



*Note: Pursuant to Section 101 of the Aviation and Transportation Security Act (49 U.S.C. 114(n)), this directive establishes Transportation Security Administration (TSA) policy and supersedes Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) orders, policies, guidance, and bulletins regarding Employee Morale Groups issued under the FAA Personnel Management System.*

1. **PURPOSE:** This directive provides TSA policy and procedures for governing the establishment and operation of employee morale groups on TSA facilities.
2. **SCOPE:** This directive applies to all TSA employees.
3. **AUTHORITIES:**
  - A. Sections 101 and 111(d) of the Aviation and Transportation Security Act, Pub. L. 107-71 (ATSA), November 19, 2001 (49 U.S.C. §§ 114(n), 40122, 44935, and 44935 note)
  - B. Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch, 5 Code of Federal Regulations Part 2635.
4. **DEFINITIONS:**
  - A. Authorizing Official: The TSA Assistant Secretary, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Associate Administrator, Special Counselor, Chief Counsel, Assistant Administrators, Federal Security Directors (FSDs), or their Designees.
  - B. Employee Morale Groups (EMG): Groups of TSA employees and other eligible individuals, who formally join together for morale, support, or other similar activities. EMGs are self-sustaining, non-Federal entities that operate on TSA facilities with the written consent of the appropriate FSD or other Authorizing Official. EMG leadership and members act as individuals exclusively outside the scope of any official capacity as officers, employees, or agents of the Federal Government. EMGs do not represent their membership in any employee-management matters. EMGs do not include:
    - (1) Credit unions authorized to operate on TSA facilities.
    - (2) Informal funds operating on TSA facilities. While such informal funds are authorized to exist at the discretion of the Authorizing Official, these unofficial activities generally need not be formalized because of their limited scope, membership, or funds. Examples include water funds, coffee funds, cup & flower funds, and other small activities whose assets (property and cash) do not exceed \$1000 at any time. Should the assets of such an informal fund exceed \$1000, the informal fund must discontinue its activity on TSA facilities, become an EMG, or reduce its assets below \$1000 for at least one year.

**5. RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- A. Assistant Administrator for the Office of Human Capital (AA/OHC) is responsible for all policy matters for the approval and monitoring of EMGs operating on TSA facilities.
- B. Authorizing Officials are responsible for implementing this directive, retaining oversight of all EMGs and informal funds authorized to operate on facilities under their control, and ensuring that periodic reviews of EMGs are conducted to:
  - (1) Ensure that the membership provisions and purposes, under which the organization was permitted on TSA facilities, continue to apply. Substantial changes to those conditions shall necessitate further review, documentation, and approval for continued permission to operate on TSA facilities.
  - (2) Furnish reports, as required, to the AA/OHC, or designee, on EMGs covered by this directive.
- C. EMGs are responsible for:
  - (1) complying with TSA directives and policies;
  - (2) complying with the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch when participating in activities sponsored by the EMG;
  - (3) furnishing their own equipment, supplies, and other materials; and
  - (4) conducting EMG business during non-duty time.

**6. POLICY:**

- A. The existence and activities of EMGs are of interest to TSA. TSA recognizes that these groups, which foster a sense of belonging and esprit de corps, are an important complement to the formal TSA organization. Such groups can provide otherwise unavailable resources, create a sense of personal involvement, and promote the morale and efficiency of TSA employees.
- B. EMG leadership must ensure that all members are aware of and comply with TSA directives and policies, including this directive, and comply with the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch when participating in activities sponsored by the EMG.
- C. TSA officials must fulfill their oversight responsibilities detailed above, but should not become involved in the management or operations of EMGs.
- D. Support to EMGs. Except as noted below, EMGs will furnish their own equipment, supplies, and other materials and will conduct EMG business during non-duty time.

- (1) EMGs may use TSA premises for meetings or activities with the permission of the Authorizing Official in accordance with local office policy, procedures, and building regulations, provided such space is available. Such use must not result in higher cost to the Government. Only authorized persons may attend meetings held in areas off-limits to the general public.
  - (2) Provided that meetings or activities do not interfere with or disrupt TSA mission accomplishment, Authorizing Officials may permit the use of limited duty time (not to exceed one hour per month) for employees to attend.
  - (3) EMGs may distribute materials during meetings held in TSA facilities and may post announcements on bulletin boards made available for non-official messages. Distribution of EMGs materials on TSA property is otherwise prohibited.
  - (4) EMGs may use TSA e-mail only to notify eligible members of scheduled meetings or activities. E-mails may only be sent to current employees and shall not include large attachments. EMG members may use TSA telephone services to make an occasional local call on behalf of the organization.
- E. EMGs will be self-sustaining, primarily through dues, contributions, fees, or special assessments of members. Dues, if required, should be assessed on an equitable basis and will be the responsibility of the employees. Management shall not assume any responsibilities for assessing or collecting dues or other payments.
- F. Fundraising is governed by the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch, and will not occur in TSA facilities unless approved by the authorizing official. To avoid the appearance of impropriety and potential conflicts of interest, EMG members may not solicit or accept gifts or donations from regulated parties (or their employees), including but not limited to: airport authorities; air carriers; and passengers. EMG fundraising on TSA facilities will be infrequent and will not interfere with Government operations.
- G. Limitations on EMGs. EMGs must not:
- (1) Represent themselves, directly or indirectly, as being an official function or organization of TSA or any TSA official, and may not use the official DHS insignia or utilize TSA in their title or letterhead.
  - (2) Discriminate in terms of membership or treatment because of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political belief, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. Any TSA employee who perceives discriminatory treatment should contact any supervisor or management official in the employee's chain of supervision or TSA's Office of Civil Rights.
  - (3) Advocate overthrowing the constitutional form of government of the United States or otherwise engage in activities that could reasonably prejudice or discredit TSA or its operations.

- (4) Assist or participate in a strike, work stoppage, or slowdown against the Government of the United States or any of its agencies or impose a duty or obligation to conduct, assist, or participate in such strike, work stoppage, or slowdown.

## **7. PROCEDURES:**

### **A. Formation, approval and termination of EMGs.**

- (1) An organization seeking to be authorized to operate on TSA facilities as an EMG must submit the following information to the Authorizing Official:
  - (a) A written constitution, by-laws, charter, articles of agreement or other documentation acceptable to the Authorizing Official that describes the nature, purpose, function and objectives of the organization;
  - (b) Description of membership eligibility.  
  

**Note:** Generally membership is open to all employees in the area serviced and may also include immediate family members;
  - (c) Description of EMG management positions, including term and election procedures for EMG management positions;
  - (d) Designation of management responsibilities, to include accountability for assets, periodic financial reporting to members, availability of financial reports to the Authorizing Official or designee, satisfaction of liabilities, disposition of any residual assets on dissolution, and other matters that show responsible financial management;
  - (e) Notification to all members of their personal financial responsibility if the EMG's assets are insufficient to discharge all liabilities;
  - (f) Commitment to comply with Federal, state and local laws and regulations, including TSA regulations and policies. As necessary, the Authorizing Official may require specific proof of compliance with laws and regulations (e.g., tax identification numbers, licenses, etc.); and
  - (g) Such other information as the Authorizing Official may require.
- (2) The Authorizing Official, in collaboration with the field counsel or Office of Chief Counsel, as appropriate, will review submitted materials to ensure that the proposed organization is in compliance with the policies and procedures of this directive. After this review, the Authorizing Official will determine if it is in the best interest of TSA to recognize the requesting group as an EMG. To avoid the dilution of time, resources and interest, a field Authorizing Official may wish to limit the number of EMGs approved for each airport. A decision will normally be issued to the requesting group within 30 days of receipt of a completed application package.

(3) The Authorizing Official may withdraw authorization at any time if the EMG prejudices or discredits TSA or the Federal Government, conflicts with government activities, fails to follow this or other TSA directive, or for any other reasonable cause.

B. Scheduled EMG activities. In order to promote the goals of the EMG, to provide authorized support, and to minimize disruption in the workplace, EMGs are strongly encouraged to maintain close coordination with the Authorizing Official or designee. Among other items, EMGs should coordinate: the anticipated schedule of meetings or activities; requests for duty time and for meeting space; and other relevant information of mutual interest.

**8. EFFECTIVE DATE & IMPLEMENTATION:** This policy is effective immediately upon signature.

**APPROVAL**



12/04/06

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Richard A. Whitford  
Assistant Administrator for Human Capital

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Date

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