2007-Present: The Evolution

As challenges grow in complexity and transportation security threats continue to evolve, so does TSA. Throughout the years, TSA has adapted to the endlessly changing terrorist threat against transportation. TSA continues to evolve security procedures and equipment to protect the homeland; the enhanced footwear screening procedures; the 3-11 liquids rule in all carry-on bags; installing advanced imaging technology to detect non-metallic weapons, explosives and other possible threats. While the appearance of Transportation Security Officers and our screening procedures have changed, our work and dedication to the mission have remained constant. TSA has and will continue to adapt and innovate as the threats evolve.

August 3, 2007
Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007

On August 3, 2007, President Bush signed the Implementing Recommendations of The 9/11 Commission Act of 2007, Public Law 110-53, legislation requiring the Secretary of Homeland Security to establish a system to enable industry to screen 100 percent of all air and sea cargo entering the United States, phased in over a three-year period.
January 30, 2009
First Boarding Pass Issued
The first boarding pass issued following the initial implementation of Secure Flight for domestic commercial flights on January 30, 2009.

December 25, 2009
Attempted Christmas Day Underwear Bomb on Northwest Airlines Flight 253
Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab attempted to detonate an explosive device concealed in his underwear while on board Northwest Airlines Flight 253, an Airbus A330 flying from Amsterdam to Detroit. The device consisted of a chemical initiator and a powdered main charge explosive consisting of PETN. Other components included modified underwear and a syringe containing the initiating chemicals. The device caused a brief fire but failed to detonate, and Abdulmutallab was subdued by passengers and crew.

Reproduction provided by the TSA Systems Integration Facility (TSIF).

May 31, 2010
Last Boarding Pass Issued
The last boarding pass issued before the full implementation of Secure Flight on all domestic commercial flights in May 2010.

October 29, 2010
Attempted Air Cargo Bomb Plot From Yemen
Individuals with ties to Al-Qaeda attempted to ship two IEDs, hidden in laser printers, to the United States. The devices were found on separate cargo planes from Yemen due to a tip from a Saudi Arabian intelligence official during stop-overs in the U.K. and the United Arab Emirates. Each package contained a Hewlett-Packard HP LaserJet P2055 desktop laser printer. Inside each printer’s toner cartridge was a sophisticated bomb. The devices consisted of improvised detonators and powdered PETN main charge explosives hidden within the cartridges. Each bomb was triggered by a cell phone alarm, which activated a phone battery to send power through a thin wire filament inside a syringe containing...
five grams of lead azide, a powerful chemical initiator. Once hot, the lead azide would ignite, causing the PETN to detonate. The device’s wiring was artfully concealed so that all the printer components would appear to be correct if the device was X-rayed.

*Reproduction provided by The Explosives Operations Branch.*

**December 20, 2012**
No-Hassle Flying Act of 2012

The No-Hassle Flying Act of 2012, Public Law 112-218, was signed on December 20, 2012. The act authorized TSA to determine whether checked baggage on a flight segment originating at an airport outside the United States, where U.S. Customs and Border Protection has established preclearance operations, must be re-screened in the United States for explosives before it can continue on any additional flight.

**April 25, 2012**
TSA Academy Opens at FLETC in Glynco, Georgia

On April 25, 2012, the Office of Training and Workforce Engagement established the TSA Academy at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Glynco, Georgia. The TSA Academy was created to provide an enhanced learning environment built on a foundation of standardization that would create a high performing counterterrorism workforce able to more proficiently and effectively secure the Nation’s transportation systems. The TSA Academy Recognition Coin was designed in October 2012 and it was centered around the events of 9/11 and the TSA Academy’s commitment to ensuring it would not happen again. Three covered pillars with the Academy mission statement quote “Excellence in Education,” represent the establishment of the Academy schoolhouse. A thin red line surrounding the center honors the lives lost on 9/11. A star on each outer rim represents the dedication and superior skills of the instructors and finally, the testament to the iconic phrase that came from that day with the quote “We will never forget.”

**November 1, 2013**
In Memory of Gerardo I. Hernandez

On Friday, November 1, 2013, TSA Officer Gerardo I. Hernandez, age 39, was shot and killed by a lone gunman at the Los Angeles International Airport. Law enforcement officials identified the suspect as 23-year-old Paul Anthony Ciancia, who was shot and wounded by law enforcement officers before being taken into custody. Ciancia was wearing fatigues and carrying a hand-written note that said he “wanted to kill TSA and pigs.” Hernandez was the first TSA officer to be killed on the job.

Program for Gerardo I. Hernandez memorial service held on November 8, 2013 in California.
December 24, 2014
Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula Publishes Inspire 13 Magazine on How to Build the Perfect Hidden Bomb

Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula released an issue of Inspire magazine, an English language, online magazine which discusses aviation as a target of attack and details how to build nonmetallic IEDs, which airlines to attack, and where to place the devices on a plane. It was purposefully released on the anniversary of the 2009 underwear bomb plot. This Inspire 13 edition had very specific instructions on building a device that could defeat many of the security levels. In the days, weeks, and even years that followed, TSA has changed policies, procedures, and even technologies to fill gaps that the magazine reported existed. Although no device has been encountered, TSA continues to use the “Inspire 13 device”, or “The Hidden Bomb” to address screening capabilities and limitations, and as a case study about security procedures and technologies.

October 31, 2015
Bombing of Metrojet Flight 9268 by ISIS

Metrojet Flight 9268, an Airbus A321, crashed on October 31, 2015, after departing from Sharm el-Sheikh for St. Petersburg, killing all 224 people on board. Maria Ivleva, in window seat 31A, and Natalia Bashakova, in front of her in 30A, settled down for the more than four-hour flight back to their homes and families in St. Petersburg. Nine feet below where they sat, tucked between two suitcases in the baggage hold, was a bomb. Russian investigators believe it was placed there during loading by a baggage handler who was loyal to an Egyptian offshoot of the Syria-based Islamic State militant group (ISIS). At 6:12:56 a.m., the aircraft was 30,875 feet above the northern Sinai Desert when approximately 2 pounds of high explosives detonated. The subsequent breakup of the plane and its crash onto the desert below killed all 224 passengers and crew, making it the deadliest attack yet by ISIS outside its regular battlegrounds in Syria and Iraq.

February 2, 2016
Attempted Laptop Bomb on Daallo Airlines Flight 159

On February 2, 2016, 20 minutes after taking off from Mogadishu, Somalia, at about 14,000 feet, an explosion occurred aboard Daallo Airlines Flight 159, an Airbus A321, opening a hole in the fuselage. There were 74 passengers and seven crew on board at the time of the incident. Two injuries were reported and the burnt body of the alleged suicide bomber, Abdullahi Abdisalam Borleh, fell from the aircraft. The flight had been delayed, so at the time of the explosion, the aircraft...
was not at cruising altitude. A bomb, containing military grade explosive TNT hidden in a laptop, had been rigged with a timer to explode mid-flight. Two airport workers put the laptop on an X-ray belt and then handed the device to the bomber in the departure lounge. Given the placement, the blast likely would have set off a catastrophic secondary explosion in the fuel tank if the aircraft had reached cruising altitude.

Reproduction provided by the TSA Systems Integration Facility (TSIF).

July 15, 2017

Attempted Bombing Using a Meat Grinder and Barbie Doll on Etihad Airways Flight 451

On July 29, 2017, two brothers, Khaled Khayat and Mahmoud Khayat, were arrested in Sydney on suspicion of a plot to plant bombs on Etihad Airways Flight 451, a Boeing 77, departing Sydney on July 15, 2017. The plan was to detonate IEDs concealed inside a Barbie doll and a meat grinder, 20 minutes into an Abu Dhabi bound flight with 400 passengers aboard. The plot was prevented at the check-in counter when the third brother Amer Khayat, attempted to check in a bag that was heavy. The bombs never made it onto the plane because the doll, which weighed 3.5kg, was too heavy to be taken as a hand luggage. The self-timed bomb inside the Barbie doll was set to detonate a second back-up bomb inside a meat grinder. Tarek Khayat, a senior member of the Islamic State in Raqq ashipped the bombs via international air cargo in Turkey to his brothers, Khaled Khayat and Mahmoud Khayat, in Australia. Amer Khayat was arrested by Lebanese authorities 11 days after he arrived in Lebanon. He was released in September 2019 after being found that he was an intended victim of his own brothers. Tarek Khayat was captured on the Iraq-Syria border on December 27, 2017.

Reproduction provided by the TSA Systems Integration Facility (TSIF).

September 11, 2018

TSA Unveils New Flag During the 17th Anniversary of 9-11

Strategic Communications and Public Affairs led the effort to design the Agency’s first official flag. The internal process started on March 22, 2018 with a video and broadcast from Administrator Pekoske asking all TSA employees to be a part of the creation by crowdsourcing through the IdeaFactory. The creation process happened in three phases and the final artwork for the TSA flag was approved on August 16, 2018 by ADM Pekoske. The final artwork was unveiled to the workforce during TSA’s 9/11 Remembrance Event on September 11, 2018.

A few weeks later, a patch for the TSO uniform was design based on the flag design. The new patch was introduced to the workforce in September 2019.
The TSA seal consists of a white, graphically-stylized American eagle, centrally located inside rings of red and white, against a field of blue. The eagle’s dynamically-feathered wings are outstretched in a pose signifying protection, vigilance, and commitment. The wings break through the red and white containment rings, indicating freedom of movement. There are nine stars and 11 rays emanating out from the top of the eagle symbolizing the agency’s 9/11 roots. The design also includes a graphic representation of land and sea reflecting the modes of transportation TSA is charged with protecting. The eagle’s head is turned to the right, emulating the DHS eagle.

October 5, 2018
FAA Reauthorization Act Of 2018

The FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018, Public Law 115-254, was signed into law on October 5, 2018. The statute included the TSA Modernization Act and marked the first ever reauthorization of TSA since the agency’s founding in 2001. The bill authorized TSA to continue as an agile and modern national security organization capable of dealing with ever-evolving threats to our transportation system. The act empowered TSA to expand field operations testing of advanced screening technologies, increased the use of canine resources, and enhanced public area security. It will also improve passenger and cargo security as well as cockpit and cabin security, surface transportation security, and foreign airport security. The act ensures that TSA can continue to set the global benchmark for the highest transportation security standards in the world today.