



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

November 1, 2007

The Honorable Richard L. Skinner  
Inspector General  
Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Inspector General Skinner:

I write to inform you of some disturbing information that has recently 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 was 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, your office issued OIG-07-35, entitled "Audit of Access to Airport Secured Areas." The unclassified summary states that you "performed access control testing at 14 domestic airports of various sizes," and that your "four-person team conducted more than 600 access control tests." Though the unclassified summary of your report does not reveal when and where your testing took place, the email was sent some eleven months before your report. If the email provided advance notice of covert testing during the time period in which your office conducted covert testing, I am concerned that the important oversight work of your office may have been compromised.

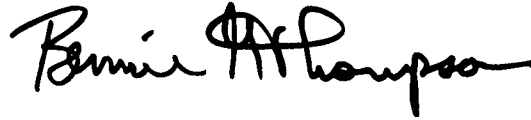
Obviously, any effort to undermine the integrity of covert testing of TSA's screening checkpoints is unacceptable. In your August 29, 2007 Letter Report concerning the advance notice of covert testing given to Transportation Security Officers at Jackson-Evers airport in Jackson, MS, you state that you are assessing whether this type of incident was isolated to that airport. I ask that you expand your inquiry to include consideration of all facts surrounding the attached email as well as whether *any* covert testing by any government entity (whether conducted by your office, the Government Accountability Office, or the TSA itself) was compromised by advance warnings.

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Thank you for your assistance with this matter. 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 style with a large, prominent initial "B".

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