

# Spotlight

Department of Homeland Security



## Office of Inspector General

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### Why This Matters

The Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Transportation Security Administration (TSA) legacy Transportation Threat Assessment and Credentialing (TTAC) offices play an active role in determinations affecting whether individuals engaged in or with access to various aspects of the U.S. transportation system pose a threat to transportation or national security.

Ensuring that TSA follows Federal guidance during the personnel security process and that legacy TTAC offices adhere to standard internal controls for hiring and supervision minimizes the risk of an insider threat to security.

### DHS Response

TSA concurred with Recommendations 1 through 7 and did not concur with Recommendation 8. Based on information provided in TSA's response, Recommendations 1 and 2 are closed and resolved. Recommendations 3 through 7 are open and resolved. Recommendation 8 is open and unresolved.

### For Further Information:

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

## Personnel Security and Internal Control at TSA's Legacy Transportation Threat Assessment and Credentialing Office

### What We Determined

The Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Transportation Security Administration (TSA) Transportation Threat Assessment and Credentialing Office was established as the lead for conducting security threat assessments and credentialing initiatives for domestic passengers on public and commercial modes of transportation, transportation industry workers, and individuals seeking access to critical infrastructure. Two programs, the Secure Flight Operations Center and the Security Threat Assessment Operations Adjudication Center, were established to conduct case-specific adjudications of potential threats to transportation security. Due to the sensitive nature of these adjudications, periodic background investigations are essential to security, and internal control measures are critical to effective oversight of personnel between investigations.

TSA employee background investigations met Federal adjudicative standards, but were not timely. The Secure Flight Operations Center and the Security Threat Assessment Operations Adjudication Center identified potential insider threat risks; however, limited resources weakened internal control at the Security Threat Assessment Adjudication Center and the shift and supervisory structure at the Secure Flight Operation Center use resources inefficiently. Within the legacy Transportation Threat Assessment and Credentialing Office, there has been a pattern of poor management practices and inappropriate use of informal administrative processes to assess and address misconduct.

### What We Recommend

We made eight recommendations to improve background investigations, internal controls, staffing models, data system development coordination, and use of TSA or DHS formal complaint processes, and to establish an independent panel for legacy Transportation Threat Assessment and Credentialing employees to request review of reassignments.