



One Hundred Tenth Congress
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20515

November 1, 2007

The Honorable Edmund S. Hawley
Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security
Transportation Security Administration
601 South 12th Street
Arlington, VA 22202-4220

Dear Assistant Secretary Hawley:

I write regarding disturbing information that has come to my attention concerning covert testing of Transportation Security Administration (TSA) airport screening checkpoints. The attached email, entitled "NOTICE OF POSSIBLE SECURITY TEST," was sent from TSA's "NETHUB" on April 28, 2006 at 2:51 PM to numerous recipients, apparently including all Federal Security Directors and other airport security staff.

The email, which takes the form of a memorandum from TSA's Assistant Administrator for the Office of Security Operations, states that the information is provided for "situational awareness." It goes on to say that airport authorities and airport police received "informal notice" of "possible security testing," and concludes with specific information about the methods the testers are using and a brief description of the testers themselves.

In March of this year, the Department of Homeland Security's Office of Inspector General (IG) issued OIG-07-35, entitled "Audit of Access to Airport Secured Areas." The unclassified summary of this report states that the IG had "performed access control testing at 14 domestic airports of various sizes," and that its "four-person team conducted more than 600 access control tests." Though the summary does not state when and where this testing took place, I am concerned that this work may have been compromised.

Obviously, any effort to undermine the integrity of covert testing of TSA's screening checkpoints is unacceptable, and I have directed Committee staff to examine the circumstances surrounding this email as well as to determine whether it is an isolated incident or part of a broader practice. To this end, pursuant to Rule X(3)(g) and Rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives, I ask that you provide the following information no later than Friday, November 9, 2007.

1. A narrative explanation of the circumstances surrounding the issuance of the attached email, including how the underlying information in the email was obtained and the names of the individuals who drafted, edited, and sent it.
2. All drafts of the email.

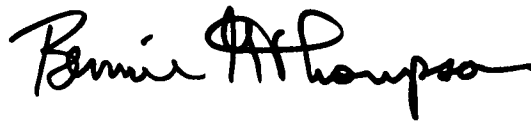
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3. All responses to the email.
4. All emails, documents, memoranda, notes, instant messages, or other communications concerning the email.
5. A listing of all recipients of the email by name and title.
6. A listing by name and title of any other TSA employees who were aware of the warning.
7. With respect to any other instance where advanced notice of covert testing may have occurred, please provide any email, document, memorandum, note, instant message, or other communication discussing covert testing or alerting anyone within the TSA or at any airport or airline to the presence of covert testers or possibility of ongoing or upcoming covert testing.
8. All communications from NETHUB to the field from inception to the present.
9. All communications from the field to NETHUB from inception to the present.
10. For anything provided in response to (7) above, please provide all the information requested in items (1) through (6).

I appreciate your assistance with this matter and look forward to your prompt response. If you have any questions, please contact Cherri Branson, Chief Oversight Counsel, at (202) 226-2616.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bennie G. Thompson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bennie G. Thompson
Chairman

Enclosure

-----Original Message-----

From: NETHUB

Sent: Friday, April 28, 2006 2:51 PM

To: TSA FSD; TSA DFSD; TSA AFSDS; TSA AFSD-R; TSA AFSD-LE

Cc: TSNM COMMERCIAL AIRLINES; TSNM COMMERCIAL AIRPORTS; Schear, James; Morris, Earl R; McGowan, Morris; Restovich, Mike; Tashiro, Susan; NETHUB

Subject: NOTICE OF POSSIBLE SECURITY TEST

Date: April 28, 2006

To: Federal Security Directors

From: Mike Restovich, Assistant Administrator, Office of Security Operations

Primary POC: NetHub

Secondary POC: None

Action Due Date: None

Subject: NOTICE OF POSSIBLE SECURITY TEST

This information is provided for your situational awareness. Several airport authorities and airport police departments have recently received informal notice of possible DOT/FAA security testing at airports around the nation. Here is the text of one such notification:

Several airports have reported that the DOT is testing airports throughout the country. Two individuals have been identified as FAA or DOT at the airport in JAX this morning. They have a stack of fake ID's, they try to penetrate security, place IED's on aircraft and test gate staff.

These individuals were in CHS earlier this week and using a date altered boarding pass managed to get through the security checkpoint. Alert your security line vendors to be aware of subtle alterations to date info. They should also pay very close attention to the photo id's being presented. They will print a boarding pass from a flight, change the date, get through security (if not noticed) and try to board a flight and place a bag in the overhead.

There is a couple, and the woman has an ID with an oriental woman's picture, even though she is Caucasian. We are getting the word out.

Office of Security Operations, NetHub