

Statement of
John Pistle
Administrator
Transportation Security Administration
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Before the
United States Senate
Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
April 30, 2014

Good morning Chairman Rockefeller, Ranking Member Thune, and distinguished Members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today about the Transportation Security Administration's (TSA) on-going efforts to develop and implement a risk-based approach in securing our nation's transportation systems.

TSA's primary mission is to protect the Nation's transportation systems, including aviation, mass transit, rail, highway, and pipeline, to ensure freedom of movement for people and commerce. Each year TSA screens approximately 640 million passengers and 1.5 billion checked and carry-on bags on domestic and international flights departing from U.S. airports. TSA also strengthens and enhances the security of an inter-related, multi-modal transportation network that includes 751 million bus passengers and 10 billion passenger trips on mass transit each year. To fulfill this vital mission, TSA employs a layered approach to security through a well-trained frontline workforce, state-of-the-art technologies, intelligence analysis and information sharing, behavior detection, explosives detection canine teams, Federal Air Marshals

(FAMS), and regulatory enforcement. This multi-layered approach helps to ensure the security of the traveling public and the Nation's transportation systems.

It is my goal to consistently apply a risk-based approach to all aspects of TSA's mission. Whether it is the deployment of Federal Air Marshals (FAMs), the allocation of Transit Security Grant resources, or air cargo screening policies, TSA is working to implement a risk-based approach that allows us to deliver the most effective security in the most efficient manner. To this end, TSA continues to examine the procedures and technologies we use, how specific security procedures are carried out, and how screening is conducted. When I last testified before this Committee in 2011, TSA was in the initial stages of operationalizing our first Risk Based Security (RBS) screening initiatives. I am pleased to report to the Committee that RBS measures are now being broadly implemented across the nation and throughout the various modes of transportation.

Focusing on risk management is also the most efficient way to use TSA's limited resources and enhances the value we provide to the American people. I recently created the position of Chief Risk Officer to assess and standardize our approach to risk management across our mission operations and business support operations. This effort allows TSA to better assess new policies with respect to risk and value creation. As I have testified previously, it is not possible to eliminate risk altogether so our efforts must remain focused on managing and mitigating that risk. This is the most appropriate and sustainable model for TSA.

Expedited Screening

TSA Pre✓™ was one of the first initiatives in TSA's shift toward a risk-based and intelligence-driven approach to security. I am pleased to report that the TSA Pre✓™ initiative

has developed into an effective security program at 118 airports nationwide. TSA Pre✓™ is a key RBS initiative that allows us to expedite security screening at aviation checkpoints for low-risk passengers. As you know, passengers may qualify for the TSA Pre✓™ program through a Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Trusted Traveler program such as TSA's Pre✓™ Enrollment or Customs and Border Protection's Global Entry program. Last December we extended TSA Pre✓™ to members of the U.S. Armed Forces, and in April of this year extended eligibility to all civilian employees of the Department of Defense. TSA is currently working with a number of other Federal departments and agencies to include other lower risk populations into TSA Pre✓™.

Another key initiative to expand the TSA Pre✓™ eligible population is the TSA Pre✓™ application program that we started in December 2013. Through this program, U.S. citizens, U.S. nationals, and U.S. lawful permanent residents can apply directly to participate in TSA Pre✓™ and, undergo a background check in order to become a known and trusted traveler for a period of 5 years. This program complements other DHS trusted traveler programs and allows passengers to access TSA Pre✓™ who may not otherwise travel internationally, or hold a valid passport. To date, more than 180,000 people have submitted applications at the 240-plus application centers nationwide.

Additionally, TSA uses real-time and intelligence based methods, such as Managed Inclusion and TSA Pre✓™ Risk Assessments to identify additional passengers eligible for expedited physical screening on a trip-by-trip basis. Numerous other risk-based changes are in effect nationwide, including expedited screening procedures for children 12 and under and adults

75 and older, airline pilots and flight attendants, and expedited screening at for military personnel.

To accommodate TSA's expansion of program eligibility to a greater number of low-risk passengers, TSA has taken the following actions: expanded the number of airports participating in TSA Pre✓™ from the initial 40 to 118 airports; increased the number of expedited screening lanes from 46 to more than 600, with each lane providing the capability for doubling hourly throughput; and increased the number of U.S. airlines participating in TSA Pre✓™ from five to nine in FY 2013, with plans of continued expansion as airlines are ready. Today, TSA is providing expedited screening to over 40% of the traveling public.

RBS has also enabled TSA to become more efficient and has achieved \$100 million in savings by enabling trusted passengers to more quickly move through the checkpoint, increasing the efficiency of both standard and TSA Pre✓™ security lanes. TSA anticipates that incorporating RBS principles throughout our operations will result in a smaller, more capable workforce focused on our counterterrorism mission.

Industry Engagement

Our industry and stakeholder partners are key to TSA's ability to implement risk-based security into every area of transportation security. These partners were key in the aviation sector as TSA worked to establish and expand the TSA Pre✓™ program. Airlines worked with us to update their systems to handle new requirements, such as Pre✓™ interconnectivity and boarding pass markings, and our airport partners worked with us to reconfigure checkpoint space to accommodate a Pre✓™ lane for passengers. To date, TSA has expanded the program to 9

participating airlines at 118 airports nationwide, and continues to partner with industry to add additional partners and innovations to the program.

Our stakeholders were essential in understanding gaps and implementing important new procedures across our Nation's airports following last November's tragic shooting at Los Angeles International Airport (LAX), which resulted in the death of Transportation Security Officer (TSO) Gerardo Hernandez, and the wounding of Behavior Detection Officer (BDO) Tony Grigsby, Security Training Instructor (STI) James Speer, and a passenger. Immediately after the shooting I convened a series of stakeholder meetings at TSA Headquarters, which included representatives from law enforcement agencies and associations, labor groups and industry associations, and other federal, state, and local agencies. I requested that these stakeholders provide recommendations on how TSA could improve security and prevent another tragic event. Thereafter, I again met with stakeholders to present various ideas under consideration and seek initial feedback.

I also sought the input of TSA employees, through both town hall meetings and the TSA Idea Factory, our web-based employee engagement tool. Employees from all levels of the organization contributed ideas, including Federal Security Directors (FSDs), TSOs, staff from Training and Coordination Centers, security inspectors, and headquarters employees. A number of these ideas were incorporated into the final report TSA produced on March 26, 2014.

The report identifies recommendations adopted by TSA based in part on ideas and feedback generated by industry and law enforcement stakeholders as well as the TSA workforce. TSA is implementing these recommendations nationwide to close gaps identified through our LAX review. Some of these measures include recommending that airport operators conduct active shooter training and exercises on a bi-annual basis, issuing an Operations Directive

requiring that all FSDs conduct mandatory evacuation drills twice a year, and requiring supervisors to conduct briefings for employees regarding the evacuation routes and rendezvous points identified in the local mitigation plan. TSA is also issuing recommended standards for increased law enforcement presence at high traffic airport locations such as peak travel times at checkpoints and ticket counters to provide visible deterrence and quicker incident response times.

TSA also recently extended invitations to 24 industry group and association members to be part of TSA's Aviation Security Advisory Committee (ASAC), which provides recommendations for improving aviation security methods, equipment and procedures. The ASAC enhances TSA's security posture through consultation with key partners concerning potential risks to infrastructure, passengers and cargo, as well as gathering input from stakeholders on the effectiveness of TSA's current security procedures. Members then develop and share recommendations for possible improvements to make TSA's policies more effective.

Within the surface transportation system, TSA continues to place emphasis on industry engagement support and partnership as keys to successfully developing security risk reduction policies. One example is TSA's effort to implement a mass transit and passenger rail strategy that prescribes specific, outcome-based risk reduction activities, developed in concert with mass transit and passenger rail security stakeholders.

International Engagement

Engaging international partners is also critical to implementing effective risk-based security. Only with the collaboration and cooperation of foreign governments and international aviation partners can we mitigate international aviation threats. Overseas, TSA focuses on

compliance, outreach and engagement, and capacity development. By conducting foreign airport assessments and air carrier inspections at last points of departure (LPDs) to the United States, TSA is able to identify, evaluate, and work with our international partners to address vulnerabilities through outreach and engagement activities and targeted capacity development. These areas of engagement, informed by intelligence and combined with the efforts of our international partners, form a strong foundation for enhancing risk-based security worldwide.

TSA also worked diligently with our domestic and international stakeholders on the Aircraft Repair Station rule. This regulation strengthens foreign repair station security as directed by Congress through The Vision 100 – Century of Aviation Reauthorization Act (P.L.108-176). The regulation supplements the Federal Aviation Administration’s (FAA) repair station safety requirements by requiring security measures to prevent unauthorized operation of aircraft under repair.

Repair stations that are on or adjacent to a TSA-regulated airport (or commensurate foreign facility) must adopt security measures to prevent the unauthorized operation of unattended aircraft capable of flight. This includes designating a TSA point of contact, securing large aircraft (those with a maximum certificated take-off weight of more than 12,500 pounds) capable of flight that are left unattended, and conducting employee background checks for the point of contact and any employee who has access to the keys or other means used to prevent the unauthorized operation of the aircraft.. All repair stations certificated under part 145 of the FAA rules are required to submit to TSA inspections and implement any TSA-issued Security Directives. TSA collaborated with the FAA during this process, and we are pleased that the final rule enhances security while minimizing the cost to industry.

Surface Transportation

TSA must remain vigilant across all modes of transportation. Although we know that our adversaries remain intent on targeting air travel, which is why 97 percent of TSA's budget is focused on aviation, TSA also has the responsibility for surface transportation security. Surface transportation modes include mass transit and passenger rail, pipelines, freight rail, and highway.

In the surface mode of transportation like surface and mass transit where TSA does not conduct frontline screening, TSA engages with state, local, and private sector partners to identify ways to reduce vulnerabilities, assess risk, and improve security through collaborative efforts. TSA continues to work to develop security standards, assess vulnerabilities, develop plans to close vulnerabilities, and use metrics to drive risk reduction in a measurable way. An integral part of this effort is engaging stakeholders in developing effective, operational security. For example, TSA conducts corporate security reviews of Mass Transit agencies to include Amtrak and over-the-road bus operators through the Baseline Assessment for Security Enhancement (BASE) program. This program is a thorough security assessment of mass transit and passenger rail systems nationally and over-the-road-bus operations, performed by our Transportation Security Inspectors-Surface (TSI-S). BASE assessments are conducted with emphasis on the 100 largest mass transit and passenger railroad systems measured by passenger volume, which account for over 80 percent of all users of public transportation.

TSA continues to work to develop security standards, assess vulnerabilities, and use metrics to drive risk reduction in a measurable way. An integral part of this effort is engaging stakeholders in developing effective, operational security. As an example, TSA and AMTRAK have a long-standing security partnership through programs that aim to deter terrorist activity through expanded random, unpredictable security activities. Amtrak has also expanded

coordination with rail and transit agencies and local law enforcement through the Regional Alliance Including Local, State and Federal Efforts (RAILSAFE) program. Operation RAILSAFE is a coordinated effort involving counter-terrorism activities such as heightened station and right of way patrols, increased security presence on board trains, explosive detection K9 sweeps and random passenger bag inspections. On average more than 40 states and over 200 agencies participate, including TSA's Visible Intermodal Prevention and Response (VIPR) teams.

TSA also collaborates with industry through our Intermodal Security Training and Exercise Program (I-STEP) across all modes of surface transportation. I-STEP tests and evaluates the prevention, preparedness and ability to respond to threats. As new threats develop, I-STEP scenarios are updated to ensure that our industry partners are appropriately prepared.

TSA works collaboratively and proactively with industry partners to ensure resources are appropriately directed towards reducing risk to critical pipeline infrastructure. *The Implementing the Recommendation of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007* (P.L 110-53) required TSA to develop and implement a plan for inspecting the 100 most critical facilities of the national pipeline system. These inspections were conducted between 2008 and 2011, with regular ongoing reviews through TSA's Critical Facility Security Review program. I have personally taken the time to meet with and engage with officials from the pipeline sector and I am confident that our process of using current threat information and industry best practices is producing strong, flexible and effective security measures in a voluntary, rather than regulatory, manner.

TSA also partners with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to allocate transit security grants that assist states and localities in buying down transportation risk through federal security funding. This funding allows for entities to increase mitigation of terrorism risk

through operational deterrence activities, site hardening, equipment purchases, and other capital security improvements. Between FY 2006 and FY 2013, approximately \$2 billion in Transit Security Grant Program (TSGP) funding was awarded to public mass transit owners and operators, including Amtrak, and their dedicated law enforcement providers. The FY 2014 grants cycle, currently in progress, will add another \$100M in funding to public mass transit agencies and Amtrak. These grants provide funding to eligible recipients to enhance security through critical infrastructure remediation, equipment purchases, and operational activities such as counterterrorism teams, mobile screening teams, explosives detection canine teams, training, drills/exercises, and public awareness campaigns.

Visible Intermodal Prevention and Response (VIPR) Teams

Visible Intermodal Prevention and Response (VIPR) teams are a key layer of security in the deterring transportation threats. VIPR teams augment the security of any mode of transportation at any location within the United States and are typically composed of federal, state, and local law enforcement and security assets and TSA personnel including FAMs, BDOs, TSOs, Transportation Security Specialists-Explosives, Transportation Security Inspectors, and TSA-certified explosives detection canine teams. These teams can be immediately deployed to local multi-modal security operations nationwide, or respond to specific requirements and emerging intelligence. While VIPR teams have predominantly been deployed in surface modes, following November's shooting at LAX, I directed that VIPR teams be split evenly between surface and aviation modes. This VIPR deployment strategy has garnered support among the TSA workforce and we will continue this shift to enhance VIPR presence at airports, subject to adjustments based on intelligence or special requirements.

Workforce Training

TSA's mission performance requires a skilled, professional workforce. Through a variety of current initiatives, TSA has incorporated professionalism, cultural awareness, and customer service into our training. Specifically, TSA's new hire training is designed to strengthen core competencies in teamwork, respect, communication, and accountability. Further, TSA has expanded its partnership with the DHS Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers (FLETCs) to provide additional training courses for our screening officer workforce. This dedication to developing front-line employees recognizes their contributions and affirms their critical role in our risk-based security approach.

In addition to training for the frontline workforce, TSA offers programs for all employees that enhance security and leadership skills through advanced degree curricula and executive training at prestigious institutions. TSA has also completed leadership training for nearly all 4,331 Supervisory TSOs, and we are implementing similar training for our 5,500 Lead TSOs and 1,200 Transportation Security Managers. TSA remains committed to the professional development for employees across all levels of the organization.

Conclusion

TSA will continue to enhance its layered security approach through state-of-the-art technologies, better passenger identification techniques, best practices, and other developments that will continue to strengthen transportation security across all modes of transportation. I thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today, and I look forward to answering your questions.