

Industry Questions Regarding the Five-Year Technology
Investment Plan Biennial Refresh
January 17, 2018

P.L. 113-245 Requires TSA to produce a Strategic Five-Year Technology Investment Plan (Five Year Plan). The first Five Year Plan was issued on August 12, 2015, and the Biennial Refresh (Refresh Plan) was issued on December 19, 2017.

Responding to Dynamic Threats:

- 1.) Last spring, we saw the emergence of a serious new threat to the aviation system relating to personal electronic devices (PEDs). The threat had a significant, rippling effect on the international aviation system, with last point of departure airports required to take drastic steps to increase security and passengers here in the U.S. now required to take PEDs out of their carry-on bags. The latest intelligence indicates that we are in a very dynamic and evolving threat landscape that could have significant implications on aviation and the international economy.
 - a. Will the investments outlined in the Refresh Plan for transportation security equipment keep pace with the evolving threats to aviation?
 - b. How will the TSA's Refresh Plan accelerate significant advancements in security technology capabilities and deployment of these systems at the nation's checkpoints and checked baggage systems?
 - c. How will the Refresh Plan foster a robust domestic security manufacturing base and enhances competition to drive innovation in aviation security?

ASAC Checkpoint Report – Security Funding:

- 2.) Last year the Aviation Security Advisory Committee's (ASAC) undertook a comprehensive effort to assess the effectiveness of checkpoints at U.S. airports, and presented to TSA 35 specific recommendations in a report titled *Improving Checkpoints at U.S. Airports*. This report sets the vision for checkpoints in the future, which includes the fielding of next-generation technologies that will significantly increase security and improve the passenger experience.
 - a. Will the TSA's Refresh Plan meet the vision outlined in the ASAC report?
 - b. Does TSA have the funding necessary to accelerate the development and deployment of increased capabilities and next-generation technologies as soon as possible to meet the evolving threats?
 - c. Notwithstanding current or anticipated budgets, has the TSA identified the funding requirements needed to accomplish the mission and meet the evolving threats, as the ASAC has recommended?
 - d. TSA's Electronic Baggage Screening Program (EBSP) has a \$250 million capital fund each year, which provides multi-year funding for screening equipment upgrades and replacement. This provides some consistency and certainty in making future investment decisions for checked baggage system projects. Would the establishment of a capital fund for the Passenger Screening Program (PSP) help the TSA in improving the checkpoint equipment?

Improving the Development and Acquisitions Process:

- 3.) The ASAC Checkpoint Report also contains a number of specific recommendations for the TSA to vastly improve the long and expensive security equipment development and acquisitions process. In particular, the TSA test and evaluation process takes many years with high costs to government and industry. The Refresh Plan provides additional detail on the recent TSA reorganization, and how it will enhance the process.
- a. Does TSA have examples of any efficiencies or time saved in the development and acquisitions process since the reorganization?
 - b. Has the TSA set specific metrics or goals to measure reduced times for equipment development and qualification?
 - c. Has the TSA established any specific metrics or goals to reduce the T&E timeframe, as a means to measure progress?
 - d. TSA is exploring third-party testing to gain efficiencies in the testing process. Will the third-party testing policy ensure that determinations made by the third party will be accepted by the TSA, so the testing process does not have to be replicated?
 - e. TSA has indicated to the vendor community it will open up a notional, "checkpoint of the future" in Las Vegas McCarran International Airport to test and evaluate multiple types of technology including biometrics, Advanced Imaging Technologies and CT systems. TSA has also indicated they may test different configurations of AT/CT and ASL configurations due to the lack of space at the TSA Integration Facility located adjacent to Washington Reagan National Airport. Given a shortage of engineering and testing personnel, the existing backlog at the TSIF, and geographic challenges, what new assets and resources will be deployed for the effort at Las Vegas McCarran? What is the anticipated reduction in workforce at the TSIF to accommodate this effort? Were alternative locations closer to TSA testing personnel or the manufacturers' facilities considered? Will TSA be funding procurement and installation of various ASL configurations as part of this demonstration?
 - f. Figure 2 is an Overview of the Acquisition Lifecycle for Security Technology. The ability to meet evolving threats in the future will be heavily reliant on algorithm development. Will new algorithm acquisition/deployment also proceed under a similar acquisition framework? If not, has that process been defined? Can it be provided to industry?
 - g. Does TSA possess rapid procurement authorities to purchase and install significant quantities of TSE post-Innovation Task Force, bypassing the process outlined in Appendix F? For example, has TSA considered the use of innovative contracting methods to greatly accelerate the prototyping and procurements of new equipment, including executing Urgent Operational Needs (UONs) or Other Transaction Authority (OTAs)?

Air Cargo:

- 4.) Around 50% of all passenger airline travel has cargo in the bay of the aircraft, yet the Refresh Plan makes no reference to cargo security.

- a. Does TSA accept the findings of such organizations as the GAO and CRS and view air cargo as a serious security concern and, if so, what are TSA's specific plans on incorporating advanced, non-intrusive cargo screening technologies into TSA's R&D and materiel acquisition planning?
- b. Are there possibilities to tie in the Air Cargo requirements with the requirements of other agencies, such as the CBP Non-Intrusive Inspection organization?

Cybersecurity:

- 5.) The Refresh Plan contains an update on the state of hardening the aviation security system against cybersecurity threats and attacks.
 - a. What is the overall status of TSA's cybersecurity efforts? What is the status of the cybersecurity elements of the Security Technology Integrated Program (STIP) and any ongoing challenges?
 - b. How does TSA ensure the cybersecurity of security technology deployed in the field?
 - c. To what extent has TSA conducted penetration tests of this security technology to understand how an adversary might gain unauthorized access to the technology?
 - d. What is the level of coordination between TSA and the DHS Office of Cybersecurity and Communications (CS&C) on cybersecurity matters? Has TSA ever requested an independent cybersecurity assessment from DHS CS&C?
 - e. Does TSA have specific resource constraints associated with delivering on its cybersecurity objectives?
 - f. What assistance from industry does TSA need in meeting its cybersecurity objectives?