

**United States Department of Homeland Security
Transportation Security Administration
Statement of
The Honorable John S. Pistole
Administrator
Before the
Subcommittee on Homeland Security
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives**

Good morning Chairman Aderholt, Ranking Member Price, and distinguished Members of the Subcommittee. I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you and this Subcommittee today to discuss the President's budget request for the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2012 and to reflect on the challenges facing the security of the Nation's transportation network.

The President's overall budget request of \$8.1 billion for TSA reflects a total increase of approximately \$467 million or 6 percent over the FY 2011 Continuing Resolution (CR) level, and includes \$165 million in new initiatives to support transportation security consistent with the Administration's FY 2011 request, approximately \$355 million in base programs to maintain current operating levels and \$55 million in efficiencies. Including offsetting collections, the request seeks approximately \$7.9 billion in gross discretionary budget authority, reflecting a prudent investment in security capabilities to protect the traveling public.

Fiscal Responsibility

In light of these tough economic times, we have identified and absorbed over \$152 million in efficiencies and service reductions, redirecting resources toward frontline security operations including \$68 million as part of a Department-wide reduction in administrative services and other non-mission-critical contracts. TSA has also renegotiated technology maintenance and purchase contracts to extend warranty coverage for screening technology and other maintenance coverage, yielding approximately \$18 million in savings. Finally, TSA identified \$34 million in information technology infrastructure program efficiencies.

The Aviation Passenger Security fee has not changed since TSA was established following the events of 9/11, even though the overall cost of aviation security has grown by more than 400 percent. As such, the FY 2012 Budget also includes a proposal to increase the current \$2.50 per enplanement Aviation Passenger Security Fee by \$1.50 per enplanement beginning in the third quarter of 2012. This proposal will raise \$590 million as a direct offset to appropriations for aviation security in 2012 alone. The proposal assumes additional \$0.50 and \$1 increases in 2013 and 2014, respectively, increasing annual passenger fee collections by \$2.4 billion when fully implemented in 2014. The Administration's proposal makes progress towards fulfilling the intent of the Aviation and Transportation Security Act by better aligning the costs of aviation security services with the fee paid by those individuals who directly benefit from those services.

Prudent Investments in Transportation Security

Following the attempted attack on December 25, 2009, TSA accelerated technology and security measures designed to address non-metallic items, the foremost threat to aviation security. The President's request identifies several key areas for continued investment in FY 2012.

Advanced Imaging Technology

The request includes \$105 million and 535 positions to support the purchase, installation, and operation of an additional 275 Advanced Imaging Technology (AIT) units at airport checkpoints, which are considered to be the most effective method to detect both metallic and non-metallic threat items concealed on passengers. When combined with prior year purchases and those planned under the Administration's FY 2011 budget request, the FY 2012 Request will enable TSA to deploy 1,275 units, providing coverage at over half of our operational screening lanes and ensuring the majority of passengers will be screened using AIT.

We also are exploring enhancements to AIT to further address privacy issues and increase efficiency in our operations. To that end, we are field testing Automatic Target Recognition (ATR) software, which eliminates passenger-specific images and instead highlights an anomaly on a generic outline. Pat downs used to resolve such anomalies will be limited to the areas of the body displaying an alarm unless the number of anomalies is sufficient to require a full-body pat down. If no anomalies are detected, the screen simply displays the word "OK." This software eliminates the need for a remotely located Transportation Security Officer (TSO) to view passenger images, reducing associated staffing and construction costs. ATR software represents a substantial step forward in further addressing passenger privacy concerns, while continuing to meet TSA established standards for detection.

Screening Passengers by Observation Techniques

The request includes \$22 million to support an additional 350 Behavior Detection Officers to expand the Screening Passengers by Observation Techniques (SPOT) program. The first phase of our work with the Department's Science and Technology Directorate (S&T) to validate the SPOT program is nearing completion, and we expect to receive a report in the coming months. Although final results are pending, preliminary briefings on the validation study indicate it is supportive of SPOT. The final results of this three-year evaluation will be applied to future development and enhancement of this important program that works to identify individuals who may pose a risk of terrorism or criminal activity.

Sustaining High Levels of Transportation Security

The President's request also sustains vital transportation security programs across transportation modes. The request includes approximately \$43 million to sustain TSA's intelligence analysis capabilities, providing TSA with the capability to review, synthesize, analyze, and share transportation-specific intelligence. TSA's intelligence products are a key element of its risk-based strategy and framework to prioritize security resources.

We are also continuing to enhance the security of cargo transported on passenger aircraft through the request of \$115 million that includes funding for air cargo inspectors, canine teams, and the Air Cargo Screening Program. As of August 1, 2010, all cargo loaded on passenger aircraft in the United States is screened for potential threats. We are also moving forward by requesting comments from industry regarding a proposed revision to aircraft operator standard security programs to require that 100 percent of cargo transported on passenger aircraft to the United States from foreign last points of departure be screened by December 31, 2011 – two years earlier than previously anticipated.

In FY 2012, over 800 Explosives Detection Systems (EDS) installed in many of our largest airports will exceed their planned 10-year service life. As a result, increased emphasis will be placed on recapitalizing these machines with state-of-the-art EDS units for checked baggage through the requested \$273 million in FY 2012. In addition, the request also proposes a broadening of the authority for uses of the Aviation Security Capital Fund, to permit its use for recapitalization. Currently, use is restricted to facility modification to accommodate the installation of in-line baggage systems. Due to significant facility modification investment under the Recovery Act, recapitalization has become a more pressing need.

TSA is also requesting resources to maintain and expand law enforcement presence in the air and on the ground. The request includes funds to maintain the Federal Air Marshal Service (FAMS) surge deployment levels for domestic and international flight coverage that began in response to the attempted terrorist attack on December 25, 2009. Members of the FAMS are deployed on flights around the world and the United States based on risk in order to detect, deter, and defeat hostile acts targeting U.S. air carriers, airports, passengers, and crews. In addition, the request includes \$23 million to support the 82 Assistant Federal Security Directors for Law Enforcement (AFSD-LEs) currently deployed and provides 22 additional AFSD-LEs for major airports, where they serve as the primary liaison to local law enforcement.

The request includes \$126 million for TSA to sustain the deployment of 900 explosives detection canine teams, providing an important layer of security to complement passenger checkpoint screening at airports, assist in air cargo screening and enhance security in the mass transit environment. As we move forward with our use of canines, we are evaluating new training measures to screen individuals for explosives using canines, particularly those trained in vapor wake detection.

Visible Intermodal Prevention and Response Teams

The request includes \$27 million to expand the Visible Intermodal Prevention and Response (VIPR) program by an additional 12 multi-modal teams to a total of 37 teams. TSA's VIPR teams are designed to enhance security by working in aviation, mass transit, rail and other transportation modes alongside local law enforcement agencies. VIPR teams are comprised of personnel with expertise in inspection, behavior detection, security screening, and law enforcement, and enhance TSA's ability to leverage a variety of resources quickly to increase security in any mode of transportation anywhere in the country. TSA conducted nearly 3,900 VIPR operations in 2010 in the various modes of surface transportation and 3,784 operations in the aviation environment.

Secure Flight

The request includes an additional \$12 million to sustain the enhanced watchlist vetting initiative through the Secure Flight program, which enables TSA to identify individuals who may present a threat to passenger air travel. Secure Flight became fully operational on November 23, 2010, for all covered flights operating to, from and within the United States, fulfilling a key 9/11 Commission recommendation and increasing security by having TSA, rather than airlines, screen every passenger against the latest intelligence before a boarding pass is issued. Since its implementation, Secure Flight has demonstrated the value of uniform, consistent watch list matching through improved identification of matches. Continuous Secure Flight vetting begins 72 hours in advance of a flight and continues until the flight departs, consistently providing insight into potential threats and enabling TSA to plan efforts to counter any threat accordingly.

We are most appreciative of the Subcommittee's support for these initiatives to further increase the value of our investment in the Secure Flight program. As we have briefed the Committee in classified sessions, this tool is extremely effective, particularly when combined with partnerships within DHS -- especially U.S. Customs and Border Protection -- and the Intelligence Community.

Improving Business Performance

The request also includes key investments in Department-wide initiatives to improve performance and significantly reduce future costs and business risk. As part of the initiative to improve acquisition performance, the request includes approximately \$2 million and 15 positions to enhance TSA's Office of Acquisitions. It provides both additional personnel to ensure operational requirements are properly developed and included in DHS contracts, and greater oversight and accountability, consistent with recommendations from the Government Accountability Office and the Office of the Inspector General. In addition, the request includes approximately \$20 million to support the migration of TSA-maintained data centers into DHS-operated centralized data centers to standardize IT resources across the Department, which will streamline maintenance and support efforts, improve information sharing abilities, and increase information security.

Conclusion

Mr. Chairman, thank you again for this opportunity to discuss the President's budget request for TSA. I look forward to our continued work together and would be pleased to respond to your questions.

John S. Pistole

Administrator

John S. Pistole was sworn in 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.

