



**“Not on my watch”: 50 Failures of TSA’s
Transportation Security Officers**

**CONGRESSMAN MARSHA BLACKBURN
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

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A TSA Transportation Security Officer takes a nap at LaGuardia Airport while on duty.
(Photo by Bucky Turco)

“Among these public servants are TSA's workforce, men and women who report to their posts each day motivated by the motto, "not on my watch."... Perhaps the next time you are going through airport security, taking a moment to convey respect and thanks to the Transportation Security Officers, the folks in the new blue uniforms, would offer well deserved recognition. After all, your safety is their priority.”

- Ellen Howe, Assistant Administrator, Office of Strategic Communications & Public Affairs, Transportation Security Administration

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Executive Summary

Our national domestic airline passenger screening policy in the United States was initially implemented in response to the increasing number of domestic flight hijackings throughout the 1960s and early 1970s. The Congressional Research Service has reported that 134 domestic flights were hijacked in the United States between 1961 and 1972.

In response to these hijackings, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) implemented domestic passenger security screening at airports across the United States in 1973. This required airlines to conduct pre-board screening of passengers and their carry-on items. The following year, Congress passed the Air Transportation Security Act of 1974 (P.L. 93-366, 88 Stat. 409) which specifically required the screening of all passengers and their carry-on baggage. As a result of these new screening procedures, incidents of domestic hijackings were virtually nonexistent in the United States by the 1990s.

However, the horrific events on the morning of September 11, 2001 completely changed the way our government must view federal aviation security. In the wake of September 11, 2001, President George W. Bush signed into law the Aviation and Transportation Security Act (ATSA; P.L. 107-71) which created the Transportation Security Administration (TSA).

Since its creation, the TSA has greatly expanded its authority and reach to include every transportation sector within the United States. While in the last decade TSA has employed many dedicated public servants who truly have a deep desire to serve our country, they have also hired an alarming number of individuals who in many cases would never have passed a simple background check. The individuals who are featured in this report are not only abusing their public positions but they are using their jobs to commit federal crimes against the very public they are sworn to protect.

This problem has only exacerbated itself since 2005 when TSA administratively reclassified airport security screeners as Transportation Security Officers. To make matters worse, TSA upgraded TSOs uniforms to reflect those of federal law enforcement officers, complete with metal officer badges. Despite their new title of officer, TSOs receive zero federal law enforcement training and as you will see in

this report, many TSOs have displayed little respect for the titles they hold and uniforms they wear.

The purpose of this report is to demonstrate the urgent need to improve our nation's airport screening operations. Despite the ever present threat of domestic terrorism, many Transportation Security Officers have proven time and time again that they are unqualified to serve as one of our nation's last lines of defense.

Key Findings

The findings in this report provides a small snap shot detailing 50 crimes TSA employees have been arrested for since 2005. This report does not highlight every arrest that has been made since 2005. Collectively, the crimes these individuals have been arrested for illustrates a deepening problem within TSA’s training and hiring practices that makes the United States more susceptible to a domestic threat.

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Disclaimer: Each individual in this report charged with a criminal offense is presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS

Photo
Not
Available

CAPTURED

JONATHAN GOODY

Airport: John F. Kennedy International

Position: Transportation Security Officer

Crime: Hit and Run, Assault

Date: November 17, 2005

“A CHRISTIAN ROCK musician - who once played for Pope John Paul II - was nearly beaten to death early yesterday by an off-duty airport security agent during a Brooklyn road-rage clash, cops and relatives said. Johnny Philippidis, 27, lay in a medically induced coma last night at Lutheran Medical Center, and his mother, Jannine, was keeping vigil at his bedside.

Jonathan Goody, 25, was driving from his job at Kennedy Airport when his luxury sedan and Philippidis' SUV collided at 12:40 a.m. at 65th St. and Third Ave. in Bay Ridge, police said. Both men got out of their vehicles after the wreck and allegedly exchanged heated words.

Police said the federal Transportation Security Administration agent hit Philippidis several times and then sped away.”

Source: New York Daily News (November 17, 2005)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



CAPTURED

RONNIKI ACK/ YVETTE REYNOLDS

Airport: John F. Kennedy International

Position: Transportation Security Officers

Crime: Theft

Date: December 14, 2005

“Two airport screeners at Kennedy Airport -- both of them women -- have been arrested and charged with stealing the wallet of a man who was going through security screening. When his baggage arrived late, Canberry realized the contents of his wallet had been stolen. The retired New York City Firefighter immediately cut his vacation short, worried and devastated by the loss.

Sources say TSA Screeners Ronniki Ack and Yvette Reynolds were still in uniform and caught red handed using the stolen ATM card at various banks. The two allegedly went on a shopping spree. Sources say one even bought an iPod from a Circuit City.”

Source: WABC-TV New York, NY (December 14, 2005)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



CAPTURED

RICHARD MCLAUGHLIN

Airport: Boston Logan International

Position: Lead Transportation Security Officer

Crime: Child Pornography

Date: April 5, 2008

“Massachusetts and Florida police arrested a Logan Airport Lead Transportation Security Officer on a variety of child pornography charges.

After an undercover sting police say that they arrested Richard D. McLaughlin, 48, of Everett, who currently is in custody in St. Lucie County, Fla., in lieu of \$350,000 bail. **McLaughlin unwittingly contacted an undercover Florida child porn task force agent who was posing online as a father with an available 11-year-old daughter.**

Between January and March, from his home in Everett, McLaughlin allegedly discussed and repeatedly asked the agent for online sex with the purported daughter. The agent allegedly received multiple links to child porn images from McLaughlin. Florida agents, along with Massachusetts State Police, arrested McLaughlin at his house on March 7.”

Source: Private Officer News Network (April 5, 2008)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



WANDA WEEMS

Airport: Newark Liberty International

Position: Transportation Security Officer

Crime: Bypassing Airport Screening & Traffic Warrants

Date: July 3, 2009

“Wanda Weems, 45, of Newark, boarded Continental Flight 1011, bound for Houston, Friday morning but neither she nor her luggage was screened by authorities, officials said.

The flight was held up for over an hour as every passenger was taken off the plane and screened again, TSA spokeswoman Ann Davis said. The plane took off at 10:15 a.m. without Weems, who was questioned and taken into custody, Davis said.

John Kelly, a spokesman for the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, which operates the airport, said a subsequent investigation by agency police found she was wanted on traffic-related warrants.”

Source: New Jersey Star-Ledger (July 4, 2009) & Associated Press

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



CAPTURED

CHARLES BENNETT

Airport: Orlando International

Position: Transportation Security Officer

Crime: Child Molestation

Date: February 1, 2010

“A TSA agent has been arrested and charged with lewd and lascivious molestation of a minor after police say he tried to keep a girl as a sex slave. Police arrested 57-year-old Charles Bennett of Winter Garden on Friday. A 15-year-old girl was the one who reported him to police.

According to reports from the Orange County Sheriff's Office and the Orange County Jail, the 15-year-old victim confided in her caregivers that Bennett had touched her inappropriately three years ago when she was 12. **She says he also asked the young girl to be his "sex slave," an accusation investigators say Bennett admitted to in a written statement to police.**

Source: My Fox Orlando (February 1, 2010)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



CAPTURED

GEORGE THOMPSON

Airport: Minneapolis St. Paul International

Position: Transportation Security Officer

Crime: Hate Crime

Date: May 4, 2010

“A Minneapolis man has pleaded guilty to violating the civil rights of an 83-year-old Somali man after assaulting him while yelling that he was Muslim and should go back to Africa.

George Thompson entered the plea Wednesday in federal court in St. Paul.

Court papers say the 64-year-old former employee of the Transportation Security Administration told the older man he was going to kill him and chased him into a Minneapolis street on May 4, 2010.

The court documents say Thompson's actions were based on the victim's "actual and perceived religion and national origin." He was charged under a federal hate crimes act that became law in 2009 and was named for Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, two well-known hate crime victims.

Source: My Fox 9 Twin Cities (August 10, 2011)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



CAPTURED

SEAN SHANAHAN

Airport: Boston Logan International

Position: Transportation Security Officer

Crime: Statutory Rape of a Minor

Date: March 9, 2010

“A TSA employee at Logan International Airport is facing statutory rape charges Tuesday.

Sean Shanahan was arrested by police in Winthrop. **Officials say he sexually assaulted a 14-year-old girl at his home during school vacation week.**

Shanahan allegedly sent her sexually explicit text messages.

Shanahan was held on \$50,000 bail following his arraignment and ordered to have no contact with the victim or any minors.”

Source: Boston WCVB TV (March 9, 2010)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



CAPTURED

ROLANDO NEGRIN

Airport: Miami International

Position: Transportation Security Officer

Crime: Assault

Date: May 7, 2010

“A Transportation Security Administration screener at Miami International Airport was arrested this week for allegedly beating up a co-worker after months of jokes about the size of the screener's genitalia that colleagues observed during training with full-body scanning machines.

The agency has suspended Rolando Negrin, 44, after his arrest Tuesday night after beating a co-worker who had made the jokes. The AP reported that Negrin reportedly told police he "could not take the jokes any more and lost his mind."

Source: Washington Post (May 7, 2010)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



CAPTURED

LEROY RAY

Airport: Newark Liberty International

Position: Transportation Security Officer

Crime: Theft

Date: May 18, 2010

“A Transportation Security Administration agent has been arrested for allegedly stealing nearly \$500 dollars from a wheelchair bound passenger as she passed through a security checkpoint at Newark Airport.

Leroy Ray allegedly went into the disabled woman's bag as it passed through the X-ray machine.

Ray was caught on surveillance video on February 3, 2010, reaching into the woman's bag to steal an envelope of cash, according to a criminal complaint.”

Source: NBC New York (May 18, 2010)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



CAPTURED

CHRISTOPHER BURLEY

Airport: Little Rock National

Position: Transportation Security Officer

Crime: Theft

Date: July 3, 2010

“Thirty-three year old Christopher Burley is accused of stealing painkillers from a passenger at Little Rock's National Airport.

Passengers at the airport are shocked over what police say Burley, a TSA screener did Wednesday morning. When a female passenger noticed painkillers missing from her purse after going through a security checkpoint, an investigation was prompted. Later, a TSA official found the missing pills they say Burley tried to hide.

According to employees at the airport, it was all caught on camera, too.”

Source: Fox 16 Little Rock (July 3, 2010)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



CAPTURED

MICHAEL ARATO

Airport: Newark Liberty International

Position: Transportation Security Officer Supervisor

Crime: Bribery

Date: October 20, 2010

“A TSA security screening supervisor at Newark Liberty International Airport has admitted accepting bribes and kickbacks from a co-worker who stole money from passengers during security screenings.

Michael Arato, 41, of Ewing also admitted Monday in federal court in Newark that he regularly stole from passengers who went through his checkpoint in Terminal B.

Prosecutors say Arato permitted a worker he supervised to steal between \$10,000 and \$30,000 in cash from travelers' bags over a 13-month period. In exchange, the subordinate would give a portion of the money to Arato. The subordinate, who was not named, cooperated with the federal investigation that led to Arato's arrest in October.”

Source: New York Fox (February 14, 2011)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



CAPTURED

ANDREW CHEEVER

Airport: Boston Logan International

Position: Transportation Security Officer

Crime: Child Pornography

Date: December 16, 2010

“A former TSA employee has been arraigned on child pornography charges in Lowell, the Middlesex District Attorney’s office said today.

Andrew Cheever, 33, of Lowell, was arraigned on two counts of possession of child pornography. Cheever was held on \$15,000 cash bail with the conditions that he has no contact with children under the age of 18, no employment or volunteer work with children under the age of 18, and does not use the computer and/or internet.

According to authorities, on Oct. 8, Massachusetts State Police conducted an investigation into the use of file-sharing programs for the possession and distribution of child pornographic images and videos.

During the investigation, investigators noticed a computer on the network which was sharing suspected child pornography files.

On Oct. 15, a search warrant was executed at Cheever’s home, where the suspected computer was registered.”

Source: Boston Fox 25 (December 16, 2010)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



CAPTURED

RICKY GERMAN

Airport: Memphis International

Position: Transportation Security Officer

Crime: Theft

Date: December 20, 2010

“The Transportation Safety Administration agent accused of stealing a passenger's laptop computer at Memphis International Airport says he didn't do it. On Wednesday, airport police charged German with theft in connection with a Dec. 20 incident at the airport.

A passenger accidentally left an Apple Macbook valued at \$1,200 in the "C" baggage claim lobby at the airport and reported it missing about 8:15 p.m. that night, according to a court affidavit filed by airport police.

Surveillance video at the airport shows German with the laptop about 7:30 p.m. It shows him throwing away paperwork with the owner's name on it from the case, according to the affidavit.”

Source: Commercial Appeal (January 29, 2011)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



CAPTURED

MICHAEL MERRIMAN

Airport: Indianapolis International

Position: Transportation Security Officer

Crime: Aggravated Assault

Date: February 16, 2011

“An Indianapolis Airport TSA employee has been fired after being arrested on airport property for aggravated assault. Michael Merriman, 59, was arrested Tuesday morning shortly after a witness saw him punch another airport employee in the head multiple times.

The victim, identified as 39-year-old Brian Hale was bleeding from his nose when officers responded to his 911 call for help. The Indianapolis man who works for HDS-Relay told officers Merriman appeared to be upset about not getting a parking spot.

"You will never do that to me again," Merriman reportedly said as he held Hale in a headlock and reportedly punched him a half dozen times.”

Source: WXIN Fox 59 (February 16, 2011)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



CAPTURED

PERSAD COUMAR & DAVON WEBB

Airport: John F. Kennedy International

Position: Transportation Security Officers

Crime: Theft

Date: February 17, 2011

“Port Authority police busted two Transportation Safety Administration employees for allegedly stealing tens of thousands of dollars from checked baggage at John F. Kennedy Airport.

Persad Coumar, 44, and Davon Webb, 30, were each charged with third-degree larceny, third-degree criminal possession of stolen property, fifth-degree conspiracy and a misdemeanor charge of official misconduct, the Queens district attorney's office said.

Police say \$39,980 was recovered from the suspects' homes in connection with the investigation.

The TSA hired Webb, who lives in the [Bronx](#), in 2004. Coumar, a Queens resident, has worked for the agency for nearly a decade.”

Source: NBC New York (February 17, 2011)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



CAPTURED

ONEIL DALEY

Airport: John F. Kennedy International

Position: Transportation Security Officer

Crime: Harassment

Date: February 24, 2011

“A TSA agent was grounded yesterday after a parking lot fender-bender at JFK Airport sent him into a fit of road rage, authorities said.

Airport screener Oneil A. Daley, 31, allegedly threatened Texan Airlines employee José Compos, 29, with a baseball bat after the younger man nicked the TSA agent's car while backing up. Daley was charged with misdemeanor menacing, criminal possession of a weapon and harassment.

Source: New York Post (February 24, 2011)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



CAPTURED

MINETTA WALKER

Airport: Buffalo Niagara International

Position: Behavior Detection Officer

Crime: Felony charge of conspiring to defraud the government by interfering with security measures at the airport

Date: March 1, 2011

“Minnetta Walker is a behavioral detection officer at Buffalo Niagara International Airport. Her job is to walk through the airport and look for individuals who might be planning some criminal activity.

The 43-year-old Transportation Security Administration employee was arrested on charges that she provided information to suspected drug traffickers and helped them get past security checkpoints with minimum scrutiny.

Walker is accused of a felony charge of conspiring to defraud the government by interfering with security measures at the airport.”

Source: Buffalo News (March 1, 2011)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



CAPTURED

MICHAEL MAZZONE

Airport: Newark Liberty International

Position: Lead Transportation Security Officer

Crime: Impersonating a law enforcement officer

Date: March 2, 2011

“A Transportation Security Administration supervisor assigned to Newark Liberty International Airport was arrested last week on charges of impersonating a law enforcement officer, after authorities say he told a Roselle Park patrolman who had pulled him over that he was a cop, too.

Mazzone faces a separate charge in Roselle Park Municipal Court of failing to yield to a pedestrian in a crosswalk, the offense he was originally stopped for, before claiming to be a "customs inspector,"

U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers are empowered to carry firearms and make arrests. TSA officers can do neither.”

Source: New Jersey Star-Ledger (March 7, 2011)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



Photo
Not
Available

CAPTURED

DAWN NIKOLE KEKA

Airport: Kona International

Position: Lead Transportation Security Officer

Crime: Federal Embezzling

Date: March 16, 2011

“A former Transportation Security Administration employee is facing a federal embezzling charge for allegedly stealing money from a traveler's wallet at a passenger checkpoint at the Kona airport.

TSA officials arrested Dawn Nikole Keka on Friday. She was a lead transportation security officer at Kona Airport.

The TSA said it conducted a sting operation targeting Keka in response to numerous allegations that she was stealing cash from Japanese travelers passing through her screening lane.

According to a criminal complaint filed in federal court yesterday, a TSA special agent posing as a Japanese tourist went through Keka's lane with 13 marked \$100 bills in her wallet. The agent placed the wallet in a Hello Kitty backpack.”

Source: Honolulu Star Advertiser (March 16, 2012)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



CAPTURED

DWAYNE VALERIO

Airport: Manchester Boston Regional

Position: Transportation Security Officer

Crime: Aggravated Felonious Sexual Assault

Date: March 18, 2011

“A TSA employee who worked at Manchester Boston Regional Airport has been arrested on five counts of aggravated felonious sexual assault, according to police.

Police arrested Dwayne Valerio, 44, at his 192 Rockingham Road home on Friday, March 18, according to Lt. Robert Michaud. Police released few details on what led to his arrest, citing the alleged victim's age.

"The victim is a juvenile," he said.

Valerio is now being held on \$50,000 cash or surety bail at the Rockingham County jail in Brentwood, jail officials said.”

Source: Eagle Tribune (April 2, 2011)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



CAPTURED

THOMAS GORDON

Airport: Philadelphia International

Position: Transportation Security Officer

Crime: Child Pornography

Date: March 24, 2011

“A passenger screener at Philadelphia International Airport is facing charges that he distributed more than 100 images of child pornography via Facebook, records show.

Federal agents also allege that Transportation Safety Administration Officer Thomas Gordon Jr. of Philadelphia, who routinely searched airline passengers, uploaded explicit pictures of young girls to an Internet site on which he also posted a photograph of himself in his TSA uniform.

Homeland Security agents arrested the TSA officer March 24, and he is being held without bail.”

Source: Philadelphia Inquirer (April 23, 2011)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



CAPTURED

RYNEL DELACRUZ

Airport: Orlando International

Position: Transportation Security Officer

Crime: Illegally bringing a firearm into an airport

Date: May 19, 2011

“A Transportation Security Administration officer was arrested Monday night at Orlando International Airport after he allegedly tried to bring a gun through a security checkpoint.

Rynel B. Delacruz, 25, faces an aviation personal conduct charge. He was released Tuesday after posting \$250 bail.

According to police reports, Delacruz placed a piece of luggage on an x-ray machine at a checkpoint shortly after 10 p.m. Monday. The screener noticed the gun in the bag and contacted supervisors, and Orlando police were called.”

Source: Orlando Sentinel (May 19, 2011)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



CAPTURED

ELLIOT IGLESIAS

Airport: Orlando International

Position: Transportation Security Officer

Crime: Theft

Date: June 3, 2011

“A former Transportation Security Administration worker accused of stealing laptops from checked luggage at Orlando International Airport is now facing a federal theft charge.

Iglesias was working as a TSA baggage screener in March when he was accused of stealing four laptops and a mobile wi-fi device from checked luggage that was to be loaded onto US Airways flights head to Washington D.C. and other places, according to the filing.

A co-worker told a TSA supervisor he saw Iglesias place a laptop taken from a brown suitcase and put it in his personal backpack, according to a police report.”

Source: Orlando Sentinel (June 3, 2011)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



CAPTURED

KARLA MORGAN

Airport: Houston-George Bush Intercontinental

Position: Transportation Security Officer

Crime: Theft

Date: June 16, 2011

“A TSA agent at Bush Intercontinental Airport has been arrested amid accusations of theft.

Officers arrested Karla Morgan, 49, Thursday for theft. Police say an undercover officer gave Morgan a wallet he said he found with a thousand dollars inside.

Investigators say Morgan put the wallet in her backpack and walked out of the airport. Officers then arrested Morgan in a parking lot.

The TSA had been conducting an internal affairs investigation for a while. Morgan began working for the agency in September 2002.”

Source: KTRK-TV Houston (June 17, 2011)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



CAPTURED

PAUL YASHOU

Airport: Los Angeles International

Position: Transportation Security Officer

Crime: Theft

Date: June 23, 2011

“A Transportation Security Administration officer has been indicted on five charges in the theft of four watches and a pre-paid debit card from luggage at Los Angeles International Airport, officials announced Friday.

A federal grand jury indicted Paul Yashou, 38, of Torrance, on two felony and three misdemeanor theft counts Friday afternoon.

Yashou is alleged to have stolen the items from luggage going through security at LAX's Terminal 1, the U.S. District Attorney's Office said. According to the indictment, one of the watches was valued at about \$15,000, another at \$5,000 and two at \$1,000. The pre-paid debit card was valued at \$1,000.

Authorities arrested Yashou on June 23 at his home after an investigation revealed the \$15,000 watch had been sold to a jewelry store that had tried to sell the item on EBay.”

Source: Los Angeles Times (July 22, 2011)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



CAPTURED

PAUL YASHOU

Airport: Ft. Lauderdale-Hollywood International

Position: Transportation Security Officer

Crime: Grand Theft

Date: July 4, 2011

“A Transportation Security Administration employee faces grand theft charges after allegedly stealing items from travelers at the Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport, authorities said Thursday.

Nelson Santiago, 30, was arrested on Monday and was released on bond Tuesday, the Broward Sheriff's Office said. He faces two counts of grand theft, authorities said.

An employee of Continental saw Santiago take an I-Pad out of a suitcase on Monday put it into his pants, authorities said. He confronted him and reported the incident to supervisor, authorities said.

Detectives estimate he stole about \$50,000 worth of electronics within the last six months.

Santiago worked at the airport's Terminal 1, and he had been a TSA officer since January 2009 but no longer works with the agency, authorities said.”

Source: NBC Miami (July 7, 2011)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



CAPTURED

DAVID RALPH ANDERSON

Airport: Elko Area Regional

Position: Transportation Security Officer

Crime: Six counts of lewdness with a child

Date: August 23, 2011

“A city officer arrested a Spring Creek man Wednesday morning at the Elko Area Regional Airport, where he works for the Transportation Security Administration, on a warrant charging six counts of lewdness with a child.

The Elko County Sheriff's Office was notified in July of possible sexual contact between David Ralph Anderson, 61, and a girl younger than 14.

In addition, the girl stated he would rub lotion all over her body, placed his hand up her shirt to touch her breasts, had her watch pornographic films with him, encouraged her to consume alcohol and would French kiss her.”

Source: Elko Daily Free Press (August 26, 2011)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



CAPTURED

CHRISTOPHER ALLEN/ JOHN BEST/ BRIGITTE JONES

Airport: Palm Beach International & Westchester Co. Airport (NY)

Position: Transportation Security Officers

Crime: Drug Trafficking

Date: September 13, 2011

“Three Transportation Security Administration officers and two police officers are among 20 people arrested Tuesday on charges of conspiring to distribute tens of thousands of oxycodone painkillers for illegal sale from Florida to Connecticut, according to U.S. Attorney of Connecticut David B. Fein.

According to court documents, TSA and law enforcement officers accepted cash and gift cards to allow large quantities of the prescription drug and large sums of money to be transported between Florida and New York airports.

The arrested include Christopher Allen, 45, and John Best, 30, TSA officers based at the Palm Beach International Airport; Brigitte Jones, 48, a TSA officer based at Westchester County Airport in New York.”

Source: CNN (September 13, 2011)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



CAPTURED

RUBEN ORLANDO BENITEZ

Airport: Jackson-Medgar Wiley Evers International Airport

Position: TSA Assistant Federal Security Director

Crime: Murder

Date: September 18, 2011

“After a joint effort from multiple law enforcement agencies, authorities have arrested, Ruben Orlando Benitez, 45, of Jackson in connection with the stabbing death of Stacey D. Wright of Jackson.

Wright was found stabbed to death in her apartment in Landmark Apartments in D'Iberville on Sunday, September 18, 2011.

Sources in Jackson said, Benitez served as one of Mississippi's top federal Transportation Security Administration (TSA) officials. Wright was also employed with the TSA.”

Source: WLOX News Channel 13(September 20, 2011)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



AL RAIMI

Airport: Newark Liberty International

Position: Lead Transportation Security Officer

Crime: Theft

Date: September 20, 2011

“A federal judge in New Jersey has sentenced a lead transportation security officer at Newark Liberty Airport to six months of home confinement for stealing money from passengers' bags as they underwent security screenings.

Transportation Security Administration officer Al Raimi pleaded guilty in February, admitting he and his supervisor regularly stole money from travelers. He was sentenced Tuesday.

Prosecutors say the 30-year-old Woodbridge resident stole between \$10,000 and \$30,000 cash over nearly a year.”

Source: MSNBC (September 20, 2011)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



CAPTURED

CLIFTON LYLES

Airport: Nashville International

Position: Transportation Security Officer

Crime: Statutory Rape

Date: September 20, 2011

“A TSA agent has been arrested in Rutherford County on charges of statutory rape.

Clifton Lyles was arrested by U.S. Marshals Tuesday night, following a grand jury indictment.

Lyles worked at Nashville International Airport.

Details about what led to his arrest were not released.

His bond was set at \$10,000.”

Source: News Channel 5 WTV-TV (September 20, 2011)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



CAPTURED

KRISTA TAHA

Airport: Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County

Position: Transportation Security Officer

Crime: Conspiracy & Making False Statements

Date: September 28, 2011

“A Transportation Security Administration agent was arrested earlier this week on federal charges for her role in an alleged phony marriage scheme to secure U.S. citizenship for her purported spouse.

The plot unraveled when two male TSA agents who claim to have dated the woman, Krista Taha, 34, told investigators that their courtship with Taha was while she was reportedly married to Ali Taha, a Lebanon native, The Smoking Gun reports.

The felony criminal complaint filed Tuesday in a U.S. District Court in Detroit states that since 2002, Krista and Ali conspired to defraud the United States "of and concerning the governmental functions and rights of the Immigration and Naturalization Service and United States Citizenship and Immigration Services."

Source: Fox News (September 28, 2011)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



CAPTURED

EDUARDO VALDES

Airport: Miami International

Position: Transportation Security Officer

Crime: Illegally bringing a firearm into an airport

Date: October 12, 2011

“A Transportation Safety Administration employee was taken into custody Tuesday after he unlawfully tried to bring a handgun into the secured area of Miami International Airport, police said.

Just before noon, Eduardo Valdes, 29, a screener for TSA was reporting for duty on the sterile side of the airport. He was passing through an employee security checkpoint when another screener noticed a handgun in his bag.

According to the police report, Valdes admitted he knew it was illegal to bring a firearm into the airport and that he just "forgot." He also said the gun was not registered and he did not have a concealed weapons permit.”

Source: WPLG - Miami, Ft. Lauderdale (October 12, 2011)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



CAPTURED

DIANNE PEREZ

Airport: Los Angeles International

Position: Transportation Security Officer

Crime: Bribery

Date: October 17, 2011

“Authorities have revealed text messages used by two people involved in an alleged marijuana smuggling ring at Los Angeles International Airport.

The son of a former Los Angeles fire chief was charged Monday with bribing a federal Transportation Security Administration officer at LAX to help him smuggle about 14 pounds of marijuana past security on nine separate trips.

Millage Peaks IV, 23, admitted to FBI agents that he and his associates made the trips with the aid of a TSA officer, whom they paid nearly \$6,000 in bribes to avoid detection, according to an FBI affidavit.

Peaks and TSA Officer Dianne Perez were arrested on bribery charges Sunday after what the FBI said was his most recent attempt. A baggage handler smelled marijuana in the luggage and alerted authorities, who found 14 pounds of marijuana.”

Source: Los Angeles Times (October 17, 2011)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



CAPTURED

PAUL DAVID RAINS

Airport: Orlando International

Position: Transportation Security Officer

Crime: Child Pornography

Date: November 1, 2011

“An Orange County man faces child porn charges, records show, stemming from images authorities say he possessed while working as a TSA employee at Orlando International Airport.

Records show a Florida Department of Law Enforcement agent investigating suspected child-porn distribution in Orange County served a search warrant at Rains' home on Aug. 3.

An arrest report states that Rains confessed to downloading images of child pornography "for the past few years." He said he downloaded the images "out of curiosity," the report states.

The FDLE agent reported finding 10 images of child porn on Rains' computer. The images, the agent said, showed sex acts by children who appeared to be between five and 11 years old.

Source: Orlando Sentinel (November 1, 2011)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



CAPTURED

HAROLD GLENN RODMAN

Airport: Washington Dulles International

Position: Transportation Security Officer

Crime: Sexual Assault

Date: November 22, 2011

“A federal airport screener has been charged with sexual assault after he allegedly assaulted a woman near his home in Manassas, Virginia, police said Tuesday.

Police said Harold Glenn Rodman, 52, was wearing a uniform and displayed a badge at the time of the attack.

Rodman is a Transportation Security Administration officer at Dulles International Airport, the TSA confirmed. He has been removed from security operations pending the investigation.

According to Prince William County, Virginia, police, a 37-year-old woman and her friend were walking in a Manassas neighborhood when a man who was unknown to them approached, displayed a badge and then sexually assaulted the woman before fleeing on foot.”

Source: CNN (November 22, 2011)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



RANDALL SCOTT KING

Airport: Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International

Position: Behavior Detection Officer

Crime: Kidnap & Sexual Assault

Date: November 23, 2011

“Police in west Georgia found a wounded Transportation Security Administration officer at his home after a woman said the man kidnapped and sexually assaulted her, then gave her a suicide note to deliver, authorities said Tuesday.

Randall Scott King, 49, of Hogansville, was listed in critical condition Tuesday afternoon at Columbus Medical Center.

The alleged victim told police that King abducted her from a Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA) parking lot in Atlanta on the evening of November 17 and took her to his residence in Hogansville, where the assault allegedly occurred, Hogansville police said in a statement.

Hogansville is 50 miles southwest of Atlanta.”

Source: CNN (November 23, 2011)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



CAPTURED

CYNTHIA ORTIZ

Airport: Palm Beach International

Position: Transportation Security Officer

Crime: DUI

Date: January 1, 2012

“A Department of Homeland Security officer was arrested for drunk driving after Groveland police reportedly saw her driving on the wrong side of the highway on New Year's Day.

Cynthia Ortiz, a Transportation Security Administration officer from West Palm Beach, actually got a break from police, who waived a wrong-way driving charge even though she was not very cooperative.

According to an arrest affidavit, police stopped Ortiz at about 4:30 a.m. after she was observed driving on the wrong side of State Road 50. Upon questioning, she immediately wanted to know why she was being stopped.

She allegedly failed three field sobriety tests -- one-leg stand, walk and turn, and finger to nose -- before being taken to the police department for booking and a chemical breath test.”

Source: The Daily Commercial (January 5, 2012)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



CAPTURED

EDWIN ROSARIO

Airport: LaGuardia

Position: Transportation Security Officer

Crime: Theft

Date: January 13, 2012

“A federal TSA screener at La Guardia Airport was arrested for allegedly swiping a pricey laptop from a college student at a security gate.

“He’s supposed to be protecting our country, but this shows his true intent,” fumed alleged victim Conley Averett, 21, who attends Parsons School of Design.

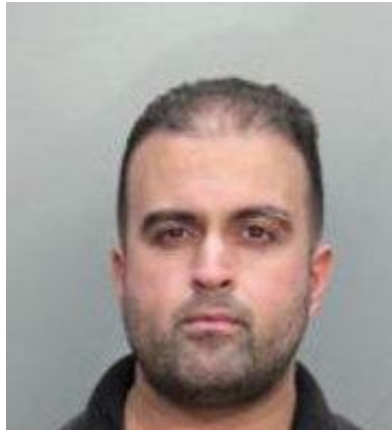
Now-fired TSA screener Edwin Rosario, 27, was charged Tuesday with grand larceny and possession of stolen property for taking Averett’s \$1,300 computer Dec. 19 as Averett hopped a Delta flight to Detroit and left it behind, authorities said.

Averett realized the laptop wasn’t in his knapsack after he boarded his plane, and initially thought he had let it in a plastic scanning bin.

However, Rosario was seen on surveillance video taking the laptop and admitted to the theft when a TSA supervisor confronted him about it at his Bronx apartment, cops said.”

Source: New York Post (January 13, 2012)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



CAPTURED

MICHAEL PUJOL

Airport: Miami International

Position: Transportation Security Officer

Crime: Theft

Date: January 21, 2012

“Police have arrested a TSA officer and his wife after authorities said they stole then tried to sell two iPads from a passenger's luggage.

On Thursday, Miami-Dade detectives arrested the alleged thief, TSA officer Michael Pujol, along with his wife Betsy.

Pujol told police he slid the iPads inside a secret pocket in his uniform.

According to police, Betsy took the goods her husband stole and put them up for sale on Craigslist, where police caught it. "The buyer then gave information [about] whom he received it from, and they traced it back," Steve said."

Source: WSVN Miami (January 21, 2012)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



CAPTURED

CLAYTON DOVEL

Airport: Dallas/Ft. Worth International

Position: TSA Baggage Inspector

Crime: Theft

Date: January 31, 2012

“Police suspect Clayton Keith Dovel, a Transportation Security Administration baggage inspector at Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport Terminal E, of stealing iPads from checked luggage.

Dovel works in the terminal, but unlike the security checkpoints where passengers are screened, the 35-year-old TSA employee works in an out-of-sight position in what's called the "Resolution Room" where checked luggage is screened by hand.

That's where police say they think Dovel took iPads that travelers packed away.

"For me, it was like zero chance of me thinking I'd get the iPad back," said Borna Mojra, an architecture student at the University of Texas at Arlington.

It was a long shot, but eight months after his new, 64 gigabyte iPad was stolen, D/FW Airport Police say they found Dovel with it at work.

They also found him with seven other iPads.

Source: WFAA-TV Dallas/Ft. Worth (January 31, 2012)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



CAPTURED

ALEXANDRA SCHMIDT

Airport: John F. Kennedy International

Position: Transportation Security Officer Training Instructor

Crime: Theft

Date: February 2, 2012

“A Transportation Security Administration agent is accused of stealing \$5,000 in cash from a passenger as he was being screened at John F. Kennedy International Airport.

Alexandra Schmid, who has worked for the TSA for four years, allegedly swiped the cash from the passenger's jacket as it passed through an X-ray conveyor belt around 8:25 p.m. Wednesday in Terminal 4.

Schmid, from Brooklyn, was arrested Wednesday night.

Schmid was apparently caught on surveillance video wrapping the money in a plastic glove and walking off with it to the bathroom, Port Authority police spokesman Al Della Fave tells 1010 WINS.”

Source: CBS New York (February 2, 2012)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



CAPTURED

SHANNON GILLIAM

Airport: Philadelphia International

Position: Transportation Security Officer Training Instructor

Crime: Bribery

Date: February 28, 2012

“A training instructor with the Transportation Security Administration at Philadelphia International Airport pleaded guilty in federal court today to taking a bribe from a security officer.

Shannon Gilliam, 29, of Sharon Hill, potentially faces four to 27 months in prison under advisory sentencing guidelines.

Prosecutors said Gilliam was responsible for training transportation security officers and to administer annual mandatory screening tests to officers who handle passenger and baggage screening at the airport.

The government's plea memo said that between August and October 2011 Gilliam took a \$200 bribe from a TSO identified in the plea memo as "R.R." in exchange for ensuring a passing grade on the certification exam.”

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



CAPTURED

MICHAEL SCOTT WILSON

Airport: BWI Thurgood Marshall International

Position: Transportation Security Officer

Crime: Child Pornography

Date: March 18, 2012

“A former TSA agent from Baltimore County has been indicted on federal child porn charges. Michael Scott Wilson, of Perry Hall, was previously charged in Baltimore County on charges of possession and distribution of child pornography and was scheduled for trial in April. But court record show those charges were dropped last week.

According to court documents, Wilson was allegedly found in possession of a video, "depicting a prepubescent female engaged in masturbation and anal sex with an adult male". Those same documents show Wilson was also in possession of an image of a naked teenage girl.

At the time of his arrest in Baltimore County last fall, Wilson was employed as a TSA agent at BWI Thurgood Marshall International Airport.

Source: WMAR-TV (March 18, 2012)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



CAPTURED

SAMIRAH SAUNDERS

Airport: Newark Liberty International

Position: Transportation Security Officer

Crime: Dealing Heroin

Date: March 19, 2012

“A TSA screener at Newark Airport was recently busted in a major heroin den near her workplace — still wearing her spiffy, government-issued uniform, authorities said.

Samirah Saunders, 22, and two other women were collared in the March 6 raid at 86 Wainwright St. in Newark, just around the corner from an elementary school and a spot where cops found a load of ready-for-street-sale heroin, according to sources and court records.

It wasn't clear whether Saunders was still on duty or was going to or from work.

She's accused of helping to distribute the 1,400 packets of heroin, stamped “Green Lantern” and “P Dope” in green ink, confiscated from the apartment, according to court records.”

Source: New York Post (March 19, 2012)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



CAPTURED

ERIN BARGER

Airport: Nashville International

Position: Transportation Security Officer

Crime: Methamphetamine

Date: March 21, 2012

“An agent with the Transportation Security Administration at Nashville International Airport is jailed in Maury County after authorities busted a meth operation Tuesday night.

Members of the Maury County Drug Task Force were conducting a routine parole check when they discovered the pungent smell of an alleged "cook" in progress at the Hampshire House Apartments in Columbia.

Police arrested two people including Erin Barger, a 29-year-old TSA screener.

The apartment complex is also located across the street from the Kids Kountry Learning Center and drug agents say the charges against the duo could be enhanced.”

Source: WKRN-TV (March 21, 2012)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



CAPTURED

BRYANT LIVINGSTON

Airport: Washington Dulles International

Position: TSA Supervisor

Crime: Prostitution Ring Leader

Date: March 28, 2012

“**Bryant Livingston, 39, of Manassas is facing five counts of prostitution-related charges.** After a manager called 911, police found naked women in a Silver Spring hotel Feb. 15, along with men in various stages of undress, according to Montgomery County Police.

Livingston was seen escorting men and women out of the hotel room, police said. One man told police he paid \$100 for a sex act and he found out about the "party" on Craigslist, Montgomery County Police Captain Paul Starks said. NBC Channel 4 is reporting Livingston was a floor manager at Dulles International Airport ... **Livingston pleaded guilty to a second degree assault charge in 1999.**”

Source: WTOP-103.5FM (March 28, 2012)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



CAPTURED



CAPTURED

NICHOLAS PUCCIO/ JEFFREY PICOLELLA

Airport: Palm Beach International

Position: Transportation Security Officers

Crime: Criminal Mischief & Use of a Firearm while Under the Influence

Date: March 28, 2012

“Miami Beach police say two Transportation Security Administration officers partied a little too hard Tuesday night, trashed their South Beach hotel room and then picked up a semi-automatic handgun and shot six rounds out the window.

One bullet pierced a \$1,500 hurricane impact resistant window at a nearby Barneys New York, penetrated a wall and tore into some jeans in the closed store’s stockroom, according to store manager Adelchi Mancusi.

Jeffrey Picolella, 27, and Nicholas Anthony Puccio, 25, were arrested just before midnight. The Palm Beach County men have been charged with criminal mischief and use of a firearm while under the influence.”

Source: Miami Herald (March 28, 2012)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



CAPTURED

LATEISHA EL

Airport: John F. Kennedy International

Position: Transportation Security Officer

Crime: Harassment & Misdemeanor-Assault

Date: March 28, 2012

“A TSA screener was arrested at JFK Airport for hurling a cup of hot coffee at an American Airlines pilot who told her and some colleagues to tone down a profanity- laced conversation in a terminal, sources said yesterday.

The dust-up occurred at about 5 a.m. on March 28, when airman Steven Trivett, 54, who was off-duty, was exiting Terminal 8 and overheard the banter, according to Port Authority police sources.

Trivett, of Butler, Tenn., told them they should “conduct themselves more professionally in uniform and not use profanity or the n-word,” a source explained.

One screener told him to “mind his own business” and cursed him out.

When he tried to grab at the ID tags of screener Lateisha El, 30, she pushed him and tossed a “full cup” of hot coffee on him, police say.”

Source: New York Post (April 4, 2012)

TSA's 50 MOST DANGEROUS OFFICERS



CAPTURED

JOSE SALGADO

Airport: Boston Logan International

Position: Transportation Security Officer

Crime: Child Pornography

Date: April 10, 2012

“Cops snared 55 Massachusetts men in a sweeping, multi-agency child pornography crackdown — including a Transportation Security Administration officer assigned to Logan International Airport who is just the latest embarrassment for the troubled federal agency.

TSA agent Jose E. Salgado, 59, of Chelsea was suspended from his job after his employers learned that local law enforcement agencies are pursuing criminal charges against him for the possession and sharing of pornographic images of children.

Periodic arrests of TSA agents on sex charges across the nation have fueled criticism of the agency's screening of its own employees, tasked with patting down the traveling public and keeping the airways safe. At least two other TSA officers assigned to Logan have faced sex charges in the past two years. Sex charges against others have been reported in Virginia, New Hampshire, Nevada, Georgia and other states.”

Source: Boston Herald (April 11, 2012)

Recommendations

In nearly all of the cases represented in this report, TSA has repeatedly responded with the same boilerplate response. “The unacceptable behavior of a few individuals in no way reflects the dedication of our nearly 50,000 Transportation Security Officers (TSOs) who work tirelessly to keep our skies safe.”

Unfortunately, what TSA fails to recognize is that the collective actions of TSOs repeatedly appearing in our national headlines and being arrested for serious crimes does in fact reflect poorly on TSA’s nearly 50,000 Transportation Security Officers.

Many of the problems associated with Transportation Security Officers and Behavior Detection Officers (BDOs) stem from TSA’s hiring practices and insufficient use of background checks. As Chairman John Mica and Chairman Darrell Issa highlighted in their report “A Decade Later: A Call for TSA Reform”, despite TSA’s claims that it operates as an intelligent risk-based organization, TSA advertised for employment at the Washington Reagan National Airport on pizza boxes and on advertisements above pumps at discount gas stations in the D.C. area.

It has also been reported to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure on multiple occasions that TSA does not consistently conduct criminal and credit background checks on new and existing employees. I completely agree with the committee’s assessment that the failure to implement an intelligent hiring strategy, combined with the lack of background investigations, has resulted in high termination rates and employee turnover.

The Combating Terrorism Center at West Point has also raised concerns about background checks. In the November issue of the *CTC Sentinel*, Ben Brandt detailed significant vulnerabilities in the approach to background checks “which has proven notably unsuccessful at stopping members of street gangs from gaining employment and carrying out criminal activities such as narco-trafficking, baggage theft, and prostitution at airports nationwide.”

As this report clearly shows, one of the greatest threats to airline security is the ever present insider threat. When TSOs or BDOs become corrupted and abuse their limited authority, it puts the traveling public at great risk to terrorist threats.

In 2011, Rajib Karim, a 31-year-old British Airways computer specialist was convicted for plotting to become a flight attendant and stage a suicide attack targeting U.S.-bound planes on behalf of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula. Karmin attempted to recruit a baggage handler at Heathrow Airport as well as an employee of airport security to assist him in staging the attack. As detailed in this report, when TSOs assist drug dealers in evading detection during the airport screening process the type of threat posed by Karmin a clear and present danger that TSA should take more seriously than categorizing it as the character flaws of a single individual.

Furthermore, as earlier highlighted in this report, TSOs and BDOs have zero federal law enforcement training despite their federal law enforcement titles, uniforms and metal badges. In many cases, TSOs and BDOs have less training than security guards in most states. For example, in California, security guards may receive permits to carry firearms, tear gas and batons. Due to their lack of training and abuse of power, TSOs and BDOs should return to the previous title and uniforms that were in use prior to the TSA administrative reclassification in 2005.

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