

**Statement of
John S. Pistole
Administrator
Transportation Security Administration
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Before the
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Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Homeland Security
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Good morning Chairwoman Landrieu, Ranking Member Coats, and distinguished Members of the Subcommittee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today about the Transportation Security Administration's (TSA) on-going efforts to develop and implement a comprehensive risk-based approach to secure our Nation's transportation systems, and about Department of Homeland Security (DHS) travel programs to make domestic and international travel more convenient and efficient for passengers without sacrificing security.

TSA employs risk-based, intelligence-driven operations to prevent terrorist attacks and to reduce the vulnerability of the Nation's transportation systems 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 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.

Adopting a Risk-Based Security Strategy

Since becoming TSA Administrator, I have solicited the opinions of our key

stakeholders and security professionals, our dedicated workforce and our counterparts abroad about how TSA can work better and smarter. Based on this feedback, I directed the agency last Fall to begin developing a strategy for enhanced 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. It is an acknowledgment that we are not in the business of eliminating all risk associated with traveling from point A to point B. Risk is inherent in virtually everything we do. Our objective is to mitigate risk and to reduce, as much as possible without undermining travel and commerce, the potential for anyone to commit 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 terrorist watch lists – while providing expedited screening, and perhaps a better travel experience, to those we consider pose less risk.

By utilizing our 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 was necessary after 9/11 and has been effective over the past decade, two key enablers – technology and intelligence – are allowing TSA to move toward a RBS model.

TSA Pre✓™ Program

Perhaps the most widely known security enhancement we are putting in place is TSA Pre✓™. Since first implementing this idea last Fall, the program has been expanded to nine airports and more than 460,000 passengers around the country have experienced expedited security screening through TSA Pre✓™. The feedback we've been getting is consistently positive.

The success of TSA Pre✓™ has been made possible by the great partnerships with our participating airlines and airports and our sister component, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP). The airlines work with us to invite eligible passengers to opt into the initiative, and working with CBP we are able to extend TSA Pre✓™ benefits to any U.S. citizen who is a member of one of CBP's trusted traveler programs, such as Global Entry, SENTRI, or NEXUS. By the end of 2012, TSA expects to be offering passengers in 35 of our Nation's busiest airports the expedited screening benefits associated with TSA Pre✓™.

This Committee's support in these efforts has been essential, and it is deeply appreciated. By providing funding for essential technologies and program enhancements, TSA will be positioned to include new airports, air carriers and other populations as participants in TSA Pre✓™. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2012, Congress appropriated an additional \$10 million to TSA for upgrades to the Secure Flight system, allowing it to incorporate new populations into the low risk passenger pool. The FY 2013 President's budget proposal requests \$7 million in FY 2013 which will continue to support this new capability.

Under TSA Pre✓™, individuals volunteer information about themselves prior to flying in order to potentially expedite the travel experience. By learning more about travelers 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 TSA's Pre✓™ lane. Currently, eligible participants include certain frequent flyers from American Airlines and Delta Air Lines as well as existing members of CBP's trusted traveler programs who are U.S. citizens and are flying on participating airlines. We are actively working with other major air carriers, such as United, US Airways, Jet Blue, Hawaiian, 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, Secretary Napolitano and I announced the national roll out of TSA Pre✓™ and our goal to have the program operating at the 35 busiest domestic airports by the end of 2012.

Because we know more about these passengers, 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.

Earlier this month, we expanded the TSA Pre✓™ population to include active duty U.S. Armed Forces members with a Common Access Card, or CAC, traveling out of Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport. Service members will undergo the standard TSA Secure Flight pre-screening, and if we are able to verify the service members are in good standing with the Department of Defense, by scanning their CAC card at the airport, they will receive TSA Pre✓™ screening benefits, such as no longer removing their shoes or light jacket, allowing them to keep their laptops in their cases, and their 3-1-1 compliant bags in a carry-on.

In addition to active duty members of the United States Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and Coast Guard, this evaluation will also include active drilling members of the U.S. National Guard and reservists. U.S. service members are entrusted to protect and defend our Nation and its citizens with their lives. In treating them as trusted travelers, TSA is recognizing that these members pose little risk to aviation security. This evaluation is being conducted in compliance with the “Risk-Based Security Screening for Members of the Armed Forces Act,” signed into law by President Obama on January 3, 2012. (Pub. L. No. 112-86).

Streamlining the Process for Inbound International Passengers

TSA Pre✓™, as mentioned previously, is being extended to any U.S. citizen who is a member of one of CBP’s trusted traveler programs.

To further expedite the screening process, CBP currently operates 15 international aviation preclearance locations. Each of these locations has been or is scheduled to be evaluated by TSA to confirm that preclearance airports are performing checkpoint screening procedures of

passengers and accessible property comparable to those of domestic airports and are providing an equivalent level of protection. All precleared flights arriving from the 15 preclearance airports are permitted to deplane passengers directly into the sterile area of U.S. airports. However, connecting passengers' checked baggage intended for connecting domestic flights must still be screened by TSA upon arrival in the U.S., until the screening technology and protocols at the preclearance airports conform to TSA domestic checked baggage requirements.

To that end, under the Beyond the Borders (BTB) initiative, in accordance with a joint declaration signed by President Obama and Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper on February 4, 2011, TSA and the National Security Staff (NSS) have been working with Transport Canada (TC) towards mutual recognition of the two countries' checked baggage screening systems. Under an Action Plan, released last December, Canada's eight preclearance airports (Calgary, Edmonton, Halifax, Montréal, Ottawa, Toronto, Vancouver, and Winnipeg) have initiated the process to upgrade their checked baggage screening equipment to TSA-certified explosives detection system (EDS) equipment as the primary checked baggage screening equipment. According to the BTB Action Plan, this upgrade, partnered with comparable implementation of TSA-equivalent policies and procedures, will make it unnecessary to rescreen checked bags from these Canadian airports when the passengers connect in the United States to other flights.

This upgrading process began on February 11, 2012, and is scheduled to be completed at all Canadian preclearance airports by March 31, 2015. TSA will conduct a site visit of each preclearance airport in Canada to ensure checked baggage screening procedures provide an equivalent level of protection.

Additional Security Initiatives

The following additional recent initiatives to enhance security complement those discussed above.

Known Crewmember. To build on our risk-based approach to security, we are currently supporting efforts to test another identity-based system to enable TSOs to positively verify the identity and employment status of airplane pilots. The Known Crewmember program is the

result of a joint operation between the airline industry (Airlines for America) and pilots (Air Line Pilots Association, International), which allows uniformed pilots from 22 airlines to show two forms of identification that are checked against a database called the “Cockpit Access Security System,” which confirms identity. After more than two months into the pilot program, and with deployments nearly complete at the seven participating airports, over 59,000 uniformed pilots have been cleared through the process, with an average of nearly 1,900 approvals per day. Like TSA Pre✓™, Known Crewmember is a clear example of TSA’s commitment to focusing its attention and resources on those who present the greatest risk, thereby improving security and the travel experience for passengers across the country.

Expanded Behavior Detection. TSA took steps last Fall to expand its behavior detection program that builds on the existing Screening of Passengers by Observation Techniques (SPOT) program, which has grown since 2003 to include over 160 airports. Under the Expanded Behavior Detection pilot program, TSOs employ specialized behavioral analysis techniques to determine if a traveler should be referred for additional screening at the checkpoint. The vast majority of passengers at the pilot airport checkpoints experience a “casual greeting” conversation with a Behavior Detection Officer (BDO) as they pass through travel document verification. This additional interaction, used by security agencies worldwide, enables officers to better verify or dispel concerns about suspicious behavior and anomalies.

Preliminary analysis from Boston, where the pilot is currently being conducted, shows an increase in the rate of detection of high-risk passengers. However, additional data is required to understand if the trend seen in the Boston data is statistically significant and replicable at other airports. TSA is currently conducting analyses with the DHS Science and Technology Directorate to estimate the number of cases required for validation. In the meantime, we have expanded the pilot program to Detroit to collect additional data on incorporating enhanced real-time risk assessments into our other layers of security.

New Document Assessment Technology. In addition to testing new procedures for low-risk populations, TSA is also employing technology to automatically verify passenger identification documents and boarding passes, providing TSA with a greater ability to identify altered or fraudulent documents. This technology, known as Credential Authentication

Technology – Boarding Pass Scanning Systems (CAT-BPSS), will eventually replace the current procedure used by security officers to detect fraudulent or altered documents. CAT-BPSS enhances security and increases efficiency by automatically comparing a passenger’s ID and boarding pass to a set of security features to concurrently authenticate them and ensure that the information on both match. The system can screen a wide range of travel documents. TSA began testing the technology in July 2011 and will deploy and evaluate the technology at airports in the near future.

Conclusion

As we review and evaluate the effectiveness of these aviation security enhancements, additional changes to the security screening process may be implemented in the future as TSA continues to work toward providing all travelers with the most effective security in the most efficient way possible. Of course, TSA will always retain the ability to incorporate random and unpredictable security measures throughout the airport, and no individual is ever guaranteed expedited screening.

We appreciate the ongoing support and cooperation of the aviation industry and the traveling public as we strive to continue strengthening transportation security and improving, whenever possible, the overall travel experience for all Americans. The interconnectedness and interdependence of the global economy requires that every aspect in aviation security spectrum be as strong as possible. 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 to discuss RBS, the streamlining process for inbound international passengers, and TSA’s additional security initiatives.



John S. Pistole

Administrator

John S. Pistole was confirmed as the Transportation Security Administration's (TSA) fifth Administrator in July 2010. As TSA Administrator, he oversees management of a 60,000-strong workforce, the security operations of more than 450 federalized airports throughout the U.S., the Federal Air Marshal Service (FAMS), and the security for highways, railroads, ports, mass transit systems and pipelines.

Under his leadership, TSA will continue to grow as a risk-based, intelligence-driven counterterrorism agency dedicated to protecting our transportation systems.

Pistole came to TSA as a 26-year veteran of the FBI with extensive national security and counterterrorism experience. After the tragic events of September 11, 2001, he was put in charge of the FBI's greatly expanded counterterrorism program, eventually becoming the FBI's Executive Assistant Director for Counterterrorism and Counterintelligence. In 2004, Pistole was named Deputy Director for the FBI.

Pistole has led or been involved in several high profile investigations, including the attempted car bombing in Times Square on May 1, 2010; the December 25, 2009, attempted attack on Northwest Flight 253; the plot against New York City subways in 2009; the 2006 UK liquid explosives plot; and the May 2003 suicide bombings of three housing compounds in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, in which 35 people died, including nine Americans.

Pistole began his career as a Special Agent with the FBI in 1983, serving in the Minneapolis and New York divisions before his promotion to Supervisor in the Organized Crime Section at FBI headquarters in Washington, D.C. In 1999, as Assistant Special Agent in Charge, Boston, he helped lead investigation and recovery efforts for the Egypt Air Flight 990 crash off the coast of Rhode Island.

In 2007, Pistole received the Edward H. Levy Award for Outstanding Professionalism and Exemplary Integrity. He is a recipient of the 2005 Presidential Rank Award for Distinguished Executive.

Pistole practiced law for two years prior to joining the FBI. He is a graduate of Anderson University (Indiana) and Indiana University School of Law – Indianapolis. He is married and has two daughters.