

Spotlight

Department of Homeland Security



Office of Inspector General

July 2012 OIG-12-96

Why This Matters

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) Office of Global Strategies (OGS) develops and promotes the implementation of effective aviation security processes at international airports operating last point of departure flights to the United States. On May 18, 2011, TSA Administrator John Pistole received a letter from an anonymous author who made several allegations of misconduct and program mismanagement within TSA's OGS. Administrator Pistole asked us to review the allegations

DHS Response

TSA concurred with both of our recommendations. TSA noted that it has already realigned its process for developing Emergency Amendments and has established a preclearance program within OGS that will provide ongoing evaluation of the security operations at preclearance airports.

We concurred with TSA's responses to our recommendations. Both recommendations are resolved and open pending evidence of, and concurrence with, TSA's corrective actions.

For Further Information:

Contact our Office of Public Affairs at (202)254-4100, or email us at DHS-OIG.OfficePublicAffairs@dhs.gov

Review of Allegations of Misconduct and Mismanagement Within TSA's Office of Global Strategies

What We Determined

We were unable to substantiate most of the author's allegations. OGS took corrective actions on airport assessments conducted in Haiti, is methodical in determining where to deploy its representatives around the world, and did not circumvent the hiring process or take improper actions to select two Regional Directors. The Capacity Development Branch has spent thousands of dollars on training programs, but the allegation that its programs provide little more than basic screener training is inaccurate. However, we confirmed that TSA did not issue an Emergency Amendment for a country in a timely manner, and has not evaluated all preclearance airports as required. TSA is taking action to strengthen the Emergency Amendment process and the preclearance program.

We did not identify any discrepancies or evidence of favoritism regarding OGS's administration of awards, promotions and in-position increases, training, and hiring processes, but some employees perceive problems in these areas. Many employees claimed to be fearful of retaliation, but few said they actually experienced it.

What We Recommend

We recommend that the TSA Administrator:

- 1) Establish and implement timeframes for issuing Emergency Amendments, including deadlines for TSA offices involved in reviewing and providing comments on them.
- 2) Require rescreening for all passengers arriving at U.S. ports of entry from preclearance airports that fail to achieve comparable status.