

INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION
SIXTH MEETING OF THE DIRECTORS OF CIVIL AVIATION OF THE
CENTRAL CARIBBEAN (DCA C/CAR)

INFORMATION PAPER

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN AVIATION SECURITY IN THE U.S.

Nassau, Bahamas

June 30 – July 4, 2003

Agenda Item 5: Aviation Security (AVSEC) Matters

(Presented by the United States)

SUMMARY

The use of civil aviation in the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, in the United States, led the U.S. Congress to pass the Aviation and Transportation Security Act (ATSA) on November 19, 2001. This act created the U.S. Transportation Security Administration (TSA). The TSA is responsible for protecting aviation, maritime, land and other transportation systems in the U.S., to ensure freedom of movement for people and commerce. The TSA has had many crucial deadlines to meet in the past year and a half. Several significant events have occurred and Congressionally-mandated deadlines have been met. In addition, as of March 1, the TSA has transitioned into the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. This event marks one of the largest U.S. Government reorganizations since World War II. This paper discusses the major events in U.S. aviation security over the last several months.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Aviation and Transportation Security Act (ATSA), signed by the President of the United States on November 19, 2001, created the TSA and changed the way transportation security is defined, provided and overseen in the United States. The TSA's mission is to protect the United States' transportation systems to ensure the freedom of movement for people and commerce.

2. DISCUSSION

- 2.1 In November 2001, Congress set a total of 36 deadlines for TSA in the Aviation and Transportation Security Act (ATSA). All of these deadlines have been met, most notably the requirement that 100% of commercial air travel passengers in the U.S. be screened by U.S. Government personnel. The nation's 429 public airports are now screened by Federal Government employees, who have replaced private screeners. Also, as of January 2003, 100% of checked baggage is screened.

- 2.2 The TSA is also moving forward with the voluntary Registered Traveler System. In addition to the normal required screening at airports, the registered traveler will also be pre-screened through a background check, providing screeners with more information than they currently have about other passengers at checkpoints. Allowing registered travelers to pass more quickly into the secured areas will ease congestion at the checkpoints and reduce overall wait times.
- 2.3 The TSA is also developing the Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC). The TWIC will allow implementation of a uniform, nationwide standard for secure identification of the 12 million U.S. transportation workers requiring unescorted physical access to secure areas of the nation's transportation systems. Each TWIC holder will be positively matched to their credential via a biometric.
- 2.4 The TSA is expanding its research and development efforts to assess and reduce the terrorist threat to all transportation modes. For example, the agency is leading efforts to develop new technologies for use at airports. More advanced methods to help control access to airport perimeters are being developed. The TSA is also optimizing human performance by improving screener selection, training and evaluation methods. In late November 2002, the TSA also announced the launch of Operation Safe Commerce (OSC), an innovative public-private partnership dedicated to enhancing security throughout international and domestic supply chains while facilitating the efficient cross-border movement of legitimate commerce.
- 2.5 Structural aircraft security has also been a recent issue in aviation. While the effort to strengthen cockpit doors to prevent unlawful entry is the responsibility of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), TSA has a vested interest. A U.S. rule that requires domestic and foreign operators serving the U.S. to install reinforced cockpit doors by April 9, 2003 is now in effect.
- 2.6 The TSA is also focusing on maritime and land transportation security.
- 2.7 TSA's comprehensive website, www.TSA.gov, lists prohibited items, information on travel for people with disabilities and with children, as well as information on boarding aircraft and general "dos" and "don'ts" for travelers.
- 2.8 The TSA has ensured a smooth transition of programs with the recent move from the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) to the newly-established Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The TSA continues to work closely with DOT and the FAA to ensure ongoing programmatic coordination with DHS.

3 CONCLUSION

- 3.1 The establishment of the TSA is one of the largest reorganizations in the U.S. Government since World War II. The TSA has met all of the 36 deadlines mandated by the U.S. Congress and has significantly improved transportation security, while balancing the need for the free movement of people and goods. More information on the TSA and the DHS can be found at www.TSA.gov and www.DHS.gov, respectively.