cargo is transported on commercial aircraft annually from foreign airports
- There are 40 recognized countries in the national cargo screening program

Law Enforcement

- Federal air marshals fly millions of miles each year supporting aviation security
- There are more than 900 TSA canine teams deployed nationwide tasked with screening passengers and cargo, and supporting other security missions
- In 2016 more than 230,000 hours of canine explosives detection screening throughout the nation's transportation system
- Thousands of federal flight deck officers participate voluntarily to ensure the traveling public security
- Provide assistance to hundreds of crew member self-defense trainings yearly

Multi-modal Security Efforts

- TSA secures the United States transportation network which connects cities, manufacturers and retailers through:

More than 4 million miles of roadways

More than 140,000 miles of railroad track

More than 612,000 bridges and more than 470 tunnels

More than 360 maritime ports, 3,700 marine terminals and approximately 12,000 miles of coastline

Approximately 2.7 million miles of pipeline

- Approximately 250 surface transportation security inspectors ensure and regulate compliance in the cargo supply chain
- More than 37,000 surface regulatory inspections are conducted annually across all modes in support of risk-based security
- Approximately 26 million daily trips are taken on public transportation, 2.7 million miles of pipeline, 10 billion pounds of cargo

TSA Hires Veterans

TSA is committed to supporting the employment of veterans and provides a hiring preference to eligible veterans. Veterans' preference is applied to eligible veterans who were discharged or released from military service under honorable conditions.

TSA will also consider applications from individuals who are about to be released from active duty military. Members of the uniformed service may accept a civilian position if they have performed active duty service and are on transition leave pending separation or release from active duty under honorable conditions.

To claim veterans' preference on the application, you must provide appropriate documentation such as the copy of the DD-214 Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty showing item 24. Character of Service (Service-2 copy or Member-4 copy). If you have not yet received the DD-214 prior to final separation or transition from active military service, you may submit a "Statement of Service" letter from your military chain of command in lieu of the DD-214 to support veterans' preference eligibility during the application process.

The non-competitive TSA Veteran Appointment Authority applies to management, administrative, and professional positions at TSA and is similar to the Veterans' Recruitment Appointment. The eligibility requirements include: disabled veterans; veterans who served on active duty in the Armed Forces during a war declared by Congress, or in a campaign for which a campaign badge has been authorized; veterans who, while serving on active duty in the Armed Forces, participated in a military operation for which the Armed Forces Service Medal was awarded; or veterans separated from active service within 3 years. The appointment authority does not apply for the Transportation Security Executive Service, Transportation Security Officer or Federal Air Marshal positions.

Q: How is veterans' preference applied at TSA?

A: For transportation security officer positions, TSA applies veterans' preference as defined in P.L. 107-71 and to those individuals eligible under the provisions of Section 2108 of Title 5 United States Code (U.S.C.). To be eligible for veterans' preference under P.L.107-71, you must be a member or former member of the U.S. Armed Forces, and entitled under statute to retired, retirement or retainer pay.

For all other TSA positions, TSA provides preference at the point of selection to those eligible for veterans' preference as defined under the provisions of 5 U.S.C. §2108.

Q: If I am hired by TSA, an excepted-service agency, will I be able to move to other federal agencies that are in the competitive service?

A: Yes. The U.S. Office of Personnel Management and DHS/TSA have entered into an interchange agreement, which allows certain permanent TSA employees to apply and be selected for vacancies in competitive service agencies.

Military Travel Assistance

TSA provides airport security screening assistance and benefits for all members of the U.S. Armed Forces. The following information for screening your person, carry-on bags and checked baggage can help you have a smooth travel experience at the airport.

Assistance for Veterans and Wounded Warriors

Injured, wounded service members, veterans and wounded warriors may contact TSA Cares to request assistance with the security screening process. TSA Cares is a helpline to assist travelers with disabilities and medical conditions. Call TSA Cares 72 hours prior to traveling with questions about screening policies, procedures and what to expect at the security checkpoint at (855) 787-2227.

TSA verifies the status of individuals identifying themselves as a wounded warriors, through the appropriate military branch. Following verification, the travel information is provided to the departing/arriving U.S. airports where wounded warriors may use TSA Pre✓® expedited screening at available locations or experience other expedited screening procedures.

Injured service members/veterans requesting assistance will have their travel information and type of assistance required provided to the departing/arriving U.S. airports to ensure they receive proper assistance at the security checkpoint.

Expedited Screening Benefits

All members of the U.S. Armed Forces, including those serving in the Reserves and National Guard can benefit from TSA Pre✓® expedited screening at select airports when flying on participating airlines. Cadets and midshipmen of the U.S. Military Academy, Naval Academy, Coast Guard Academy and Air Force Academy are also eligible to receive TSA Pre✓® screening benefits. Use your Department of Defense identification number when making flight reservations. Accompanying family members ages 12 and under can be processed through expedited screening as well. Learn about TSA Pre✓®.

U.S. Armed Forces members do not need to be in uniform and may use TSA Pre✓® while on personal or official travel.

Enter the 10-digit DoD ID number located on the back of the common access card as your known traveler number when making flight reservations or when updating your Defense Travel

System profile for official travel. If the number is not on your CAC, you may obtain it by logging on to milConnect. You will find your ID number under the “My Profile” tab. To ensure future airline reservations automatically include your DoD ID number, save it in your DTS profile. You may also save your DoD ID number in any frequent flyer program profiles of the participating airlines.

Transport of Weapons by an Individual Soldier

Firearms, ammunition and firearm parts are prohibited in carry-on baggage and may be transported in checked baggage only. If you have just returned from overseas duty or any assignment where you carried a firearm or ammunition, check your carry-on bag and other belongings to ensure firearms, parts or ammunition are not present.

Rules for individually transporting firearms and ammunition.

Rules for transporting sharp objects and tool.

List of prohibited hazardous materials.

Transport of Weapons by the Unit

The unit must declare weapons and ammunition to the aircraft operator.

Weapons must be unloaded.

Weapons must be collectively secured in a crate and banded or individually locked in a hard-sided case.

Ammunition must also be securely packed in fiber (such as cardboard), wood or metal boxes or other packaging specifically designed to carry small amounts of ammunition.

Firearm magazines/clips for packing ammunition must be completely and securely enclosing any ammunition (e.g., by securely covering the exposed portions of the magazine or by securely placing the magazine in a pouch, holder or holster).

You may carry the ammunition in the same hard-sided case as the firearm, as long as you pack it as described above.

A unit representative must submit the unit's official travel orders and an inventory of weapons and ammunition being transported.

The unit representative must certify to TSA in writing that the weapons are unloaded.

Law Enforcement Travel

Flying Armed: To qualify to fly armed, unless otherwise authorized by TSA, federal regulation states that a law enforcement officer must meet all of the following requirements:

Be a federal law enforcement officer or a full-time municipal, county, state, tribal or territorial law enforcement officer who is a direct government agency employee.

Be sworn and commissioned to enforce criminal or immigration statutes.

Be authorized by the employing agency to have the weapon in connection with assigned duties.

Have completed the TSA Law Enforcement Officer Flying Armed Training Course.

In addition to the above requirements, municipal, county, state, tribal, or territorial officers must present an operational need to have the weapon accessible from the time he or she would otherwise check the weapon, until the time it would be claimed after deplaning. The need to have the weapon accessible aboard the aircraft must be determined by the employing agency and based on one of the following:

Assigned to a protective duty as a principal or advance team, or on travel required to be prepared to engage in a protective function.

Conducting a hazardous surveillance operation.

On official travel with a requirement to report to another location armed and prepared for duty immediately upon landing.

Control of a prisoner, or on a round trip ticket returning from escorting or traveling to pick up a prisoner.

Employed as a federal law enforcement officer, whether or not on official travel, and traveling armed in accordance with the policies or directives of the employing agency.

Common examples of travel that does not meet the threshold for carriage of accessible weapons are:

Individuals possessing the status of a retired, contract, reserve, auxiliary or annuitant law enforcement personnel.

Law enforcement officers who have not been granted general arrest authority and/or are limited specifically to governmental facilities.

Any law enforcement officer who is employed by a department, agency or service that is not fully taxpayer funded.

Attendance of non-operational or enforcement related activities (e.g., training, conferences, police week, memorial services, personal travel, etc.).

State, local, territorial, tribal and approved railroad law enforcement officers flying armed must submit a National Law Enforcement Telecommunications System message at least 24 hours prior to travel. More information on this procedure is contained in the training program. To request the training material, you must:

Be a full-time law enforcement officer meeting the instructor qualification standards of the agency.

Send the request from a government email.

Include in the body of the email the following:

Your name and contact information.

Your agency's name and address.

Your supervisor's name and full contact information.

Brief narrative detailing your operational need to fly armed.

Security Screening

TSA incorporates unpredictable security measures, both seen and unseen, to accomplish the transportation security mission. Security measures begin long before you arrive at the airport. TSA works closely with the intelligence and law enforcement communities to share information. Additional security measures are in place from the time you get to the airport until you get to your destination.

TSA adjusts processes and procedures to meet the evolving threat and to achieve the highest levels of transportation security. Because of this, you may notice changes in our procedures from time to time. TSA counts on the traveling public to report unattended bags or packages; individuals in possession of a threatening item; and persons trying to enter a restricted area or similar suspicious activities at airports, train stations, bus stops and ports. If You See Something, Say Something™. Report suspicious activity to local law enforcement.

Passenger screening at the airport is part of TSA's layered approach to security to get you safely to your destination. TSA's screening procedures are intended to prevent prohibited items and other threats to transportation security from entering the sterile area of the airport and are developed in response to information on threats to transportation security.

Carry-on Baggage Screening in Standard Lanes: TSA screens approximately 4.9 million carry-on bags for explosives and other dangerous items daily. Here's what to expect when taking your carry-on bag through security screening next time you fly.

Electronics: As TSA rolls out new carry-on screening procedures, you will be asked to remove personal electronic devices larger than a cell phone from your carry-on bag and place them into a bin with nothing placed on or under them for X-ray screening. Common examples of these devices include laptops, tablets, e-readers and handheld game consoles. This does not include items such as hair dryers, electric shavers or electric toothbrushes.

TSA screens approximately 1.3 million checked bags for explosives and other dangerous items daily. Upon check in, your checked baggage will be provided to TSA for security screening. Once the screening process has completed, your airline will transport your checked baggage on your respective flight as well as deliver it to the baggage claim area. The majority of checked baggage is screened without the need for a physical bag search.

Inspection Notices: TSA may inspect your checked baggage during the screening process. If your property is physically inspected, TSA will place a notice of baggage inspection inside your bag. This is to inform you that an officer conducted an inspection of your property.

Claims: If your property is lost or damaged during the screening process, you may file a claim with TSA. If your property is lost or damaged during transport to the plane or baggage claim, please contact your airline.

Locks: TSA has been provided universal "master" keys under agreements with Safe Skies Luggage Locks and Travel Sentry so that certain branded locks may not have to be cut to inspect baggage. These locks are commercially available, and packaging on the locks should indicate they may be opened by TSA officers. TSA has no position on the validity or effectiveness of these products as a security measure and will be forced to remove these products if necessary during the inspection.

Monitoring: Responsibilities for access control and video monitoring of checked baggage facilities fall to individual airports as part of their security plan. Methods of monitoring vary from airport to airport and may include CCTV.

TSA works closely with international partners to maintain aviation security standards abroad. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security is actively working to raise the baseline for aviation security across the globe by requiring the implementation of enhanced security measures, both seen and unseen, at approximately 280 foreign airports with direct commercial flights to the U.S., in more than 100 countries around the world. Read about the security measures and FAQ for more information on aviation security worldwide.

If you are flying from any of the last-point-of-departure airports into the U.S., you may experience a more extensive screening process and should prepare for additional screening of your property and personal electronic devices. We recommend arriving early to the airport to allow enough time for the screening process. Please know, there are no changes to items allowed in carry-on and checked baggage.

Most hazardous materials are forbidden in carry-on and checked baggage. There are a few exceptions for some personal items such as toiletries, medicines, battery powered electronics and assistive devices. To learn about transporting hazardous materials to the U.S., check the Federal Aviation Administration Pack Safe list.

Pat-down procedures are used to determine whether prohibited items or other threats to transportation security are concealed on the person. You may be required to undergo a pat-down procedure if the screening technology alarms, as part of unpredictable security measures, for enhanced screening, or as an alternative to other types of screening, such as advanced imaging technology screening. Even passengers who normally receive expedited screening, such as TSA Pre✓® passengers, may at times receive a pat-down.

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