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BREACH OF TRUST: ADDRESSING MISCONDUCT AMONG TSA SCREENERS

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BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION SECURITY

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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BREACH OF TRUST: ADDRESSING MISCONDUCT AMONG TSA SCREENERS

Wednesday, August 1, 2012

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION SECURITY,
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 10:04 a.m., in Room 311, Cannon House Office Building, Hon. Mike Rogers [Chairman of the subcommittee] presiding.

Present: Representatives Rogers, Lungren, Walberg, Cravaack, Turner, and Davis.

Mr. ROGERS. The Committee on Homeland Security Subcommittee on Transportation Security will come to order. The subcommittee is meeting today to examine TSA's efforts to address ongoing misconduct within its screening workforce.

I would like to welcome everybody here today, and especially TSA's new administrator, John Halinski, for testifying. Congratulations on your new appointment. I am sure you are going to do a great job. I share Administrator Pistole's confidence in your abilities.

The need for the Federal Government to oversee and direct aviation security is undeniable. Terrorists have proven time and again their commitment to attacking our Nation's aviation systems. The Government has a duty to protect its citizens against these kinds of attacks.

Having said that, the majority of Americans do not support the Government's current approach. When they hear that some people at TSA who are supposed to enforce and ensure their security are engaged in gross misconduct, it only makes matters worse.

Stealing from checked luggage, accepting bribes from drug smugglers, sleeping or drinking while on duty, now this kind of criminal behavior and negligence has contributed significantly to TSA's shattered public image. It is true that other Federal departments struggle with criminal cases against their employees, but TSA, unlike most agencies, interacts with the general public in a very frequent and personal manner.

The fact is that TSA's high-profile criminal cases have contributed to its major image problems and a growing lack of support. I believe TSA has an oversized workforce, which only increases the likelihood of this type behavior. I think the number of employees could be reduced dramatically with significantly more attention paid to qualifications and training.

It is just a small percentage of the overall workforce that is involved in criminal or negligent behavior, but it only takes a few bad apples to spoil the bunch. At the end of the day, perception is reality. I did not convene this hearing to rehash all the details of the recent incidents of misconduct, nor is it my intention to vilify every TSA employee.

Rather, this hearing is a chance for TSA to describe the efforts to more quickly identify and remove employees whose behavior or lack of judgment can further damage TSA's already troubled image. I believe the American taxpayer is owed this information. More importantly, I believe the frequency of TSA employee misconduct is a symptom of a larger problem we have examined here before.

With the exception of SPP airports, TSA is responsible for both overseeing the screening and conducting the screening. In some cases, we have seen poor screener performance going uncorrected or, even worse, being encouraged or covered up by TSA management.

One of the most disturbing examples occurred last year in Honolulu airport, where screeners and supervisors were letting luggage go through without screening for explosives. TSA's own Federal security was in on it. One of these cases is too many, but there have been other disturbing cases since then, including at airports in southwest Florida, Philadelphia, JFK, and Newark.

Today, I look forward to receiving information from Mr. Halinski on his efforts to tackle these issues, and how Congress can assist you in those efforts. TSA has taken some action under Administrator Pistole's leadership to improve the integrity of TSA's workforce, including the creation of the new Office of Professional Responsibility.

While I regularly support the administrator, adding bureaucracy on top of bureaucracy is not generally a good solution.

With that, I now recognize the Ranking Member—or the sit-in Ranking Member—of the subcommittee, Mr. Davis, for any opening statement he may have.

Mr. DAVIS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Because the Ranking Member, Ms. Lee, could not be in attendance today I am sitting in, in her stead. So I will read her opening statement at this moment, and she may join us before the end of the hearing.

I would first like to take this opportunity to thank Mr. Halinski for joining us today for the first time in his new role as deputy administrator at TSA. Mr. Chairman, as you know this Congress, we, have focused on the efforts by the Federal Government to empower and strengthen our front-line employees.

Transportation security officers working at our airports across the country are our first line of defense against terrorism. Through our work on the oversight committee in the previous Congresses, the committee has found that these workers suffer from high injury rates, attrition, and exceptionally low morale.

Until recently, there was no hope for them to obtain the necessary workplace protections, collective bargaining rights and whistle-blower protections, that other Federal employees enjoy. However, today we are closer to achieving this goal and, in turn, establishing a workforce that can place a greater focus on the security mission at hand.

The lack of workplace protections for screening personnel, combined with poor workforce management, increases costs and decreases security. Collective bargaining rights will ensure that TSOs are regarded with the same standard and authority as other critical security personnel. We can have confidence that these rights will not interfere with proper steps being taken to address criminal activity and our failure in the training program.

Mr. Chairman, as we explore today's hearing topic, I must caution you that we must make it clear as to what type of misconduct we are referring to. In one instance, we may be discussing alleged criminal activity that TSOs engage in and, therefore, must face legal consequences.

On the other hand, we must take a closer look at instances when TSOs fail to comply with standard operating procedures at the checkpoint and what steps are taken by TSA to identify this activity and address vulnerabilities in the training and enforcement program. This hearing is an opportunity to question TSA about how it ensures that screening procedures are followed, and how it determines whether the remedy for misconduct should be discipline or remedial training for TSOs.

Proper training of TSOs is critical to the security of our aviation system. That is why I, along with my Democratic colleagues of the committee, have consistently called for providing TSOs with additional training whenever egregious screening operations and missteps occur.

I look forward to hearing more from TSA about how the most recent reorganization it has undertaken will address these concerns. In recent hearings, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have stressed the importance of determining adequate staffing levels in order to create efficiencies that do not compromise security at our airports.

In these tight budgetary times, it is incumbent upon all of us to find ways to be more efficient without compromising security. We cannot, however, cut corners when it comes to transportation security. I look forward to hearing from Mr. Halinski on TSA's staffing allocation model and its determination to adequately staff our security checkpoints.

I would also expect to hear from him on the cost of outsourcing of screening operations. Finally, I hope Mr. Halinski can solve a mystery we have tried to unravel for over a year. That is, how will TSA's on-going headquarters reorganization reduce costs and create efficiencies?

With that, Mr. Chairman, I thank you and yield back.

Mr. ROGERS. I thank the gentleman. Other Members of the committee are reminded that opening statements may be submitted for the record.

We are pleased to have today with us a distinguished witness, Mr. John Halinski, the TSA deputy administrator. Mr. Halinski assumed his new position in July of this year. He previously served as the head of the office of global strategies, and Europe area manager before that.

Before joining TSA, Mr. Halinski served 25 years in the Marine Corps in a variety of distinguished positions. We thank you for your service.

The Chairman now recognizes Mr. Halinski for his opening statement.

STATEMENT OF JOHN W. HALINSKI, DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR, TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

Mr. HALINSKI. Good morning, Chairman Rogers, Congressman Davis, and distinguished Members of the subcommittee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

Since TSA's inception, commercial aviation has been a priority target for al-Qaeda and its affiliates, as evidenced by repeated unsuccessful attempts to attack our aviation system. In recent years, TSA has mitigated threats related to a liquid explosives plot in 2006; the Christmas day underwear bombing attempt in 2009; the cargo explosive attempt in 2010; and concerns about surgically implanted explosives and renewed threat of explosives concealed on the body this year.

The threat continues to evolve, which is why TSA uses intelligence as a key driver of all we do. Our transportation security officers, or TSOs, screen more than 1.8 million people per day. Our workforce is dedicated to the security of all passengers, and our leadership is committed to employing risk-based, intelligence-driven operations to reduce the vulnerability of the Nation's transportation system to terrorism.

Ten years after Federal screening operations began, our workforce is one of the most diverse in the Federal Government. The TSA workforce exceeds the civilian labor force participation rates for the three largest minority groups. Approximately one-quarter of our workforce, or 15,000 personnel, are veterans of the United States armed forces, who bring to TSA the same dedication to serving their country that they did while in military uniform.

Our workforce has considerable on-the-job experience, with the average TSO serving with us for nearly 6 years. We train and expect our workforce to carry out our critical security mission with professionalism and respect. Overall, most travelers have a positive experience at the airport. Of the 6 million passengers screened each year, we are contacted by roughly 750,000 travelers.

Of those contacts, less than 8 percent are from passengers registering a complaint. This fact belies the near-constant criticism and frequently-embellished allegations of improper screening reported in the media and repeated as fact by many individuals despite the evidence to the contrary. Since the creation of TSA, we have been focused on evolving the skill of our workforce to proactively mitigate potential threats.

Through efficiencies created in our operations and the use of technology, we have invested in more specialized screening approaches, enhancing our layered security system as recommended by the 9/11 Commission. Also, since the inception of TSA we have used intelligence and our experience to make adjustments to the prohibited items list.

These changes allow our workforce to focus on high-threat items. We base these decisions on a careful analysis of intelligence and our commitment to mitigating risk. In addition to Administrator Pistole's expectations of hard work, professionalism, and integrity

from everyone who works at TSA he has also committed to provide the most effective security in the most efficient way.

We are currently engaged in a transformation to better allocate resources and streamline agency functions. Our mission requires a workforce with specialized skills that can adapt as threats evolve. Maintaining and enhancing our employees' capability is a high priority. To be successful in our mission, we hold ourselves and our workforce accountable for meeting our expectations for hard work, professionalism, and integrity.

Like any large agency, we will have employees that don't meet our expectations. It is a matter of loyalty to the tens of thousands of employees who take pride in carrying our out mission and do it well that we take prompt and appropriate action when we identify employees who do not meet our standards.

Administrator Pistole, shortly after coming to TSA, established the Office of Professional Responsibility, or OPR, patterned after a similar function within the Department of Justice. The purpose of OPR is to ensure that allegations of misconduct are thoroughly investigated and that discipline is appropriate and fair across the agency.

In closing, what unites everyone at TSA is our mission. We are acutely aware of why TSA was created. Our employees, some of whom are your neighbors and your constituents, choose public service to ensure that the horror of 9/11 never happens again within our country.

Our workforce's commitment to serve and protect the traveling public is both genuine and admirable. I am proud to serve with TSA, and I am committed to supporting to make them better. I am committed to defending them when they are criticized for doing the right thing. I am also committed to holding them accountable when they fail to meet our standards.

This is what our mission requires to be successful. Thank you, and I look forward to answering your questioned.

[The statement of Mr. Halinski follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JOHN W. HALINSKI

AUGUST 1, 2012

Good morning Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Jackson Lee, and distinguished Members of the subcommittee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today to address the challenges facing the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) workforce. To better understand those challenges, first and foremost, it is critical that we not only remember, but also appreciate why TSA was created and the enormous challenges facing the men and women of TSA every day as we carry out our security mission.

Following the 9/11 terrorist attacks, TSA was stood up to secure our transportation systems. Since TSA's inception, there have been repeated unsuccessful attempts to attack our aviation system—the liquid explosives plot in 2006, the Christmas day underwear bombing attempt in 2009, the cargo explosive attempt in 2010, and the renewed threat of explosives concealed on the body this year. The threat to aviation is real, and we use intelligence, technology, and partnerships with law enforcement across the country and around the world to stay ahead of threats and ensure our workforce is prepared to address them.

Our Transportation Security Officers (TSOs) serve on the front line of our layered security system and screen approximately 1.8 million people who travel from 450 airports each day. Both in the field and at headquarters, the TSA workforce is vigilant in ensuring the security of the passengers that travel through our Nation's vast transportation networks. TSA employs risk-based, intelligence-driven operations to prevent terrorist attacks and to reduce the vulnerability of the Nation's transpor-

tation system to terrorism. We continue to evolve our security approach by examining the procedures and technologies we use, how specific security procedures are carried out, and how screening is conducted.

Our workforce is trained to carry out their responsibilities with professionalism and respect. TSA takes passengers' experiences seriously and has established multiple opportunities for travelers to provide feedback both during and after screening. Of the 600 million passengers screened on an annual basis, the TSA Contact Center receives approximately 750,000 contacts from the traveling public, of which less than 8 percent constitute complaints. Travelers with disabilities and medical conditions also have the option of reaching out to TSA for assistance before getting to the airport. These travelers may call the TSA Cares toll-free help-line number (1–855–787–2227) with questions about screening policies and procedures and what to expect at the security checkpoint. When a passenger with a disability or medical condition calls TSA Cares, a representative will provide assistance either with information about screening that is relevant to the passenger's specific disability or medical condition or the passenger may be referred to disability experts at TSA. This additional level of personal communication helps ensure that even those who do not travel often are aware of our screening policies before they arrive at the airport. Overall, most travelers have a positive experience at the airport.

EVOLUTION OF THE TSA WORKFORCE

It is important to appreciate how our workforce has evolved since the creation of TSA. Following the events of 9/11, when Congress created TSA to lead the National effort to guard against terrorist attacks on our transportation systems, we have built a workforce to meet the operational needs of the aviation system and have transformed our front-line workforce to address evolving threats while mitigating risks. Prior to 2006 we had 45,000 full-time equivalent TSOs conducting security operations focused on screening people and carry-on bags at the checkpoint and checked baggage. Today, as discussed more fully below, the same functions are carried out by approximately 25 percent fewer personnel, while the passenger volume remains about the same as it was in 2006. These efficiencies have enabled us to invest in personnel performing more specialized screening functions, thereby enhancing our layered security system.

With the support of Congress, TSA is moving away from a one-size-fits-all security model and towards its goal of providing the most effective transportation security in the most efficient way possible. While a one-size-fits-all approach has been effective over the past decade, and was necessary after 9/11, two key enablers—technology and intelligence—are allowing TSA to move toward a risk-based security model.

We created efficiencies in our operations and deployed technologies such as in-line baggage screening equipment that have allowed us to better utilize our workforce to perform other functions. Using intelligence as our guide, we have also strengthened security by adding security functions including travel and identification document verification, behavior detection officers, explosives experts, operations coordination center officers, and officers conducting security operations beyond the checkpoint—without increasing our FTE numbers.

Ten years after the introduction of Federal screening at our Nation's domestic airports, the TSA workforce is one of the most diverse in the Federal Government. Our diversity spans every demographic—race, religion, ethnicity, gender—and cultural background. TSA draws its employees from the law enforcement community, private industry, and the military. In fact, our workforce exceeds the Civilian Labor Force (CLF) participation rates for the three largest minority groups (Hispanic, African American, and Asian American) and approximately 23 percent of our workforce are veterans of the United States Armed Forces. This diversity brings with it a diversity of experience and perspective. It is also a workforce of considerable on-the-job experience, with the average TSO working at TSA nearly 6 years and more than half of our workforce with more than 5 years.

TRAINING FOR THE FUTURE

All aspects of our workforce regimen—hiring, promotion, retention, training, proactive compliance inspections, investigations and adjudications—are driven by adherence to the highest standards. TSA Administrator Pistole has made clear that integrity, professionalism, and hard work are bedrock principles and TSA is committed, not only to improving the effectiveness of security, but to doing so in the most cost-effective manner possible.

We are currently engaged in a headquarters transformation of TSA that is designed to increase efficiencies and more prudently allocate resources. An important

part of this effort is the creation of the Office of Training and Workforce Engagement (OTWE), which centralizes technical and leadership training as well as workforce engagement programs that were previously dispersed throughout TSA. Maintaining and enhancing the capabilities of our employees, and particularly our TSOs, is a priority. Both the nature of our work and advances in technology has required our workforce to adapt and develop new, specialized skills as threats continue to evolve.

TSA will soon be providing Behavior Awareness Training (BAT) to the general TSO workforce. This training encourages all TSOs to use critical thinking skills and operational experience to better identify signs of anomalous behavior. Each officer has developed, through on-the-job experience, an understanding of what is routine for the operations at their assigned airports. BAT will build on this experience and teach TSOs how to identify and react to a number of behavior indicators that they may observe and consider anomalous in their operating environment.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

In addition to technical training, on-going programs support the professional development of TSOs to continually improve their overall effectiveness and efficiency. For example, since last summer TSA has been delivering a tactical communications course for all managers, supervisors, and TSOs. The course, which expands upon the concepts and principles introduced during earlier engagement training, teaches officers how to effectively interact with passengers and co-workers. The course is designed to prepare TSOs for all types of human interactions by giving them tools and techniques to de-escalate difficult situations. At the checkpoint, these skills enable TSOs to more effectively complete the screening process.

We are also expanding supervisory training as we implement the Department of Homeland Security Cornerstone program, a unified approach to the development of essential skills for new and seasoned TSA supervisors. This program includes instructor-led classroom training, mentoring, and on-going development opportunities.

Over the next 18 months all of our Supervisory Transportation Security Officers (STSOs) will complete a course on the essentials of supervising screening operations. This training will build upon the basic leadership and technical skills of front-line supervisors, including effective communications, coaching, mentoring, and problem-solving, and will enhance technical skills needed for effectively implementing security procedures. One of the key course objectives is to encourage STSOs to take ownership of their role in facilitating and contributing to the development of a responsible and professional workforce by establishing a high standard of performance, accountability, and integrity that their team members will strive to emulate.

Workforce development is further enhanced by the TSA Associates Program, which continues to provide TSA's front-line workforce the opportunity to receive a TSA Certificate of Achievement in Homeland Security upon the completion of three core courses offered at community colleges across the country. More than 2,500 officers have enrolled since the program's inception. Today, the program is represented by employees in all 50 States with more than 70 airports and 60 community colleges participating in the program.

It is not enough to train and engage our workforce—we must hold everyone accountable in the success of our mission. Administrator Pistole, shortly after coming to TSA, established the Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR) to ensure that allegations of misconduct are thoroughly investigated and that discipline is appropriate and fair across the agency. OPR ensures that our workforce is treated fairly by removing people that do not meet the high standards of integrity that our mission requires.

CONCLUSION

Today, as it has been since TSA's creation, the success of our mission depends upon our people. We are proud of the dedication and skill they bring to their work every day. In job satisfaction surveys, TSA employees consistently report a high level of commitment to the mission—that is why they are here. We appreciate your continued support as we strive to ensure that our workforce is well-prepared and given the proper tools to meet the challenges of securing our aviation transportation system. Thank you, Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Jackson Lee, and Members of the subcommittee, for the opportunity to appear before you today. I look forward to answering your questions.

Mr. ROGERS. Thank you, Mr. Halinski.

The Chairman now recognizes himself for 5 minutes of questions. Mr. Halinski, do you believe that the criticisms of TSA by many Americans are reasonable? Yes or no.

Mr. HALINSKI. Sir, I would say that when I have looked at the statistics that we have, which is we screen approximately 600 million passengers a year, and we have engagement who actively come in contact with about 750,000, about 8 percent, or less than 8 percent, are actually criticisms of TSA.

When you look at the large amount of passengers that are going through, I think that that statistic speaks for itself. I will say that in any large organization—if you have an organization of 60,000 people—that is like a city. You are always going to have crime in a city, you are always going to have people in a city who don't do things that are proper or make mistakes.

I am not saying we are any different from any other group of Americans. I am saying we are exactly like every other group of Americans. But we will hold them accountable when they do something wrong. I think we have demonstrated that recently with the creation of our OPR and trying to streamline the process when we identify problems in our organization.

Mr. ROGERS. So do you think the criticisms by the American people are reasonable?

Mr. HALINSKI. Sir, I would say I haven't seen a lot of—well, I would ask you, sir, if you could provide us what the criticisms are. I haven't seen a lot of statistics about criticisms. What I have seen——

Mr. ROGERS. Have you been in public lately?

Mr. HALINSKI. Sir, I have been——

Mr. ROGERS. I hear them every time I go to Wal-Mart or church.

Mr. HALINSKI. Yes, sir. Understand, sir. You know, I saw an interesting fact the other day on the media and the press that TSA gets. We have actually tracked, since 2009, negative reporting in the media of TSA, and found that there were almost 13,000 reports in the media of TSA. About 47 percent of those were negative.

Interesting fact that I find is that we looked at the number of blogs, and there are about 5,000 blogs out there. Of the 5,000 blogs, about 80 percent of those are negative towards TSA. One interesting piece I find, as a former Marine officer, is the fact that it is very easy to put a negative comment in a blog and not put your name on it.

I think that is a point—you know, when we see criticism, we are going to address criticism, we are going to address vulnerabilities. I give you my word on that, sir.

Mr. ROGERS. Good. Well, you have talked about the Office of Professional Responsibility. Can you tell me more specifically what you intend to do now that you are in charge to more rapidly try to eliminate this problem to the extent humanly possible?

Mr. HALINSKI. Yes, sir. I will tell you that when we see an issue with an employee, we are very committed to resolving it. I would like to take one moment, sir, to let you know that——

Mr. ROGERS. But I mean specifically, though, what do you intend to do differently than has been done before you took this position to ensure that speedy resolution?

Mr. HALINSKI. Yes, sir. When we have personnel that have committed, let us say, stealing drugs or lack of security that we can immediately identify, those personnel are terminated. They are walked out the door.

Mr. ROGERS. Well, that is a new development. I am glad to hear that.

Mr. HALINSKI. Yes, sir. No. 2, when we cannot conclusively identify bad behavior we conduct an investigation. We have created the Office of Professional Responsibility to ensure that there is consistency. An investigation is held. We have consistent review of the process.

If appropriate, our employees are held accountable for misbehavior. I think it sends a strong signal. I would like to go back to your opening comment, sir, when your identified some issues in some of our airports. I view that as a positive thing, sir. We are policing our own.

We are identifying problems, and we are conducting the appropriate action. In some cases, it is terminating employees who have misconduct. Now, I would also categorize——

Mr. ROGERS. By the way, let me ask. Is the new contract that you are about to sign going to in any way inhibit your ability to terminate employees for improper behavior?

Mr. HALINSKI. Sir, at this point, because it is a very sensitive negotiation, I think it would be inappropriate for me to discuss that because it might have effects on that negotiation. I don't think it is appropriate to discuss that, sir. I am more than willing, after the negotiation is completed, to give you a full briefing on exactly what is entailed on that issue, sir.

Mr. ROGERS. Well, after the negotiations are complete, rather than a briefing I would rather do it in public. Because the public needs to know. You know, one of my concerns all along with TSA has been that when they do have somebody that, for example, makes serious errors in judgment, like people going through the magnetometer, the IT, they aren't terminated, they aren't really disciplined in a significant way.

You know, there has been some pretty egregious actions that if they were in the private sector I think they would have been terminated. So I am concerned that there might be some effort to inhibit your ability to get rid of bad apples.

Because the truth is, the overwhelming majority of TSA employees and screeners are good employees, good people trying to do a good job. But we can't let the whole organization be tainted by bad folks that you can't seem to get rid of. With that, my time is expired.

I now recognize Mr. Davis for 5 minutes of questions.

Mr. DAVIS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Halinski, welcome again.

Let me ask you, in 2006 the DHS Office of the Inspector General reported that Covenant Aviation Security officials at San Francisco International Airport compromised OIG covert security testing. They did so by informing their contract screeners that testing was occurring.

Do you believe that such misconduct by a company with the contract for screening services constitutes a breach of the public trust?

Mr. HALINSKI. Sir, first let me say that I am not familiar with that particular case. I have not read that. I would say that whether it is a private company or a public company we identify an issue in our screening workforce. We try to take the appropriate action that is needed, sir.

Mr. DAVIS. Well, let me ask you, what would happen if that was found to be the case today?

Mr. HALINSKI. Sir, I believe that if we found something like that going on we would take the appropriate action. I believe that we would be discussing that with the company that is there, and we would take the appropriate action based on a review of the process. I can't exactly what that would be because I wouldn't have the facts, sir, until I was able to sit across the table from them and discuss it.

Mr. DAVIS. Just a moment ago, you and Chairman Rogers had some dialogue relative to the newly-established Office of Professional Responsibility, which was created to ensure timely, fair, and consistent discipline throughout the agency. However, it is my understanding that most decisions on discipline are still made at the local level by Federal security directors.

If that is the case, then how will the Office of Professional Responsibility be able to ensure fair and consistent discipline and that it is being applied when it is not the entity making such decisions in what appear to be a majority of the cases?

Mr. HALINSKI. Sir, I think it depends, No. 1, on the case. The office of OPR will review all cases. There is a review panel that consists of two individuals from the office of OPR, as well as an FSD. They do a paper review of the case. Once again, I would like to say, sir, we have 60,000 employees.

Our Office of Professional Responsibility is a very small organization. We are concentrating—it is a new organization. We believe it is the right approach. We are trying to be consistent across the board. There is a review process that does occur, sir.

Mr. DAVIS. Well let me ask you, that being the case, how will the Office of Professional Responsibility coordinate with TSOs' exclusive representative, the American Federation of Government Employees, to ensure that the terms of the arbitration agreement between the parties are not violated?

Mr. HALINSKI. Sir, I would like to say that at this point we are in a very sensitive negotiation on collective bargaining. I think anything I say could be taken out of context, and I don't want to jeopardize that particular negotiation at this point. But we would love to do a public forum, as Chairman Rogers said, on all aspects of the agreement with the union, sir.

Mr. DAVIS. Thank you very much.

I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ROGERS. I thank the gentleman.

The Chairman now recognizes the gentleman from California, Mr. Lungren, for 5 minutes.

Mr. LUNGREN. Thank you very much.

First of all, Mr. Halinski, let me thank you for your service in the Marine Corps, and I appreciate that. I presume, I am confident, that the dedication you showed as a Marine is the same dedication you are showing us today, helping us with challenges.

I just want to put on the record, I think we are safer today as a result of the work that has been done by DHS and by TSA. I think I am safer when I go, and this weekend I am going with my granddaughter on a flight out home. When they turn 5, they come with granddad out to visit us in California.

I feel more confident and safer today than I did in the days right after 9/11. So I appreciate that work, and I appreciate the work of the TSA employees. I think the full-body scanners may be one way of reducing some of the complaints you have, as someone who has had many, many body searches from TSA, it is not a pleasant experience and there are many ways that I think can lead to complaints.

I think the rapidity with which people can go through the body scanners, and the lack of having full body searches, is an improvement. I am a supporter, and have been, of the Screening Partnership Program. I was pleased, in the announcement this last week, that the major airport in my district, Sacramento International Airport—which has been striving for some time to get permission from TSA to pursue that if that is appropriate—the announcement that they can pursue that has gone forward.

Is there any evidence whatsoever that there is any difference in terms of the level of complaints that you have from those airports that have TSA employees versus those that have Screening Partnership Program employees?

Mr. HALINSKI. Sir, we would say that our analysis between the Federalized workforce and the SPP has found that from an operational standpoint there are basically no differences. I would say that our analysis has also indicated there is a slightly higher cost.

Mr. LUNGREN. No, I understand. I don't want to get into that because we have had strong disagreements with your Department on that. Because originally, you came up and your folks forgot to put the additional costs of pension and so forth in there, and we brought it down from 13 percent down to 3 percent. So I don't want to get into that question because we have gone on and on about that.

I don't think there is any problem with examining it, but I have had some real problems with the numbers I have gotten from TSA over that time.

Let me ask you this: How do you recruit screeners? What are the key qualifications that TSA looks for? Have you changed it at all in light of some of the complaints we have had about some of those who have been on job in the past?

Mr. HALINSKI. Sir, I think we actually have a very good process to recruit screeners. Let me start, if you will allow me to walk through that process. We recruit our personnel through a variety of different processes. What we are looking for, because I think it is a key to good security, is we are looking for a very diverse workforce.

I am not talking about race, I am not talking about age. I am talking a combination of many other factors; experience, several things. Because it is very, very important. Because if you are going to be successful in security you can't look through one lens. You have to be able to look through multiple lenses.

When we do our recruiting, our personnel come in and they are vetted against a criminal database, they are vetted against a terrorist database, and they are vetted against their financial records. Once they come into TSA, sir, they are given a fairly extensive training regimen.

They have to pass a series of tests; knowledge on screening, knowledge on our standard operating procedures. Then they are given an extensive period of on-the-job training. As they progress, they are given recurrent training on a continual basis, sir.

Mr. LUNGREN. Is there a period of probation?

Mr. HALINSKI. I believe it is—I will have to get back with you on that, sir. I don't want to give you the wrong answer.

Mr. LUNGREN. Okay. What about your recruitment of veterans?

Mr. HALINSKI. Yes, sir. We actively recruit veterans. As I said, 25 percent of our workforce are veterans. That is——

Mr. LUNGREN. So how do you recruit them?

Mr. HALINSKI. How do we recruit them, sir? We use a lot of the internet, sir, to be quite frank. We have programs where we look at the Transition Assistance Program with DOD. I think that is a very good program. I myself went through that program, and it does identify opportunities for veterans.

Mr. LUNGREN. How many criminal cases do you have on-going?

Mr. HALINSKI. I will have to get back with you, sir. I am not sure exactly the number.

Mr. LUNGREN. If you could, and if you could give us the type of offenses I would appreciate that.

Thank you.

Mr. ROGERS. I thank the gentleman.

The Chairman now recognizes my friend and colleague from, what is that, Minnesota?

Mr. CRAVAACK. Minnesota.

Mr. ROGERS. Mr. Cravaack, for 5 minutes.

Mr. CRAVAACK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Welcome aboard, sir.

Mr. HALINSKI. Thank you, sir.

Mr. CRAVAACK. Thank you for your dedication and service. You definitely stepped in the breach, so thank you for doing that. But I couldn't think of a better guy than a Marine, so thank you very much.

Mr. HALINSKI. Appreciate it, sir.

Mr. CRAVAACK. You come from a very professional organization, and I hope that what you have learned in the Corps will definitely be transferred down into the troops. I think that being a Marine Corps will definitely help you along that way. So I look forward to that, and seeing a transformation in the TSA.

Like the Chairman said, the majority—I remember the old saying that 95 percent of your workforce is good, but 95 percent of your work is spent on 5 percent of your people. So I think that is probably what you are experiencing right now, as well.

I also understand and appreciate your sensitivity regarding union negotiations. As a 17-year union member, going through a negotiation process I understand your concern; saying something that may be taken out of context and affect negotiations. So I totally get that and understand it.

One of the things, though, when I went through negotiations—one of the—the strong proponents that I have always been said is that you never negotiate safety. That is one thing that I hope you will take to bear when you do go to the table and negotiate with the unions that safety is not a negotiable item.

It is either one way or the other and, hopefully, we will always lean on the side of safety. So with that said, in your testimony you mentioned training for TSOs to effectively interact with passengers and de-escalate difficult situations. One of the things that—one of the bills that I had was a TSA bill in regard to making sure that our troops, our warriors, who come back from—from overseas, when they are in uniform, with orders and a military ID, that they get expedited screening.

Not no screening, but expedited screening. Do you have special training for TSOs to expedite the screening for members of the armed services?

Mr. HALINSKI. Yes, sir, we do. Whenever we start a new program or we initiate a program, what we have is extensive training of our screeners—in this case, for military personnel—to recognize a couple of different things. We really think that the partnership we have established with DOD is very good on a number of levels.

Not just returning veterans, but also wounded warriors and wounded warriors' families. I think we have established a very, very good program. It has been great to work with DOD in this capacity, having come from DOD. We are very committed to supporting them and carrying that out, sir.

Mr. CRAVAACK. Okay. Because the reason why I asked the question, I have heard several stories from service members who were forced to remove their boots, service blouse—and when they were traveling in uniform and on orders. I take it personally. Just recently, returning back to Minnesota, I saw a young major coming back from Afghanistan.

I was all excited because of the bill that we had was able to press forward. I said, "Were you able to get through expedited screening?" He said, "No, what is that?" It wasn't even offered to him. He was in full military uniform, you know, with about three sea bags, coming back from Afghanistan.

So I was very, very disappointed that this bill that we fought so hard for is not being deployed. We just had a hearing about that just a couple weeks ago so anything you, especially as a veteran yourself, can do to move this along. Quite frankly, you are in violation of the bill already because it was supposed to be fully executed.

So anything that you can do, as a Marine, and also the head I would appreciate you expediting that. Can you tell me if any steps have been taken since then to change any training for TSOs to account for risk-based security screening for members of the armed services act? Are people aware of this act that is in place?

Are they aware, when they see a service member, in uniform, that they are to offer expedited screening to them?

Mr. HALINSKI. Yes, sir. As I said, sir, we are very, very committed to working with the DOD. I think we have established a good partnership with DOD. We are in, as you know, sir, 450 some-

odd airports and we are doing our best to ensure that we get the word out to our workforce on DOD.

We look at the military as one of our models for the risk-based security program in PreCheck. As we continue to move forward with that we will continue to conduct ourselves according to that, sir.

Mr. CRAVAACK. Okay, sir. You do understand it is the law, signed by the President.

Mr. HALINSKI. Sir, I absolutely understand the law sir.

Mr. CRAVAACK. Roger that.

With that, I will yield back.

Mr. ROGERS. I thank the gentleman.

The Chairman now recognizes himself for a second round of questions. To make sure that the audience both here and on C–Span understand, you know, some of the instances I am concerned about, I want to describe a few of them. Last year, at a Honolulu airport, 45 TSA employees were fired or suspended, including the FSD, the Federal security director, for knowingly failing to screen checked bags and explosives.

Also last year, in Jackson, Mississippi, a TSA assistant Federal security director was arrested for stabbing a co-worker to death in her apartment. The accused individual was previously a screening supervisor at Chicago O'Hare Airport. This year, in Newark Airport, screening supervisors were fired for being caught sleeping in front of monitors used to detect explosives and other threats and checked bags.

This year also, at Fort Myers Airport, five TSA employees were fired and 38 others, including supervisors and the Federal security director, were suspended for failing to conduct random screenings. This year at Dulles Airport, a screening supervisor was arrested for allegedly running a prostitution ring out of a hotel in Maryland.

Given these examples, can you tell me your thoughts about TSA's ability to oversee these supervisors who conduct the screening?

Mr. HALINSKI. Yes, sir. I would like to answer that in a couple ways, sir. First, with the incidents in Honolulu, Newark, and Fort Myers, these are incidents where I believe that the measures that we have taken in place are starting to show fruition, sir. Quite frankly, I say that because we are policing our own.

We have identified an issue, we conducted a thorough investigation, and the parties that were involved have been terminated from TSA, as they should have been, because they were not in accordance with the way we operate. In the case of Jackson and Dulles, sir, those are criminal cases. I believe that was occurring when these individuals were off-duty, and they have been handled appropriately.

I believe both individuals have been arrested and terminated from TSA. I would tell you, on supervisory training, sir, one of the things that we have initiated in our transformation in the last year is the creation of the Office of Training and Workforce Engagement. Why is that?

At one point, we had training in several different areas. We have now consolidated training and become much more efficient. Part of the training that we are doing right now at FLETC in Georgia is what we call—and I want to get it correct, sir, because I screwed

up a couple of hearings ago on an acronym—ESSO training, which is the Essentials of Supervising Screening Operations.

This particular training is new, and it specifically addresses supervisory screening techniques and operation; how they interact with the public, our culture of accountability, our culture of integrity. We are trying to get the entire screening supervisor workforce trained in a very short period of time to that standard at FLETC, sir.

Mr. ROGERS. What period of time do you think that will be?

Mr. HALINSKI. We are looking at about 18 months, sir.

Mr. ROGERS. That every supervisor will go through that FLETC training?

Mr. HALINSKI. Absolutely, sir. We are putting a push on it, and we believe the creation of this Office of Training and Workforce Engagement is a major step to refocusing our efforts to because an efficient counterterrorism organization, where we hold our people accountable, and increase integrity, sir.

Mr. ROGERS. Well, I am glad to hear that you are talking about 18 months. Because last I heard, you all were looking at a much longer time line. That is a great improvement. In Americans' minds, TSA represents everything wrong about the Federal Government; bloated in bureaucracy.

If you would put the chart up for me, and help me navigate this. When you look at the bottom right-hand side of the screen there is a little green box. That is when somebody is identified as having done something criminal or inappropriate. Kind of walk me through the process of what happens after that person—let us say he is caught stealing something in a bag.

Walk me through—where do they go? Because this seems confusing to me.

Mr. HALINSKI. Well, sir, to be quite honest with you, I have never seen that slide. It seems a little bit confusing to me. But let me simplify the process, sir. We have a couple of different processes. If an individual in TSA is identified as committing an act of theft, drugs—and we do test for drugs—or a lack of screening, what we do immediately, if we can prove it immediately, we terminate the employee.

Mr. ROGERS. Do you believe that will be in any way inhibited by your new contract?

Mr. HALINSKI. Sir, once again I am going to go back to what I have said before, is that I feel that if I discuss any aspect of the collective bargaining agreement at this critical time I could jeopardize that negotiation. I would prefer to give you a full briefing in an open hearing like this after it is concluded, sir.

Mr. ROGERS. Great. Well I can just tell you, if you are not able to fire people for stealing under that new contract we are going to have a problem.

Mr. HALINSKI. Sir, the policy we have is, if we catch an individual who is stealing, involved in drugs, or committing acts of lack of security is to terminate that employee immediately. If we cannot prove immediately, what we do is we conduct an investigation. It either goes to the DHSIG, or it is internal in our office of investigations.

If the allegation turns out to be true it is taken to the Office of Professional Responsibility. They have 30 days to conduct a consistent approach to dealing out appropriate action. That compacts the time frame, much quicker. We believe this process is streamlined and more effective and, more importantly, it is consistent across the board. It is not effect——

Mr. ROGERS. So that Office of Professional Responsibility, at 30 days can they terminate or suspend, or take whatever action is necessary? There is no other step beyond that?

Mr. HALINSKI. There is no other step except we will do an automatic review, sir, of that process. So there will be a letter, there will be a 14-day to 20-some-odd-day period where the person has the ability to respond. Then there will be a final adjudication. We are trying to streamline it.

We do not tolerate, in our agency, misbehavior, sir. I would like to say again, we have 60,000 employees, sir. They are good employees. If I may make one comment, sir, you know we see a lot about surveys with TSA employees and they have said this or they have said that. There is one striking piece that every survey we have stands out among our employees, and that is a commitment to our mission.

They truly believe—because they are not the best-paid folks out there in the world, sir—that they are there to protect the traveling public. That is their mission, sir, and we take it very seriously. We are not going to tolerate—I am going to sit here right now and tell you I am not going to tolerate—misbehavior or criminal conduct.

We will take appropriate action, I give you my word.

Mr. ROGERS. That is good enough for me.

The Chairman now recognizes Mr. Davis for his next round of questions.

Mr. DAVIS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Mr. Halinski. Am I correct to understand that discipline is not one of the terms of the contract?

Mr. HALINSKI. Sir, you know, I was in the Marine Corps for 25 years. We used to say name, rank, and serial number. I am going to go back to what I have said previously, sir. That I believe that if I talk about any piece of this negotiation it could jeopardize it. I understand all of your concerns on this, and I will gladly come back and talk to you about collective bargaining, or Mr. Pistole will, in the future.

We would love to do that, but I just feel that we could jeopardize a sensitive negotiation at this point, sir.

Mr. DAVIS. Well, let me ask you, what role does the newly-established Office of Training and Workforce Engagement play in determining whether or not there is a need for discipline or a need for additional training? How do you separate the——

Mr. HALINSKI. Yes, sir. So we have created two new organizations within TSA. We have created the Office of Training and Workforce Engagement to reduce redundant training throughout the entire organization and centralize it to become much more effective. We are utilizing the facilities at FLETC, which we believe is demonstrating a cost efficiency.

They are focused on training and messaging internally to our workforce. When I say messaging, it is that messaging of account-

ability and integrity. The Office of Professional Responsibility, on the other hand, is there to work with the leadership of TSA and provide consistency when we talk about dealing in areas of discipline or misbehavior within the organization.

Mr. DAVIS. Le me ask, earlier this summer the House took several votes on amendments to the homeland security appropriation bills. Several of those amendments focused on policies, and specifically targeted the screener workforce. One in particular would have banned TSOs from wearing badges, and would have stripped the officer title from screeners.

I am trying to understand how would prohibiting screeners from wearing badges and stripping them of their title enhanced aviation security, if you have any——

Mr. HALINSKI. Sir, I really don't have an opinion on that. It never came to fruition. I don't have an opinion, and I have a strong belief in our screening workforce. I believe when you have 60,000 people, one-quarter of which are veterans, that are looking annually at 6 million people, and they have a very short period of time to do it and to make a decision go or no-go, it is an enormous accomplishment for these people.

I truly believe that. They are out there defending the public every day. You hear stories, you see blogs. There are misconceptions out there. I would say we are no more different than any other organization in this country. We are made up of Americans who are committed to protecting this country. That is a thing I truly believe in.

I want to work with the organization to make sure we gain that reputation in the future, sir.

Mr. DAVIS. In your new role as deputy administrator, what do you see as the biggest challenge facing the screener workforce?

Mr. HALINSKI. I think there are a couple of challenges, sir. One of the things that we would like to work on, quite frankly, is the perception of our screening workforce. We are looking at that. How we better message who we are and what we do. Because I believe it is a good story.

So we want to improve the efficiency. I think that we are doing that through training, through education. We want to ensure that we are supporting the workforce. I found, in previous positions of leadership, when you talk about accomplishing the mission, which I believe we do, the second piece is taking care of your personnel.

You do that through training, you do it through defending them, and at the same time you do through holding them accountable to a standard. That is what I plan to do, sir.

Mr. DAVIS. Well, thank you very much. I would certainly say that you demonstrate a tremendous level of training as well as a tremendous level of discipline. I think you are going to manage this quite well.

Thank you very much, and I have no further questions.

Mr. ROGERS. Thank you, Mr. Davis.

The Chairman now recognizes Mr. Cravaack for a second round of questions.

Mr. CRAVAACK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

You are a breath of fresh air, sir. Thank you very much. I appreciate you stepping into the breach, and I truly think that you are

going to bring pride and professionalism back to this organization by holding people accountable for what they do in their actions.

So what I think you are going to be doing is taking just exactly those great people that do work for the TSA, you are going to be enforcing them, and making sure that they are recognized for who they are and what they do, and bring a lot of pride back to this organization that we took so much pride in right after 9/11 that brought this organization forward.

So I think you are exactly what they need right now. So I appreciate that. Just a little bit of asides. In your testimony, you say that prior to 2006 we had about 45,000 full-time equivalent TSOs. That the same functions were carried out by approximately 25 percent fewer personnel, while the passenger volume remains about the same as it was back in 2006.

Earlier information provided by the TSA in the budget justifications would seem to indicate that the TSA is not operating with 25 percent fewer TSOs today, necessitating a Congressional hard cap on the number of screeners at 46,000. Can you comment on that discrepancy?

Mr. HALINSKI. Absolutely, sir. What I would like to explain is, when the written statement talked about 45,000 with a 25 percent less doing actual screening operations, what we have done—and it is based on the comments by the 9/11 Commission—we have looked at trying to increase our security capability through a layered effect.

So we have taken those personnel, and created what we consider to be an exceptionally good, layered security approach, including BDOs—behavior detection officers—our transportation security explosive specialists, training officers. We are not going to exceed that number. We know our limitations, sir, and we are going to stand by it.

But we believe that we have been more effective in increasing that layered defensive effect by utilizing, and not only that but increasing, the ability of our people to develop within the organization. To jump from a screener to a behavior detection officer, to look at other areas.

So it is a two-pronged approach, sir. No. 1, we believe we are more effective because we are carrying out the tenets of the 9/11 report, which was a layered security effect. No. 2, we are increasing opportunities for our workforce to make them more of a professional workforce by giving them opportunities to do other things.

Mr. CRAVAACK. You brought up an interesting point, BDOs. Are you finding them to be effective?

Mr. HALINSKI. Yes, sir, we are. Sir, I would like to point to one example that actually happened yesterday, where two of our BDOs in Miami identified a kidnapping victim, called law enforcement. The person that was kidnapped was identified, and the police came in.

She—how am I going to say this?—we stopped a kidnapping, sir, basically through the quick thinking and the abilities of our BDO. I believe the program is effective. I believe it is essential, also, for the PreCheck risk-based security program. Because if you have a security program, you have to look at it from many aspects.

You can't have one piece of technology that fits all. You have to incorporate technology as well as the human factor. BDOs do that, sir.

Mr. CRAVAACK. All right. I have my questions about BDOs, but after speaking with you, you think that they are an effective program. I will go with you and support you on that. Hopefully, we won't have another round questioning BDOs again in the future. So I appreciate that.

Regarding software updates, in your testimony you talked about a misconduct tracking system developed by Lockheed Martin, and your written testimony being delayed until April, 2012 to sometime in 2013. What is the operational result of not being able to observe the patterns and trends of misconduct with this software?

Mr. HALINSKI. Sir, what we are trying to do is, it is one of those things with technology. We would like to get there tomorrow, if we could. We are working on that. What it means is, we are doing it the old, and I will say Marine-style, sir—we are fact-figuring it and trying to do it. It just takes a little bit more time.

Mr. CRAVAACK. Fair enough. All right, good luck with that. Thank you for stepping up and taking on this position, and I look forward to working with you in the future.

Mr. HALINSKI. Yes, sir.

Mr. CRAVAACK. With that, I will yield back.

Mr. ROGERS. I thank the gentleman.

The Chairman now recognizes himself for another few questions. I want to pick back up where we left off in talking about what happens when you determine somebody is guilty of misconduct, and the process. What you described was pretty clear to me.

I would like to understand, the TSA's Office of Inspection. Is that the first place it goes to determine if there was a problem?

Mr. HALINSKI. Yes, sir. If we determine that there is an issue we will turn it over to our Office of Inspection.

Mr. ROGERS. Right. Then they are the ones that send it on to Professional Responsibility if they find that there is, in fact, a problem.

Mr. HALINSKI. Well, what they do, sir, is they will ask the Department IG if they want to take the case or not. The Department IG will say yes or no, and if it is no then we will conduct the investigation. If it is yes——

Mr. ROGERS. In OPR.

Mr. HALINSKI. No, it is the Department of Homeland Security inspector general, sir.

Mr. ROGERS. Sir, no. My point is, if they decide they don't want to pursue it, then you are saying OPR will pursue it?

Mr. HALINSKI. No, sir. The Department inspector general can accept that case, or not.

Mr. ROGERS. Right.

Mr. HALINSKI. If they determine that they are not going to accept it, then the Office of Investigation will conduct the investigation. The results of that investigation are then turned over to the Office of Professional Responsibility to make a decision on whether there was an issue or not, and what the discipline should be, accordingly, sir.

Mr. ROGERS. What role, if any, does the Office of Human Capital have in this process?

Mr. HALINSKI. Sir, the Office of Human Capital is akin to an advisory type organization. Because one of the concerns we also have is the equal opportunity process and the MSPB process, which—I know you are going to get me on this acronym, sir—is the process where an employee can complain that they are being treated unfairly.

Our Office of Human Capital is there to work with that employee. They are also there as an advisor to OPR or to the Office of Investigation to what the rules are for Federal Government employees.

Mr. ROGERS. Okay.

Mr. HALINSKI. Strictly advisory, sir.

Mr. ROGERS. Excellent. Well, as you have already heard, we are pleased to see you in this position. As you are probably aware, I have been on the Armed Services Committee for 10 years. I have been urging DHS and various folks in management to do more to replicate what they do in DOD because it is the largest of our Federal entities. They kind of figured the things out. That a lot of new agencies come along.

You are the third-largest Federal agency so I think a lot of the learning problems they have already experienced. Given that you are a 25-year Marine veteran, I think you realize that they figured it out, too. So I would applaud you for your service, and I fully expect that you will be applying those lessons learned in the military towards your job.

While we have got a long way to go to remedy this, I think you are the right guy to do it. So I wish you well.

I recognize Mr. Davis for any more questions he may have.

Mr. DAVIS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I do have one.

Mr. Halinski, in the past we have expressed concerns regarding diversity in the agency. Unfortunately, we continue to be disappointed as we look at numbers that we receive from headquarters on this matter. It is my understanding that in your previous role as lead of the Office of Global Strategies you maintained a highly diverse office, including women and minorities.

Could you share with us your thoughts on a strategic plan, if you have one, to make sure that the headquarter team represents that kind of diversity that you have experienced in other opportunities?

Mr. HALINSKI. Sir, let me go back to what I said earlier about diversify. Because I believe that it is vital for security operations to have an extremely diverse workforce. You can't look at a security situation through one lens. I think the key to this is active recruiting.

I believe that the plan that we have in place is addressing that. There is always room for improvement across the board in any organization, and we look to address that in the future, sir.

Mr. DAVIS. Thank you very much. I think that you are absolutely correct in your assertions about that particular issue, and we look forward to watching the progress.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I have no further questions.

Mr. ROGERS. I thank the gentleman. I think that, in sum, what this hearing has demonstrated is that TSA does, in fact, acknowledge it has got a little bit of an image problem and, particularly, a problem with some of its employees. But I think also the fact that they put you in this position, and the things that you have outlined for us today, are good evidence that you intend to take it seriously and remedy it.

I applaud you all for that. I would remind Mr. Halinski that some Members may have questions that couldn't be here, and we will hold the record open for 10 days. So if you are offered any questions, I would ask you to respond to those in writing within 10 days.

With that, this hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 10:58 a.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

APPENDIX

QUESTIONS FROM RANKING MEMBER BENNIE G. THOMPSON FOR JOHN W. HALINSKI

Question 1a. In the lead-up to the hearing we requested that companies with contracts for screening services at airports provide us their disciplinary policies. Unfortunately, we were informed that the information was proprietary and would not be shared.

Does TSA have copies of the disciplinary policies of companies that contract for screening operations?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

Question 1b. Who, beyond the companies themselves, have copies of these policies?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

Question 2a. TSA has been engaged in the process of re-organizing its headquarters since last fall.

Where does the re-organization stand today?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

Question 2b. What efficiencies or cost savings that will result from the re-organization has TSA identified?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

Question 3. TSA has recently approved the applications of three airports seeking to utilize contract screeners, rather than Federal TSA screeners.

What authority does TSA have to discipline a screener who engages in misconduct or fails to follow standard operating procedures when the screener is employed by a contractor?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

QUESTIONS FROM RANKING MEMBER SHEILA JACKSON LEE FOR JOHN W. HALINSKI

Question 1. Last year we received notification that TSA was underway with a major reorganization effort, which was withheld from us—the authorizing committee. Today marks nearly a year since we were made aware of this reorganization. I, along with the Ranking Member of the full committee have written to the administrator requesting additional information on this matter.

Under what statutory authority is TSA able to demote staff at TSA and/or reassign new job descriptions under the guise of reorganization?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

Question 2a. The contractor TSA hired to conduct the optimization study that is fueling this reorganization indicated in its study that TSA has repeatedly embarked on efforts to improve its performance at headquarters, however, it is also noted that TSA fails to have the discipline to sustain changes that improve the organization.

What makes this reorganization effort different?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

Question 2b. How does TSA anticipate the new structure with the Office of Professional Responsibility and the Office of Workforce Engagement impact TSO morale, training, and efforts to address misconduct?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.