

**Statement of Michael White**  
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**Before the**  
**Subcommittee on Aviation Operations, Safety, and Security**  
**Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation**  
**United States Senate**  
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Chairman Blunt, Ranking Member Cantwell, and members of the Subcommittee on Aviation Operations, Safety, and Security, thank you for inviting me to participate in today's hearing on modernizing the Transportation Security Administration (TSA).

My name is Michael White and I am the Vice President of Government and Industry Relations for Cargo Network Services Corporation, a company of the International Air Transport Association, or IATA.

IATA's mission is to represent, lead and serve the airline industry. Our members comprise some 280 airlines in over 117 countries, carrying 83% of the world's passenger and cargo traffic by air.

IATA greatly appreciates the opportunity to testify on the need to modernize the TSA. Every day, the policies of the TSA have a direct impact on the majority of the 120 IATA member airlines flying to, from, and within the United States on a regularly scheduled basis.

The Transportation Security Administration is indeed a critical component to the security of the international aviation system. Since its inception, the agency has grown into what is today a mature organization that is well equipped to meet the ever-changing needs of the aviation security environment. However, as with any organization, we do believe there are a number of areas that could be improved in order to enable the agency to continue in its important mission as effectively and efficiently as possible.

Given that the TSA has never been reauthorized in its history, we applaud the Subcommittee for its effort to draft the TSA Modernization Act to help bring about

changes to the agency in a thoughtful and responsible way. We would like to comment on the following issues addressed in the Subcommittee's draft proposal:

### **5-Year Term for the TSA Administrator**

We strongly support a five-year term for the TSA Administrator. The agency has been challenged in the past when faced with disruptive transitions between numerous Administrators. We believe a 5-year term will give an Administrator the time he/she needs to promote the organization's mission in a consistent and coherent fashion. It is consistent with the term of the FAA Administrator, whose agency faces similar challenges on the safety side and has benefited from the stability that has come with a 5-year appointment.

### **TSA Organization**

We believe that TSA management should be reflective of the global nature of commercial air transportation and avoid treating domestic different than international travel. To that end, we believe there should be greater alignment between the Office of Strategic Policy and Industry Engagement (OSP/IE), which normally addresses domestic security, and the Office of Global Strategy (OGS), which normally addresses international security matters. To the extent practical, TSA should align its domestic and international operations with International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) security policies and standards to promote global harmonization.

### **Biometrics Expansion**

IATA strongly supports the use of biometrics in improving the passenger facilitation process. We note with some concern that the TSA is currently pursuing a biometric solution using fingerprints while U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is testing facial recognition biometric capture in its entry and proposed exit system. We encourage the TSA and CBP to coordinate their efforts in this regard and utilize biometric capture technology that minimizes negative impacts on passenger flows.

### **Third Party Canines**

IATA supports the use of third party TSA-approved canines for both public passenger areas and for air cargo. Canines have proven to be the most efficient means to screen passenger and cargo in a timely and cost-effective manner. We urge the TSA to move this program forward as expeditiously as possible. We recommend that the TSA consult with other federal government agencies (State, DOD, CBP) for guidance and best practices.

### **Public Area Best Practices**

IATA shares the Subcommittee's support for sharing best practices for securing airport public areas. IATA has worked closely with airports and government agencies around

the world to improve processes at airport public acceptance areas and screening queues as well as with general airport design. We are confident the TSA would benefit from the experiences of many of these foreign airports.

### **TSA Pre✓® Program**

IATA supports the expansion of the TSA Pre✓® program as we do with similar known passenger programs around the world. We need to ensure that the significant benefits of TSA Pre✓® are not lost by a reduction in personnel managing those lanes.

### **Passenger Security Fee Diversions**

IATA strongly opposes the diversion of aviation-related fees for non-aviation purposes. In 2013, Congress increased the TSA Passenger Security Fee from \$5.00 per segment to \$5.60 per one-way trip and used the surplus revenue as a pay-for. This is projected to raise \$15.79 billion through fiscal year 2025 under the guise of aviation security and diverted to the general fund. Congress should end these fee diversions and allow the funds already being collected to be used for their original stated purpose. We also oppose any attempt to use fees paid by aviation to cross-subsidize other modes of transportation.

In addition to being bad public policy, these actions have the potential to violate existing international agreements to which the U.S. is a party. The U.S. Government has entered into bilateral aviation agreements with over 100 countries, all of which include a clear prohibition against governments imposing user fees that exceed the costs of the services provided to commercial aviation. Further, the policy against cross-subsidization – long established in U.S. air transport agreements – derives directly from principles long championed by the U.S. within ICAO.

### **Known Shipper and Indirect Carrier Programs Review**

We strongly support a review of the Known Shipper and Indirect Air Carrier programs. These programs were developed in the 1990s and enhanced after 9/11. Since that time, we have much better data and technology to secure and track cargo shipments. CBP has used the Automated Commercial Environment (ACE) system to collect trade data both in and out of the United States for all modes of transportation. Technology has also moved to a less paper-intensive environment for most government agencies. The data collected offers the opportunity for a more effective and efficient risk-based screening process. We are hopeful this review will enable us to identify ways to use the technology to reduce risk and improve cargo processing.

### **Last Point of Departure Airports; Security Directives**

We strongly support requiring that the Administrator consult with trade association representatives for affected air carriers and airports. To that end, it is important to note that the majority of passengers and air cargo arriving in the United States is flown on

non-US carriers. The TSA often consults with U.S. carriers in advance of the issuance of Emergency Amendments (EAs) and Security Directives (SD), which enables those carriers to provide meaningful input into that discussion and prepare their operations in advance to support TSA's security needs. Unfortunately, these advance consultations have not taken place on a regular basis with non-U.S. carriers, either directly or through IATA. This has led to situations where the TSA's mission has been undermined because of a lack of understanding for or appreciation of the various operational, governmental, or fiscal challenges facing carriers seeking to meet new requirements. While we recognize that appropriate security clearances are needed for these types of discussions, accommodations must be made in order to ensure effective and timely implementation of these critical security directives.

Chairman Blunt, Ranking Member Cantwell, and members of the Subcommittee on Aviation Operations, Safety, and Security, thank you again for inviting me to participate in this important discussion on modernizing the TSA. IATA looks forward to working with you and your staff as you craft legislation to enhance the safety and security of our nation's aviation system.