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**HOMELAND SECURITY COMPONENT AGENCIES MAXIMIZING IT RESOURCES
TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF AMERICANS**

First Step Enables Rapid Communication and Coordination Capabilities for Airport Security

Washington, D.C. – The Transportation Security Administration (TSA), the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) and the U.S. Customs Service (USCS) today announced a plan to make IT systems at over 100 airports nationwide safer and provide critical threat information to airport security screeners. This will leverage the use of current systems, plan for future IT investments and help create an IT infrastructure to manage tens of thousands of TSA employees and provide them with rapid, coordinated means of communication.

"These agencies are setting an example for the rest of the Federal government that we can prioritize our resources, and work together to meet our collective Homeland Security goals," said Steve Cooper of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Transition Planning Office.

Chief Information Officer (CIO) of USCS, Woody Hall, and CIO of INS, Scott Hastings, both stressed the potential long-term benefits for these three agencies to cooperate at common locations such as airports.

"It is no longer business as usual in the Federal government as we work to ensure the safety of the American people. This is a powerful example of how the Homeland Security IT Investment Review Group has given immediate attention to an agency's basic IT needs. The Group's effective review of technologies will accelerate the deployment of IT systems, eliminate redundancy and provide cohesive interagency operations," said Mark Forman, Associate Director for IT and E-Gov at OMB.

Currently, TSA operations only provide Federal Security Directors and their staff working at our nation's airports with cell phones, pagers and dial-up PCs rather than a coordinated system of communication. The Homeland Security IT Investment Review Group is responsible for coordinating this analysis effort and is working to implement the most modern, cost-effective IT systems available to provide interoperability between proposed Department of Homeland Security component agencies.

The Homeland Security IT Investment Review Group quickly approved a TSA request for IT infrastructure services. Using the Dulles Washington Airport as a pilot study, TSA, INS and USCS were then able to develop a detailed business model for the sharing of IT infrastructure to be applied at over 100 airports nationwide. The results of this analysis indicate that airport infrastructure sharing could lead to significant cost savings for Homeland Security (See testimony at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/legislative/testimony/forman100102.html>).

To date, the Group has also approved a TSA business case including plans for deployment and cooperative efforts between TSA, INS and USCS to establish a common IT infrastructure where possible. For example, TSA will be able to share facilities at airports with the INS and USCS to meet their operational needs and to maximize existing IT investments.

"We are thankful that TSA now has a clear path to meeting its objective of securing the nation's airline transportation system. The Group's quick action has helped to make this possible," said Pat Schambach, Chief Information Officer of TSA.

The Homeland Security IT Investment Review Group includes the Chief Information Officers of the proposed Department of Homeland Security component agencies lead by the Office of Homeland Security and the OMB. The Group was created to reduce redundant IT investments, implement modern, interoperable IT capabilities, and identify cost-saving opportunities for the proposed Department of Homeland Security.

For more information, please contact OMB Communications at (202) 395-7254.

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