



Why This Matters

Senator Frank Lautenberg requested an investigation into media reports focused on security breaches at Newark Liberty International Airport, including the contributing factors that led to the security breaches. He requested that we compare the incident rate of breaches at Newark to other airports in the region and comparable airports. He asked us to determine whether corrective action had been taken on the specific security incidents.

DHS Response

TSA agreed with the recommendations in the report and indicated planned actions to address the recommendations made within the report.

The Administrator stated that a single definition of Security Breach should exist in all relevant policy documents. TSA is coordinating appropriate revisions to the relevant Operations Directives. TSA is also working to enhance its oversight of airport security breaches and better leverage the Performance and Results Information System to more accurately report, track and analyze trends. TSA is also updating its airport performance metrics to track security breaches and airport checkpoint closures at the national, regional, and local levels.

For Further Information:

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

Transportation Security Administration's Efforts To Identify and Track Security Breaches at Our Nation's Airports

What We Determined

While Transportation Security Administration (TSA) has several programs and initiatives that report and track identified security breaches, TSA does not have a comprehensive oversight program in place to gather information about all security breaches and therefore cannot use the information to monitor trends or make general improvements to security. The agency does not provide the necessary guidance and oversight to ensure that all breaches are consistently reported, tracked, and corrected. As a result, it does not have a complete understanding of breaches occurring at the Nation's airports and misses opportunities to strengthen aviation security.

What We Recommend

Transportation Security Administration Assistant Administrator, Office of Security Operations:

- 1) Refine and use one comprehensive definition of what constitutes a security breach that can be universally reported to Performance and Results Information System and the Transportation Security Operations Center. Once issued, ensure that this guidance is used and clearly understood throughout the agency.
- 2) Develop a comprehensive oversight program to ensure:
 - a. That security breaches are accurately reported based on the revised definition, and the events are properly tracked and analyzed for trends. This should include local and national reporting that can be validated at the headquarters level.
 - b. The agency consistently takes actions to correct vulnerabilities resulting from security breaches.