

Statement of

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Good morning Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Jackson-Lee, and distinguished Members of the Subcommittee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today about the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) workforce.

Both in the field and at headquarters, the TSA workforce is vigilant in ensuring the security of people and commerce that flow through our Nation's vast transportation networks. TSA employs risk-based, intelligence-driven operations to prevent terrorist attacks and to reduce the vulnerability of the Nation's transportation system to terrorism. Our goal at all times is to maximize transportation security to stay ahead of evolving terrorist threats while protecting privacy and facilitating the flow of legitimate travel and commerce. TSA's security measures create a multi-layered system of transportation security that mitigates risk. We continue to evolve our security approach by examining the procedures and technologies we use, how specific security procedures are carried out, and how screening is conducted.

The TSA workforce occupies the frontline in executing the agency's transportation security responsibilities in support of the Nation's counterterrorism efforts. These responsibilities include security screening of passengers and baggage at 450 airports in the United States that facilitate air travel for 1.8 million people per day; vetting more than 14 million passengers and over 13 million transportation workers against the terrorist watch list each week; and conducting security regulation compliance inspections and enforcement activities at airports, for domestic and foreign air carriers, and for air cargo screening operations throughout the United States and at last point of departure locations internationally.

TSA also ensures the security of surface transportation operations. We have 25 multi-modal Visible Intermodal Prevention and Response (VIPR) Teams working in transportation sectors across the country to prevent or disrupt potential terrorist planning activities. Since late 2005, we have conducted over 25,000 VIPR operations, with over 16,300 occurring in surface modes. And, since 2006, TSA has completed more than 230 Baseline Assessments for Security Enhancement for transit, which provides a comprehensive assessment of security programs in critical transit systems. We are seeing the benefits of how these important steps — combined with our well-trained and highly motivated workforce and our multiple layers of security including cutting-edge technology — keep America safe every day.

TSA is committed, not only to improving the effectiveness of security, but to doing so in the most cost-effective manner possible. Through advancements in workforce efficiency, TSA has been able to accommodate the increased workload that has accompanied the current practice of many airlines to charge fees for all checked baggage, the restrictions on liquids aerosols, and gels we had to implement to counter a known terrorist threat, and the screening required for the significant increase in the number of laptops carried by passengers. By employing smarter security practices in developing and deploying our people, processes and technologies we are delivering more effective security in a more efficient manner, and we will continue to do so.

Adopting a Risk-Based Security Strategy

Last Fall, TSA began developing a strategy for enhanced use of intelligence and other information to enable a more risk-based security (RBS) in all facets of transportation, including

passenger screening, air cargo, and surface transportation. At its core, the concept of RBS demonstrates a progression of the work TSA has been doing throughout its first decade of service to the American people. RBS is an acknowledgment that risk is inherent in virtually everything we do, and TSA is not in the business of eliminating all risk associated with traveling from point A to point B. Our objective is to mitigate risk in a way that effectively balances security measures with privacy, civil rights and civil liberties concerns while both promoting the safe movement of people and commerce and guarding against a deliberate attack against our transportation systems.

RBS in the passenger screening context allows our dedicated Transportation Security Officers (TSOs) to focus more attention on those travelers we believe are more likely to pose a risk to our transportation network – including those on the U.S. known or suspected terrorist watch list – while providing expedited screening, and perhaps a better travel experience, to those we consider pose less risk.

Through various RBS initiatives, TSA is moving away from a one-size-fits-all security model and closer to its goal of providing the most effective transportation security in the most efficient way possible. While a one-size-fits-all approach has been effective over the past decade, and was necessary after 9/11, two key enablers – technology and intelligence – are allowing TSA to move toward a RBS model.

TSA Pre✓™ Program

Perhaps the most widely known risk-based security enhancement we are putting in place is TSA Pre✓™. Since first implementing this idea last Fall, the program has been expanded to 12 airports, making it possible for passengers flying from these airports to experience expedited security screening through TSA Pre✓™. The feedback we've been getting is consistently positive.

Under TSA Pre✓™, individuals volunteer information about themselves prior to flying in order to potentially expedite the travel experience. By changing procedures for those travelers we know more about, through information they voluntarily provide, and combining that information

with our multi-layered system of aviation security, TSA can better focus our limited resources on higher-risk and unknown passengers. This new screening system holds great potential to strengthen security while significantly enhancing the travel experience, whenever possible, for passengers.

TSA pre-screens TSA Pre✓™ passengers each time they fly through participating airports. If the indicator embedded in their boarding pass reflects eligibility for expedited screening, the passenger is able to use the Pre✓™ lane. Currently, eligible participants include certain frequent flyers from American Airlines and Delta Air Lines as well as existing members of U.S. Customs and Border Protection's trusted traveler programs, such as Global Entry, who are U.S. citizens and are flying domestically on participating airlines. TSA is actively working with other major air carriers such as United Airlines, US Airways, Jet Blue, Hawaiian Airlines, and Alaska Airlines to expand both the number of participating airlines and the number of airports where expedited screening through TSA Pre✓™ is provided. In February 2012, Secretary Napolitano and TSA Administrator Pistole announced the goal to have TSA Pre✓™ rolled out and operating at 35 of the busiest domestic airports by the end of 2012.

TSA Pre✓™ travelers are able to divest fewer items, which may include leaving on their shoes, jacket, and light outerwear, and may enjoy other modifications to the standard screening process. As always, TSA will continue to incorporate random and unpredictable security measures throughout the security process. At no point are TSA Pre✓™ travelers guaranteed expedited screening.

People Define Programmatic Success

The success of RBS and initiatives like TSA Pre✓™ depend upon people. A dedicated TSA workforce assures the traveling public that they are protected by a multi-layered system of transportation security that mitigates risk. An effective workforce must be properly trained. Good management and decent pay are key ingredients in preserving a motivated and skilled workforce. To this end, TSA has implemented employee development initiatives like the Leaders at Every Level (LEL), through which TSA identifies high-performing employees and fosters commitments to excellence and teamwork, and the Associates Degree Program, which builds morale and provides the workforce an opportunity to enhance technical and non-technical

skills through formal training and education programs. The implementation of a new four-tier performance management program for non-TSOs enables the workforce to actively engage in developing their annual performance goals in collaboration with their supervisors, while promoting two-way communication between employees and their supervisors throughout the performance year. Providing a mechanism to proactively identify opportunities to improve their performance has increased employee morale.

Every day, the TSA workforce, including front-line workers and managers both in the field and at headquarters, strives to ensure our operational planning and decision-making process is timely, efficient, well-coordinated, and based on intelligence. Management communicates with our frontline officers through shift briefings held several times a day.

We also work to share critical information with key industry stakeholders whenever appropriate. Thanks to the effective partnerships we've forged with industry stakeholders, with our airline and airport partners, and with law enforcement colleagues at every level, TSA has achieved a number of significant milestones during its first ten years of service. These include screening 100 percent of all passengers flying into, out of, and within the United States for terrorism through the Secure Flight program, screening all air cargo transported on passenger planes domestically, and working closely with our international partners every day to screen 100 percent of high-risk inbound cargo on passenger planes. Our goal is that by the end of 2012, 100 percent of inbound cargo on passenger aircraft must be screened according to TSA-approved protocols. We are also improving aviation security through innovative technology that provides advanced baggage screening for explosives.

Conclusion

As we review and evaluate the effectiveness of TSA's aviation security enhancements, we must always be cognizant of the fact that these enhancements are only as good as the people who operate, staff and manage them. As we strive to continue strengthening transportation security and improving, whenever possible the overall travel experience for all Americans, we must always remember that our success is defined in the final analysis by our people. Whether it is for business or for pleasure, the freedom to travel from place to place is fundamental to our way of

life, and to do so securely is a goal to which everyone at TSA is fully committed. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. We will be happy to address any questions you may have.