

EXAMINING CRITICAL SECURITY MEASURES, COMMUNICATIONS, AND RESPONSE AT OUR NATION'S AIRPORTS

FIELD HEARING
BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON
TRANSPORTATION SECURITY
OF THE
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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EXAMINING CRITICAL SECURITY MEASURES, COMMUNICATIONS, AND RESPONSE AT OUR NATION'S AIRPORTS

Monday, October 26, 2015

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION SECURITY,
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY,
Syracuse, NY.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 10:42 a.m., in the Ceremonial Courtroom, James M. Hanley Federal Building, 100 S. Clinton Street, Syracuse, New York, Hon. John Katko [Chairman of the subcommittee] presiding.

Present: Representatives Katko and Keating.

Mr. KATKO. The Committee on Homeland Security, the Subcommittee on Transportation Security, will come to order.

Before I do my statement, I would like to note the fact that I used to practice in this courtroom for about 16 years, and it is really nice to be back here. It is important that we are having this hearing here today. This is the closest I will come to having a gavel in this building ever again, I think.

I do want to make a statement for the record, and I will begin.

The subcommittee is meeting today to hear testimony on the security measures, communications, and response at our Nation's airports, and I will now recognize myself for an opening statement.

If security at our Nation's airports was flawless, there would be no need for today's hearing. But the fact of the matter is that our Nation's airports are far from flawless as far as security goes.

The subcommittee is convening this field hearing today to assess the state of security preparedness among our Nation's airports. Today, we will hear the critically-important perspective of the individuals who face security challenges on the front line each and every day in New York State and elsewhere throughout our country.

The American people expect the best from the entities entrusted with their safety. It is this subcommittee's intention to continue working tirelessly to ensure the security of the traveling public. I am humbled and honored to have the opportunity both to represent the people of central New York and to chair this critically-important subcommittee.

In my 10 months in office, I have worked vigorously to address known challenges that the Department of Homeland Security faces. Since January, I have introduced 7 pieces of legislation that ad-

dress transportation and border security issues, 2 of which are already public law.

As you can tell from this committee, security is not a partisan issue, and I am proud of the work that I have done with my Democratic colleagues to tackle this critically important issue. However, my colleagues and I have a lot more work to do, and I promise we will continue to provide diligent oversight of homeland security. When we see a problem with this agency, we work swiftly to address it.

Two years ago, there was a tragic shooting at Los Angeles International Airport where Gerardo Hernandez, a Transportation Security Officer, lost his life, and two other TSA employees and one member of the traveling public were injured. This shooting and other incidents force us to face the grim reality that airports remain a target for terrorists and other violent actors who seek to disrupt the safe travel of the American public and challenge the security of our Nation's transportation systems. This is of serious concern.

Last month, President Obama signed the Gerardo Hernandez Airport Security Act of 2015 into law. I introduced this piece of bipartisan legislation because it specifically addresses the ways in which the airport community and the TSA prepare for, respond to, and communicate during major security incidents, such as active shooters.

I will note also that I had a wonderful conversation with Gerardo Hernandez' widow after the fact, and she was very excited that the bill was passed, and she was excited that it honored her husband, but she was more excited to do something about security at airports across this Nation. She is a good woman.

From the LAX shooting to the machete attack earlier this year on a TSA employee in New Orleans, we know that there is a dire need for airports to effectively ready themselves for a wide range of security scenarios.

In this regard, TSA must be proactive in proliferating best practices for security across the airport community to ensure the well-being of both the agency's own employees and the traveling public.

While each airport is unique, it is imperative that airport stakeholders, airlines, law enforcement, emergency first responders, and TSA work together to exercise plans and improve coordination among relevant entities.

So far, in the 114th Congress, our subcommittee has conducted rigorous oversight of airport access controls at airports across this country. This issue goes hand-in-hand with the overall security of the airport environment as we work to mitigate insider threats and close security loopholes.

Our witnesses today conduct and experience daily airport operations and are best prepared to inform Congress as to how they work to enhance security incident preparedness.

Long before the terror attacks of September 11, 2001, the Syracuse community was made all too aware of the critical need for a secure transportation system. On December 21, 1988, a bomb detonated aboard Pan Am Flight 103, traveling from London to New York. Thirty-five of the bombing victims were Syracuse University

students who were traveling home for the holidays after spending a semester studying abroad.

Another one of the individuals on board was a very good friend of mine's sister, the U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of New York. His sister was a student at Oswego State University, and she was also lost on that flight. So to say that it has hit home is an understatement.

Since that tragic event, there has been a litany of attacks and plots against both commercial aviation and airports. This reality highlights the need for Congressional oversight for each aspect of the transportation system, including the physical security and preparedness of airports themselves.

There is an on-going discussion between the airport community and TSA about the future of airport exit lane staffing. As many airports begin to adopt technological solutions, like Syracuse has, I am interested in a better understanding of the effectiveness of such technologies and the benefit they provide to both TSA and the airports.

I will note that Syracuse has an automated exit lane. That means that there are no guards there, as mandated after 9/11, because the exit lane is completely automated. We want to examine the efficacy of trying to expand that Nation-wide, whether that is better security than having three or four individuals there. There is also a cost-saving measure involved in this as well.

Additionally, airport perimeter security, which my colleague is vitally interested in, and employee access controls remain critical in ensuring that secure and sensitive areas of airports are only accessed by vetted and authorized individuals.

Today I look forward to hearing from our witnesses about their perspectives on the security posture of our airports and how they are working to stay ahead of a changing threat landscape while coordinating across Federal, State, and local jurisdictions to ensure safety of the traveling public.

Syracuse Airport is on the cutting edge of leveraging technology to address security vulnerabilities. I look forward to hearing how Syracuse Airport and other airports throughout New York State are utilizing innovative tactics to enhance security.

In closing, I urge both of our witnesses to let us know how Congress can help you fulfill your critical missions, and I would appreciate a very candid discussion. Don't be afraid. I won't go into prosecutor mode, I promise, although it is tempting in this courtroom.

I thank both of our witnesses for their time, and I appreciate the opportunity we all have today to hear how best practices can be shared and refined to ensure the security and safety of our Nation's aviation system.

With that, I will now recognize the gentleman from Massachusetts, Mr. Keating, for any statement that he may have. I want to thank him for making the effort to come here before, when I flew down to Washington to serve in Washington this week.

So, Mr. Keating.

[The statement of Chairman Katko follows:]

STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN JOHN KATKO

OCTOBER 26, 2015

If security at our Nation's airports was flawless, there would be no need for today's hearing. But the fact of the matter is that our Nation's airport security is far from flawless.

The subcommittee is convening this field hearing today to assess the state of security preparedness among our Nation's airports. Today, we will hear the critically-important perspective of the individuals who face security challenges each and every day in New York State.

The American people expect the best from the entities entrusted with their safety. It is this subcommittee's intention to continue working tirelessly to ensure the security of the traveling public. I am humbled and honored to have the opportunity both to represent the people of central New York and to chair this critically important subcommittee.

In my 10 months in office, I have worked vigorously to address known challenges that the Department of Homeland Security faces. Since January, I have introduced 7 pieces of legislation that address transportation and border security issues, 2 of which are already public law.

Security is not a partisan issue, and I am proud of the work I have done with my Democratic colleagues to tackle this critically-important issue. However, my colleagues and I have a lot more work to do, and I promise we will continue to provide diligent oversight of DHS. When I see a problem at this agency, I work swiftly to address it.

Two years ago, there was a tragic shooting at Los Angeles International Airport where Gerardo Hernandez, a Transportation Security Officer, lost his life, and 2 other TSA employees and 1 member of the traveling public were injured.

This shooting, and other incidents force us to face the grim reality that airports remain a target for terrorists and other violent actors who seek to disrupt the safe travel of the American public and challenge the security of our Nation's transportation systems. This is of serious concern.

Last month, President Obama signed the Gerardo Hernandez Airport Security Act of 2015 into law. I introduced this critical piece of bipartisan legislation because it specifically addresses the ways in which the airport community and the Transportation Security Administration prepare for, respond to, and communicate during major security incidents, such as active shooters.

From the LAX shooting, to the machete attack earlier this year on a TSA employee in New Orleans, we know that there is a dire need for airports to effectively ready themselves for a wide range of security scenarios.

In this regard, TSA must be proactive in proliferating best practices for security across the airport community to ensure the well-being of both the agency's own employees and the traveling public.

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Thirty-five of the bombing's victims were Syracuse University students, who were traveling home for the holidays after spending a semester studying abroad.

Since that tragic event, there has been a litany of attacks and plots against both commercial aviation and airports. This reality highlights the need for Congressional oversight for each aspect of the transportation system—including the physical security and preparedness of airports themselves.

There is an on-going discussion between the airport community and TSA about the future of airport exit lane staffing. As many airports begin to adopt technological solutions—including Syracuse—I am interested in a better understanding of the effectiveness of such technologies and the benefit they provide to both TSA and airports.

Additionally, airport perimeter security and employee access controls remain critical in ensuring that secure and sensitive areas of airports are only accessed by vetted and authorized individuals.

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Mr. KEATING. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for convening this important hearing.

Thank you to our witnesses for joining us this morning.

Every week I fly between my home in Massachusetts and my office in the District of Columbia, and I am well aware that our airports face unique and challenging times. The personnel do a fine job working trying to keep us safe. In fact, it wasn't long ago that the Chairman of the full committee, Chairman McCaul and I, did a field hearing at Logan International Airport. That was in 2011 to discuss both individual shared concerns expressed by airport operators, employees and, of course, passengers. It is with this perspective that I carefully observe the security and the layouts of our airports as I visit them.

As I left Boston and arrived in Syracuse this morning, I noted the differences between the two, from size to staffing. This morning's hearing provides us with an opportunity to continue the ongoing discussion over critical security, communications, and response at our airports outside the walls of the committee hearing room.

Led by Chairman Katko and the subcommittee's Ranking Member, Congressman Rice, our subcommittee has followed tragedy and triumphs at airports from Atlanta to New York to Los Angeles. Today we find ourselves in Syracuse, where we have an opportunity to hear from two sides of the multi-faceted aviation security equation.

Ms. Maola, the Regional Director of TSA Region One, and Mr. Martelle, the president of the New York Aviation Management Association, again, thank you for being here.

No conversation surrounding airport security can continue without thorough discussion of the tragedy at Los Angeles International Airport nearly 2 years ago. On November 1, 2013, a gunman entered LAX with a semi-automatic rifle, ammunition, and the specific intent to harm Transportation Safety Officers. He opened fire on Transportation Security Officer Gerardo Hernandez, who was in the action of diligently checking passenger boarding passes and doing this important function. He was killed in cold blood.

He then proceeded into the sterile area of the airport, where he shot and injured 2 Transportation Security Officers, James Speer and Tony Grigsby.

The Los Angeles Airport Police Department, along with numerous emergency responders, acted quickly and bravely to subdue the shooter, who injured at least 6 innocent bystanders. If it were not for their valiant actions, further loss of life may have been catastrophic.

If there was one silver lining in such an inexplicable tragedy, it is the increased knowledge and understanding we have of our threats, our vulnerabilities, as well as our capacity to respond. In the aftermath of the LAX shooting, we learned that there was much to be done in terms of preparedness in response to active shooter and other emergency situations that may arise at our Nation's airports.

Through reviews in the last Congress, for instance, we learned that not all the panic buttons and red phones utilized at checkpoints were functioning properly, and real challenges existed relating to the interoperability of communications for first responders. I cannot underscore the importance that law enforcement agencies be able to communicate with each other, emergency care providers, the airport, and TSA, in real time. How else can they ensure their responses to emergency situations are comprehensive, and how else will those entities coordinate a response with one another?

Since the LAX shooting, we learned that other vulnerabilities pervade aviation security efforts. Of particular interest to me is the risk posed by the airport's perimeter. This spring, the Associated Press revealed that there had been at least 268 perimeter security breaches at 31 major U.S. airports, and TSA has calculated a total of over 1,300 perimeter security breaches at 450 domestic airports from 2001 to 2011. This figure includes an incident near and dear to my heart, when Delvonte Tisdale, a teenager from North Carolina, snuck onto the tarmac at Charlotte Douglas International Airport and perished when an airplane on which he was stowed away dropped its wheels for a landing. That figure does not account for continued perimeter security breaches since 2011, including stowaways, stowaways that trespassed across tarmacs, scaled perimeter fences, and drove vehicles through barriers across airport property.

As I have often said, we are lucky that these individuals did not harbor nefarious intentions, but that doesn't mitigate the risk posed by such behavior to airports, employees and, of course, the passengers and travelers who rely on TSA officers and airport operators for their security.

The LAX incident revealed yet another discrepancy in our respect for this first line of defense. TSO Hernandez lost his life doing his job protecting our Nation's aviation passengers. However, as TSOs are not considered law enforcement officers under Federal law, his family was not initially entitled to death benefits. Through leadership on this subcommittee and our full committee, we are able to extend those benefits to his family through work with our appropriations in the last Congress. But other TSOs still do not receive death benefits.

Congresswoman Brownley of California has introduced legislation, the Honoring Our Fallen TSA Officers Act, to rectify this discrepancy, and I hope that all will give the measure serious consideration. I myself am proud to be a co-sponsor of this legislation.

Further, the Gerardo Hernandez Airport Security Act of 2015, as the Chairman mentioned, recently became public law. Now TSA and DHS are directed to work with airports to develop and verify individualized plans to respond to security incidents, as well as share best practices—that is very important—among airports.

Further, at a recent hearing with TSA Administrator Neffenger, I confirmed that TSA is currently conducting a top-to-bottom review of our Nation's airport security needs. I look forward to hearing from Ms. Maola about how the Gerardo Hernandez Airport Security Act and comprehensive internal review will make airports more secure and better-prepared for emergency situations in the future. I also look forward to the testimony of Jeremy Martelle of the New York Aviation Management Association regarding changes to security plans and sharing of best practices amongst New York airports.

It is our shared responsibility to mitigate, if not prevent, tragic shootings like at LAX, or perimeter breaches like those in San Jose, San Francisco, and Charlotte from occurring in the future. I want to reiterate the importance of the work done by the Transportation Security Officers. They are working on the front lines every day to keep us safe.

Mr. Chairman, thank you again for convening this hearing, and I look forward to a productive dialogue, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KATKO. Thank you, Mr. Keating.

I want to note that Mr. Keating has been at the forefront of arguing about beefing up firmer security at airports Nation-wide, and his work in that area is much appreciated. His work on the committee with me and the other colleagues is much appreciated as well.

We are pleased to have two distinguished witnesses before us today to speak on this important topic. Let me remind the witnesses that their entire written statements will appear in the record.

Our first witness is Mr. Jeremy Martelle, who serves as president of New York State Aviation Management Association. Mr. Martelle has over 24 years of aviation experience in both civil and military aviation operations. Mr. Martelle served as the Security and Operations Manager at Albany International Airport and served in the New York International Guard as a member of the 109th Airlift Wing.

We thank you for your military service, and I say that as a father whose son is just embarking on the beginning of his military service.

The Chair now recognizes Mr. Martelle to testify. But before I do, I want to note for the record that Mr. Martelle was a last-minute substitution. We very much appreciate him dropping everything to come here. He was not notified until Thursday evening of the substitution.

The substitution came about due to the fact that we had originally scheduled Christine Callahan from the Syracuse Airport to testify to shed light on some of the good things that are going on in Syracuse Airport and to learn from some of those good things. We got word from the mayor's office that she was not allowed to testify, apparently for some litigation reasons, so we appreciate Mr. Martelle for stepping in when he did.

So, thank you very much, Mr. Martelle. Your testimony, please.

**STATEMENT OF JEREMY P. MARTELLE, PRESIDENT, NEW
YORK AVIATION MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION**

Mr. MARTELLE. Thank you. Good morning, Ranking Member Keating and Chairman Katko. On behalf of the New York State public and private-use airports, I would like to thank you for inviting me to participate in today's field hearing on examining critical security measures, communications, and responses at our Nation's airports.

The New York Aviation Management Association's—referred to as NYAMA—mission is to promote the viability and business interests of New York State's airports. NYAMA represents over 13,000 members and affiliate members, 120 commercial service and general aviation airports, fixed-base operators, consultants, engineers, and aviation professionals at the State and regional levels.

Airports are economic engines fueling growth in the communities they serve. According to a 2010 study by the New York State Department of Transportation, the aviation industry contributes over \$50 billion in annual economic activity in New York State, and almost 400,000 State residents work in aviation or aviation-related industries.

The economic benefits of New York State airports are impressive. As a whole, aviation generates \$18 billion in payroll and \$4.5 billion in State and local tax revenue annually. However, the efficacy of this powerful economic engine and its benefits to New York's citizens is threatened by a critical lack of funding for our airports and their security programs.

Airport security is an essential function of how airports operate. The TSA and airport staff process millions of passengers, thousands of airport employees, and tons of air cargo safely and efficiently all year round. This is done primarily through the cooperation of private business such as the airlines, vendors, concessions, air cargo operators, and the other agencies such as the airport operators, TSA, and local law enforcement. It is because of this cooperation that our airports are some of the safest in the world.

The TSA serves a 2-part role in airport security. First, they are responsible for the screening of passengers and their belongings. Second, they are the regulatory authority over all other airport security functions. The airport operator must develop and maintain an Airport Security Program in accordance with Code of Federal Regulations Part 1542. This program describes the means in which airports will carry out security functions such as employee credentialing, fingerprinting, criminal history background checks, security training, fence line perimeter security, airport terminal access control systems, camera systems, and vehicle checkpoint inspections. In addition, airports are required to provide law enforcement services to support their ASP and the TSA passenger checkpoint. All of these functions come at a high expense which the airport must bear with little or no Federal funding.

Airports are considered high-value targets for those who wish to do us harm. The latest challenge in the battle to secure our Nation's airports is to identify and eliminate what is referred to as the "airport employee insider threat." One way our airports are addressing this is through the TSA's newly-created My Airport Initiative, which is an awareness program designed to target airport em-

ployees and instruct them on the appropriate actions to take if they observe any employees acting in a suspicious manner. The program was initially launched with a short 5-minute video clip explaining the initiative, and the TSA is encouraging airports to promote this new campaign directed at the insider threat.

One of NYAMA'S member airports decided to incorporate the TSA's My Airport into its security training classes to teach employees how to identify and report these insider threats. This airport has also teamed with local law enforcement and has created an informational poster that has been placed in the work areas of airport employees. These posters encourage employees to report any suspicious behavior anonymously to airport security. This effort shows how airports, local law enforcement, and the TSA can work together to increase awareness concerning airport security threats and take steps to mitigate these potential problems before they happen.

NYAMA strongly supports active-shooter planning and training. The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, one of our members, operates six metropolitan New York airports. When I inquired about their active-shooter program, they stated that their airports' law enforcement officers have partnered with TSA and other first responders to hold drills at each of their airports. They also use TSA and Homeland Security videos to train airport staff in recommended procedures for active-shooter incidents—run, hide, fight, et cetera. The Port Authority's Assistant Director of Aviation Security and Technology indicated that the TSA's resources are very limited for training and educational aids like posters or handouts on active shooters. They have posters on their website that airports can reproduce at their own expense, and the Port Authority has, in fact, spent its own funds for this purpose.

In recent years the TSA has engaged airports, requiring them to increase the airports' participation in security screening airport employees and products entering the sterile and secured areas of the airport. Currently, airports are required to conduct random and cursory inspections on all employees. The TSA has begun to ask if airports are willing to do more, much more. This increase has overloaded airports, which are generally funded through Federal and State grants. Adding more duties is a difficult task to accomplish. There could be a point in the future where the screening of all employees and products entering all sterile and secured areas of the airport will become a requirement. This will place a demand on the staffing and facilities like no other. Before such a mandate could be initiated, Federal funding assistance would need to be available to reimburse airports for these costs.

The funding of airport security improvements for equipment and facilities has always been a challenge for airports. Shortly after the end of World War II, the Federal Government embarked on a grants-in-aid program to units of State and local governments to promote the development of a system of airports to meet the Nation's needs. This program, known as the Federal Aid Airport Program, was authorized by the Federal Airport Act of 1946 and received its funding from the general fund of the U.S. Treasury. Since then, this program has been amended several times, most recently with the passage of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act

of 2012. Funds obligated for the Airport Improvement Program are drawn upon from the Airport and Airway Trust Fund, which is supported by user fees, fuel taxes, and other similar revenue sources.

A lot of things have changed since 1946. The aging infrastructure of today's airports have required the allocation of a large majority of airport funding to go directly to immediate safety needs such as those associated with runways, taxiways, safety areas, and aircraft parking aprons. Airport security, while just as important, in many cases takes second place to these highly visible safety improvement projects. One way to combat this would be to create a dedicated funding stream, similar to the current FAA Airport Improvement Program, in order to assist airports in funding security improvements or TSA mandates. This could be accomplished through carving out special funding sources through the passenger facility charge program or the security fee charges through airline ticket purchases.

To give some perspective on the significant costs associated with airport security improvements, I would like to provide the following local example. In May 2013, the Syracuse Hancock International Airport completed construction on a passenger terminal security and access improvements project. This \$60 million project, which is currently being paid for through the collection of passenger facility charges, was designed to bring both the physical screening of passengers and baggage in alignment with current-day security requirements, and it also allowed for the expansion and implementation of future screening requirements. The new centralized security checkpoint has improved passenger and baggage screening at several levels: New security screening equipment, including advanced baggage imaging technology; implementation of TSA PreCheck; improved customer service by consolidating TSA resources into one centralized location; and the ability to implement new security requirements, such as the requirement to screen all concession employees.

While programs like this are not typical, extensive financial resources had to be obligated in order for this project to occur, and most airports would see other critical projects go unfunded as a result of such a reprioritization of resources. In the mean time, for the next several years a portion of the airport's PFC funds will have to go to paying for this required project rather than addressing other needs. Having a National program that could prioritize these needs, similar to the AIP program, with oversight and ranking by priority, might give airports more flexibility to focus on operational needs.

Technology in airport security has its own set of challenges. Just like your home computer and other personal electronic equipment, airport security technology has a limited life span. This technological obsolescence, where a product is no longer technologically superior to another similar product, requires airports to be constantly planning for the next major upgrade or replacement of these very important systems.

For example, access control from the public areas to the secure areas of most airports is strictly managed through the use of a computer-controlled access system using a card reader and per-

sonal identification number. These systems have the capability to enable and disable their own security badges if they are stolen or the employee leaves airport employment. All access can be immediately revoked.

The second layer of this system is the closed-circuit television system, which is an integral part of every airport's security program. Both of these types of systems have improved substantially over the course of the past decade. Unfortunately, the costs associated with keeping the technology on the cutting edge, and in some cases keeping them functioning, takes significant operational and capital investment.

Another technological advancement that Syracuse Airport is using is referred to as the automated exit portals. Following completion of the centralized security checkpoint, the airport reconfigured the previous checkpoints at each concourse as the exits for passengers leaving the secure area. The airport then installed automated exit portals at these locations. The automated exit portals allow passengers and employees to exit the secure area safely, while at the same time preventing people from accessing the secured area. The portals provide a positive barrier to security breaches by preventing people and things from entering or accessing the secure area from a non-secure area.

In addition to the safety and security benefits of the exit portals, the cost savings are such that the portals have paid for themselves. Because the exit portals are automated, the airport is no longer required to physically monitor the exit lanes, thus eliminating the human error element. In addition to Syracuse, the exit portals are also located at the airports in Atlantic City, St. Petersburg/Clearwater, and installation is scheduled to begin this November at JFK.

The Gerardo Hernandez Airport Security Act. Individual incidents and detection of new security threats at airports will many times result in increased scrutiny of and mandates on airports on the part of the TSA. Sometimes events lead to Congressional actions. The Gerardo Hernandez Airport Security Act represents one such response by Congress that seeks to improve security incident preparedness by directing TSA to verify that airports across the United States have incorporated procedures for responding to active shooters targeting security checkpoints into their existing incident plans.

Additionally, the legislation directs the administrator of TSA to report to the appropriate Congressional committees findings regarding the levels of preparedness at airports. The new Federal law also requires that the agency certify to the appropriate Congressional committees that all screening personnel have participated in training for active-shooter scenarios. Another feature of the legislation requires TSA to conduct a review of the interoperable communications capabilities of law enforcement and TSA to conduct a review of these communications.

These are all important tasks, and it is appropriate in most cases that Congress exercise oversight over TSA and airport security efforts. Compliance by both TSA and airports with these mandates will necessitate cooperation and coordination among all stakeholders and recognition that new rules and requirements for new

technologies will impose additional costs on an already financially-burdened airport system.

NYAMA is well-positioned to actively participate in this process and represent New York's airports and related industries in this effort to make the Nation's aviation facilities the safest and most secure in the world against hostile threats. We stand ready to assist you, the Congress, and the TSA in this important endeavor as we go forward.

I am available to answer any questions you may have. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Martelle follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JEREMY P. MARTELLE

OCTOBER 26, 2015

Good morning Ranking Member Keating and Chairman Katko. On behalf of New York State's public and private-use airports, I would like to thank you for inviting me to participate in today's field hearing on Examining Critical Security Measures, Communications, and Responses at Our Nation's Airports. NYAMA's mission is to promote the viability and business interests of New York State's airports. NYAMA represents over 13,000 members and affiliate members, 120 commercial service and general aviation airports, fixed-based operators, consultants, engineers, and aviation professionals at the State and regional levels.

Airports are economic engines fueling growth in the communities they serve. According to a 2010 study by the New York State Department of Transportation, the aviation industry contributes over \$50 billion in annual economic activity in New York State and almost 400,000 State residents work in aviation or aviation-related industries. The economic benefits of New York State airports are impressive. As a whole, aviation generates \$18 billion in payroll and \$4.5 billion in State and local tax revenue annually. However, the efficacy of this powerful economic engine and its benefits to New York's citizens is threatened by a critical funding for our airports security programs.

Airport security is an essential function of the how airports operate. The TSA and airport staff process millions of passengers, thousands of airport employees, and tons of air cargo safely and efficiently all year round. This is done primarily through the cooperation of private business such as the airlines, vendors, concessions, air cargo operators, and the other agencies such as the airport operators, TSA, and local law enforcement. It is because of this cooperation, that our airports are some of the safest in the world.

AIRPORT SECURITY

The TSA serves a two-part role in airport security. First, they are responsible for the screening operation of passengers and their belongings. Second, they are the regulatory authority over all other airport security functions. The airport operator must develop and maintain an Airport Security Program (ASP) in accordance with CFR Part 1542. This program describes the means in which airports will carry out security functions such as; employee credentialing, fingerprinting, criminal history background checks, security training, fence line perimeter security, airport terminal access control systems, camera systems, vehicle checkpoint inspections. In addition, airports are required to provide law enforcement entity to support their ASP and the TSA passenger checkpoint. All of these functions come at a high expense which the airport must bear with little or no Federal funding.

Airports are considered "high-value targets" for those who wish to do us harm. The latest challenge in the battle to secure our Nation's airports is to identify and eliminate what is referred to as the "airport employee insider threat". One way our airports is addressing this is through the TSA's newly-created "My Airport Initiative" which is an awareness program designed to target airport employees and instruct them of the appropriate actions to take if they observe any employees acting in a suspicious manner. The program was initially launched with a short 5-minute video clip explaining the initiative and the TSA is encouraging airports to promote this new campaign directed at the insider threat.

One of NYAMA'S member airports decided to incorporate the TSA's "My Airport" into its security training classes to teach employees how to identify and report these insider threats. This airport has also teamed with local law enforcement which has

created informational posters that have been put up in the work areas of airport employees. These posters encourage employees to report any suspicious behavior anonymously to airport operations. This effort shows how airports, local law enforcement, and the TSA can work together to increase awareness about airport security threats and take steps to mitigate these potential problems before they happen.

NYAMA strongly supports active-shooter planning and training. The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, one of our members, operates six metropolitan New York airports. When I inquired about their active-shooter program, they stated that their airports' law enforcement officers have partnered with TSA and other first responders to hold drills at each of their airports. They also use TSA/Homeland Security videos to train airport staff in recommended procedures for active-shooter incidents—run, hide, fight, etc. The Port Authority's Assistant Director of Aviation Security and Technology indicated that the TSA's resources are very limited for training and educational aids like posters or handouts on active shooter. They have posters on their website that airports can reproduce at their own expense and the Port Authority has in fact spent its own funds for this purpose.

In recent years the TSA has engaged airports requiring them to increase the airport's participation in screening airport employees and products entering the sterile and secured areas of the airport. Currently, airports are required to conduct random and cursory inspections on all employees. The TSA has begun to ask if airports are willing to do more, much more. This increase has overloaded airports which are generally funded through Federal and State grants. Adding more duties is a difficult task to accomplish. There could be a point in the future where the screening of all employees and products entering all sterile and secured areas of the airport will become a requirement. This will place a demand on the staffing and facilities like no other. Before such a mandate could be initiated, Federal funding assistance would need to be available to reimburse airports for these costs.

AIRPORT SECURITY FUNDING

The funding of airport security improvements for equipment and facilities has always been a challenge for airports. Shortly after the end of World War II, the Federal Government embarked on a grants-in-aid program to units of State and local governments to promote the development of a system of airports to meet the Nation's needs. This program known as the Federal-Aid Airport Program (FAAP) was authorized by the Federal Airport Act of 1946 and received its funding from the general fund of the U.S. Treasury. Since then, this program has been amended several times, most recently with the passage of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012. Funds obligated for the AIP are drawn from the Airport and Airway Trust fund, which is supported by user fees, fuel taxes, and other similar revenue sources.

A lot of things have changed since 1946. The aging infrastructure of today's airports have required the allocation of a large majority of airport funding to go directly to immediate safety needs such as those associated with runways, taxiways, safety areas, aircraft parking areas, etc. Airport security, while just as important, in many cases takes second place to these very visible safety improvement projects. One way to combat this would be to create a dedicated funding stream, similar to the current AIP in order to assist airports in funding security improvements or TSA mandates. This could be accomplished through carving out special funding sources through the passenger facility charge program or the security fee charges through airline ticket purchases.

To give some perspective on the significant costs associated with security improvements, I would like to provide the following example. In May of 2013, right here in the Syracuse Hancock International Airport completed construction on a passenger terminal security and access improvements project. This \$60 million project, which is currently being paid for through the collection of passenger facility charges, was designed to bring both the physical screening of passengers and baggage in alignment with current-day security requirements, and it also allowed for expansion and implementation of future screening requirements. The new centralized security checkpoint has improved passenger and baggage screening at several levels; new screening equipment including advanced imaging technology, implementation of TSA Pre-Check; improved customer service by consolidating TSA resources into one centralized location; and the ability to implement new security requirements, such as the requirement to screen all concession employees.

While programs like this are not typical, extensive financial resources had to be obligated in order for this project to occur and most airports would see other critical projects go unfunded as a result of such a reprioritization of resources. In the mean time, for the next several years a portion of the airport's PFC funds will have to go to paying for this required project rather than addressing other needs. Having

a National program that could prioritize these needs similar to the AIP program with oversight and ranking by priority might give airports more flexibility to focus on operational needs.

AIRPORT SECURITY AND TECHNOLOGY

Technology in airport security has its own set of challenges. Just like your home computer and other personal electronic equipment, airport security technology has a limited life span. This technological obsolescence where a product is no longer technically superior to another similar product requires airports to be constantly planning for the next major upgrade or replacement of these very important systems.

For example, access control from the public area to the secure areas of most airports is strictly managed through the use of a computer-controlled access system using a card reader and personal identification number. These systems have the capability to enable and disable all automated controlled access points on all card readers/security badges. If an employee loses their security badge, it is stolen, or the employee leaves airport employment, all access can be immediately revoked. The second layer of this system is the closed-circuit television system which is an integral part of every airports security program. The airport, local law enforcement, and TSA, have the ability to reduce the number of access control doors employees are permitted to use which ensures greater control over who can access the secure area and from which access point.

Both of these types of systems have improved substantially over the course of the past decade. Unfortunately, the costs associated with keeping the technology on the cutting edge, and in some cases, keeping them functioning, takes significant operational and capital investment.

Another technological advancement that Syracuse Airport is using are referred to as the automated exit portals. Following completion of the centralized security checkpoint, the airport reconfigured the previous checkpoints at each concourse as the exits for passengers leaving the secure area. The airport then installed automated exit portals at these locations. The automated exit portals allow passengers and employees to exit the secure area safely, while at the same time preventing people from accessing the secured area. The portals provide a positive barrier to security breaches by preventing people and things from entering or accessing the secure area from a non-secure area. In addition to the safety and security benefits of the exit portals, the cost savings are such that the portals have paid for themselves. Because the exit portals are automated, the airport is no longer required to physically monitor the exit lanes, thus eliminating the human error element. In addition to Syracuse, the exit portals are also located at the airports in Atlantic City, St. Petersburg/Clearwater, and installation is scheduled to begin this November at JFK.

THE "GERARDO HERNANDEZ AIRPORT SECURITY ACT"

Individual incidents and detection of new security threats at airports will many times result in increased scrutiny of and mandates on airports on the part of the TSA. Sometimes events lead to Congressional actions. The Gerardo Hernandez Airport Security Act represents one such response by Congress that seeks to improve security incident preparedness by directing TSA to verify that airports across the United States have incorporated procedures for responding to active shooters targeting security checkpoints into their existing incident plans.

Additionally, the legislation directs the administrator of TSA to report to the appropriate Congressional committees findings regarding the levels of preparedness at airports. The new Federal law also requires that the agency certify to the appropriate Congressional committees that all screening personnel have participated in training for active-shooter scenarios. Another feature of the legislation requires TSA to conduct a review of the interoperable communications capabilities of the law enforcement, fire, and medical personnel responsible for responding to a security incident at airports in the United States.

These are all important tasks and it is appropriate in most cases that Congress exercise oversight over TSA and airport security efforts. Compliance by both TSA and airports with these mandates will necessitate cooperation and coordination among all stakeholders and recognition that new rules and requirements for new technologies will impose additional costs on already financially-burdened airports.

NYAMA is well-positioned to actively participate in this process and represent New York's airports and related industries in this effort to make the Nation's aviation facilities the safest and most secure in the world against hostile threats. We stand ready to assist you, the Congress and the TSA in this important endeavor as we go forward.

I'm available to answer any questions you may have.

Mr. KATKO. Thank you very much, Mr. Martelle. We appreciate you being here today, and we appreciate your testimony.

The second witness is Ms. Marisa Maola.

Did I say that correctly?

Ms. MAOLA. Yes, sir.

Mr. KATKO. Okay.

She currently serves as the regional director of Region One at the Transportation Security Administration, including New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Vermont, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Maine. Ms. Maola has served in this post since January 2012.

In addition, Ms. Maola currently serves as the Federal Security Director at JFK International Airport. I am interested in hearing about the exit lane issue there as well. Previously, Ms. Maola served as a Federal Security Director at LaGuardia International Airport.

I am going to recognize you to testify, and I want to ask you, if you can, to try to keep it as close to 5 minutes as you can and just summarize your testimony. We will have plenty of time to get into the details as we go on. Thank you.

STATEMENT OF MARISA MAOLA, REGIONAL DIRECTOR, REGION ONE, TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ADMINISTRATION, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Ms. MAOLA. Yes. Good morning, Chairman Katko and Congressman Keating. I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss airport security operations.

Providing security for the traveling public and workplace safety for the Transportation Security Administration workforce are our highest priorities.

On November 1, 2013, Transportation Security Officer Gerardo Hernandez was shot and killed at his post at Los Angeles International Airport. Officer Hernandez had worked for the TSA since 2010 and left behind a wife and 2 children. Behavioral Detection Officer Tony Grigsby, Security Training Instructor James Speer, and a passenger were also wounded in the shooting.

On March 21, 2015, Supervisory TSO Carol Richel was attacked by an assailant with a machete at the Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport. Officer Richel was grazed by a bullet as a Jefferson Parrish Sheriff's deputy fired shots during the attack. The assailant also sprayed wasp repellent at three other TSA officers.

While our officers showed bravery and commitment in the face of great tragedy, these incidents demonstrate an alarming trend of lone-wolf individuals bent on harming our Nation's transportation system and our TSA workforce.

Following the events at LAX, then-Administrator John Pistole convened a working group to address vulnerabilities highlighted during the incident. The group included representatives from law enforcement agencies and associations, labor groups and industry associations, TSA employees, and other Federal, State, and local agencies. Out of these discussions, TSA conducted a National review focused on training and communications, emergency response

equipment and technology, and law enforcement officer presence at checkpoints and response to emergencies. I would like to address each of these issues.

The Los Angeles and New Orleans incidents raised concerns about the adequacy of training for TSA employees responding to emergency scenarios such as an active shooter. Following the review, TSA made active-shooter training mandatory for our workforce on an annual basis and created our own training videos specifically focused on the airport environment. We also regularly conduct mandatory emergency response training, table-top exercises, and evacuation drills for our TSA personnel at airports, along with our airport law enforcement partners. Through daily shift briefings and internal communications, we have made officer safety a reoccurring theme of TSA's communication to our front-line employees, engaging our officers on the importance of remaining vigilant and alert, reinforcing access control measures, and reporting suspicious activity.

Regarding emergency response equipment and technology, our review indicated that many airports needed improvements to their alert notification systems, such as ensuring that duress alarms are present at all screening locations. In response, TSA procured 5,500 additional duress alarms. We also conducted a survey and found that 98 percent of the existing alarms were fully functional. We took corrective action to fix the remaining alarms, and TSA employees are now required to conduct weekly tests on the alert systems.

As part of our review, TSA also studied law enforcement presence at airports. TSA requires all airports to either post a law enforcement officer at the screening checkpoint or incorporate maximum law enforcement response times in their airport security plan or ASP. TSA conducted a thorough review of all ASPs to ensure these requirements were appropriately documented. These response times can vary by airport to ensure they are both practical and appropriate, as we recognize the importance of allowing discretion in these determinations. However, ensuring that all airports adopt clearly-articulated maximum response times in their ASP is critical.

TSA continues to monitor and enforce airport compliance with the response times defined in their respective ASPs. Additionally, TSA has issued recommended standards for increased law enforcement presence during peak travel times at checkpoints and high-traffic lobby areas such as ticket counters to provide visible deterrence and faster response times. We support this effort through a partial reimbursement agreement program that assists airports toward payment of dedicated law enforcement officers working in and around the passenger screening checkpoints during operational hours. We have strongly encouraged airports to adopt these measures.

The tragic shooting of Officer Hernandez and the attack on Officer Richel were horrifying and heart-rending. TSA has taken a series of positive steps to prevent such tragedies from occurring again. I want to thank the subcommittee for your support as we seek additional ways to improve officer safety and security and airport security generally. TSA greatly appreciates the support of

Congress in these endeavors and we value the committee's direction through the Gerardo Hernandez Airport Security Act of 2015, which codifies many of the lessons we learned in our after-action report following the LAX shooting and enables us to continue that work.

TSA has been coordinating extensively with the aviation and surface transportation stakeholders on active-shooter drills, emergency response planning and training, and we look forward to that continued effort.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today, and I look forward to answering your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Maola follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MARISA MAOLA

OCTOBER 26, 2016

Good morning Chairman Katko, Ranking Member Rice, and other Members of the subcommittee. I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today.

On November 1, 2013, Transportation Security Officer (TSO) Gerardo Hernandez was shot and killed at his post at a Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) Transportation Security Administration (TSA) checkpoint. Officer Hernandez had worked for TSA since 2010 and leaves behind a wife and two children. Behavior Detection Officer (BDO) Tony Grigsby, Security Training Instructor (STI) James Speer, and a passenger were also wounded in the shooting.

On March 21, 2015, Supervisory TSO Carol Richel was attacked by an assailant with a machete at the Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport (MSY). Officer Richel was grazed by a bullet as a Jefferson Parrish Sheriff's deputy fired shots during the attack. The assailant also sprayed wasp repellent at three other TSA officers.

While our officers showed bravery and commitment in the face of great tragedy, these incidents demonstrate an alarming trend of continued and persistent threat of "lone wolf" individuals bent on harming our Nation's transportation systems and its workforce.

LESSONS LEARNED AND FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS

Following the events at LAX, then-Administrator Pistole convened a working group to address vulnerabilities highlighted during the incident. The group included representatives from law enforcement agencies and associations, labor groups and industry associations, TSA employees, and other Federal, State, and local agencies. Out of these discussions, TSA conducted a National review focusing on the following areas: Training and communications; emergency response equipment and technology; and law enforcement officer (LEO) presence at checkpoints and response to emergencies.

Training and Communications

The Los Angeles and New Orleans incidents raised concerns about the adequacy of training for TSA employees responding to emergency scenarios such as an active shooter. Historically, active-shooter training had not been a primary focus, but was available to employees through two optional on-line courses. As of March 31, 2014, all TSA employees have completed this training, which is now mandatory for our workforce on an annual basis. At the time of the attack at LAX, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) had its own active-shooter training video, which was shared immediately with TSA employees. TSA then created its own training video, specifically focused on the airport environment. This new airport-specific video is shared with all TSA employees. We also regularly conduct mandatory emergency response training and exercises for TSA personnel at airports, and with our airport and law enforcement partners to ensure seamless coordination and preparation in the event of an emergency situation.

TSA also requires all worksites to develop and implement active-shooter tactical response plans to include the designation of evacuation routes and establishment of rendezvous points. In March 2014, TSA issued an Operations Directive requiring that all TSA Federal Security Directors (FSDs) at airports conduct mandatory evacuation drills twice a year. In addition, TSA recommends that airport operators conduct active-shooter training and exercises twice per year. In the case of New Orle-

ans, an active-shooter scenario drill was conducted not long before the attack, and included multiple airport stakeholders such as the St. Charles Parish Sheriff's Office, the airport Fire Department, and airport management.

TSA participates in annual tabletop exercises/briefing for disaster response every May. These exercises facilitate the coordination among TSA, the airport, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and State and local law enforcement first responders. Many airports are also going above and beyond by conducting training and exercises dealing with scenarios such as hostage situations and vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices. TSA's tactical response plans detail actions required by field personnel in response to natural or man-made threats. In addition to the annual active-shooter requirement, local TSA leadership coordinates tactical response exercises on such scenarios as security checkpoint breach, air piracy, and natural disaster response.

Officer safety has been a recurring theme in TSA's communications to front-line employees. Through daily shift briefings and internal communications, we continue to engage our officers on the importance of remaining vigilant and alert. Other actions taken include:

- Requiring all TSA devices to be programmed with alternate airport emergency phone numbers;
- Encouraging field employees to program their personal phones with airport emergency phone numbers; and
- Highlighting the active-shooter threat with a focus on reinforcing secure area access control measures, challenging individuals without proper identification in secure areas, maintaining good situational awareness, and reporting any suspicious activity.

Emergency Response Equipment and Technology

The National review following the LAX shooting indicated that many airports needed improvements to their alert notification systems, such as ensuring that duress alarms are present at all screening locations, including at terminal lobbies. TSA conducted a survey of screening and other locations and found that several of these locations did not have alert notification capability. In response, TSA procured 5,500 additional duress alarms for critical locations where our officers perform security screening operations. We also conducted a survey of all existing duress alarms to determine if they were fully functional. Ninety-eight percent of the existing alarms were deemed fully functional, and we took corrective action to fix the remaining alarms. TSA employees are now required to conduct weekly tests with our airport partners to test the alert notification systems.

Law Enforcement Officer Presence Response to Emergencies

In accordance with a pre-existing Security Directive, TSA requires all airports to either post a law enforcement officer (LEO) at the screening checkpoint or incorporate maximum LEO response times in their Airport Security Programs (ASPs). Following the LAX incident, TSA conducted a thorough review of all ASPs to ensure that these requirements were appropriately documented. These response times can vary by airport to ensure they are both practical and appropriate, as we recognize the importance of allowing discretion in these determinations. However, ensuring that all airports adopt clearly-articulated maximum response times in their ASP is critical. TSA continues to monitor and enforce airports' compliance with the response times defined in their respective ASPs, as well as additional requirements to maintain sections in their ASPs for contingency planning and incident management.

Additionally, TSA has issued recommended standards for increased law enforcement presence during peak travel times at checkpoints and high-traffic lobby areas such as ticket counters to provide visible deterrence and faster response times, and supports this effort through a partial reimbursement agreement program that assists airports with payment towards dedicated law enforcement officers working in and around the passenger screening checkpoints during operational hours. We have strongly encouraged airports to adopt these measures. In the wake of the LAX attacks, TSA increased the percentage of Visible Intermodal Prevention and Response (VIPR) deployments conducted in commercial aviation locations—a measure that remains in place today. TSA's VIPR teams include Federal Air Marshals (TSA's law enforcement element), and VIPR operations are planned in cooperation with State, local, and/or Federal law enforcement organizations and transportation stakeholders.

TSA maintains 101 Assistant Federal Security Directors for Law Enforcement (AFSD-LE) at 275 airports across the Nation. The primary duty of each AFSD-LE is to establish and maintain liaison relationships with local, State, and Federal law

enforcement authorities on behalf of TSA. An organized and structured liaison program is a critical component to the overall transportation security mission, including the law enforcement response strategy for incidents. The liaison relationships with local, State, and Federal law enforcement organizations ensure that the AFSD-LE has constant contact with these partners, enabling a coordinated response to incidents.

THE GERARDO HERNANDEZ AIRPORT SECURITY ACT OF 2015 (PUB. L. 114-50)

TSA greatly appreciates the support of Congress in these endeavors—from the subcommittee’s hearings on LAX lessons learned in the last Congress, to visiting LAX and meeting with Officer Hernandez’s widow, your Members have been great partners in reducing the likelihood that situations like the LAX shooting or New Orleans attack will be repeated. TSA also values the committee’s direction through the Gerardo Hernandez Airport Security Act of 2015 (Pub. L. 114-50), which requires us to conduct a series of reviews and outreach measures aimed at improving security incident response, including outreach to airports and high-risk surface transportation stakeholders to verify they have plans in place to address security incidents. This law codifies many of the lessons we learned in our after-action report following the LAX shooting, and enables us to continue that work. TSA has been coordinating extensively with aviation and surface stakeholders on active-shooter drills, emergency response planning, and training, and we look forward to continuing that effort.

CONCLUSION

The tragic shooting of Officer Hernandez and attack of Officer Carol Richel were horrifying and heart-rending. TSA has taken a series of positive steps to prevent such tragedies from occurring again. I want to thank the subcommittee for your support as we seek additional ways to improve officer safety and security, and airport security generally.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I look forward to answering your questions.

Mr. KATKO. Thank you, Ms. Maola.

I ask unanimous consent to insert a letter I have sent to Administrator Neffenger for the Transportation Security Administration into the record. The letter focuses on defensive tactic training, and I just want to enter it into the record at this time. In part, it is about defensive tactic training for Transportation Security Officers at airports Nation-wide, and without objection, so ordered.

[The information follows:]

LETTER FROM CHAIRMAN KATKO TO PETER NEFFENGER

OCTOBER 26, 2015.

The Honorable PETER NEFFENGER,
Administrator, Transportation Security Administration, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 601 12th Street, South Arlington, Virginia 22202.

DEAR ADMINISTRATOR NEFFENGER: I write to inquire about defensive tactics training curricula employed by the Transportation Security Administration (TSA). This November will mark the two-year anniversary of the tragic acts of violence carried out against three TSA employees and one member of the traveling public at the Los Angeles International Airport, which resulted in the death of Transportation Security Officer Gerardo Hernandez. This tragedy became the impetus for H.R. 720, the Gerardo Hernandez Airport Security Act of 2015, which I introduced earlier this year. This legislation, which was signed into law on September 24, 2015, seeks to enhance the security of TSA personnel, aviation workers, and members of the traveling public.

The strength of TSA is its personnel, and the agency has a duty to empower them through education and training, with sound personal tactics to accomplish their zero-fail mission of ensuring that threat objects of all kinds are not smuggled into an airport and onto an airplane. While it is important to train employees on the proper operation of equipment used at checkpoints, it is just as critical to properly train employees on how to handle combative individuals, who may seek to commit violent acts against passengers or TSA personnel. I am concerned that TSA is not adequately preparing employees to deal with threatening individuals posing a risk

to their safety and the safety of the traveling public. In light of this, I request responses to the following questions by November 6, 2015:

1. What specific officer safety issues has TSA identified at airport security checkpoints?
2. What are the baseline defensive tactics training TSA employees receive, should an individual pose a threat to their safety?
3. How many hours of defensive tactics training are required for each employee, in order to graduate from the entry-level training academy?
4. How many hours of defensive tactics training are required for each employee on a recurring basis?
5. Does TSA communicate with local, State and Federal agencies to discover new trends in defensive tactics?
6. Has TSA implemented any enhancements to the defensive tactics training curriculum, based on tactics being utilized by criminal/terrorist groups?
7. What are the protocols employed by checkpoints to ensure a timely law enforcement response to threatening individuals, should a threat to an officer and/or public safety exist?
8. To what extent does TSA collect and track data on instances of violent confrontations that occur at security checkpoints?

I look forward to working with you to minimize this officer and public safety issue. The TSA expects the very best from the men and women on the front lines, and they should expect the same from their leadership. I appreciate your timely attention to this matter, and should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or my Committee staff.

Sincerely,

JOHN KATKO,

Chairman, Subcommittee on Transportation Security.

Mr. KATKO. In consultation with the Minority, we have decided to do a more loosely-defined hearing here today. We sometimes have as many as 30 people at a hearing, and sometimes as little as 2. Down in Washington it is more formal in how we proceed, but here, since there is definitely only going to be 2 of us here today, we are going to relax the standards a bit. We are going to do about 10 minutes of questioning by myself, followed by 10 minutes of questioning by Mr. Keating, and we will go back and forth until you either are sick of us or we are sick of you. How does that sound? All right?

I now recognize myself for 10 minutes of questions.

Ms. Maola, I want to start with you because I appreciate your testimony in summary form, but I want to kind of drill down a little farther in the security preparedness of the airports, and it has been an evolution, as I understand it.

The Gerardo Hernandez incident a couple of years ago exposed a gaping problem with security preparedness, so I want to know what has happened since then in summary form, and if you can after that tell us what is on the horizon given the fact that the Gerardo Hernandez bill is now law.

Ms. MAOLA. Yes. Thank you, Chairman Katko. Lots of lessons learned following the LAX shooting; and, of course, the safety of our officers and the traveling public is paramount.

After the LAX shootings, TSA convened a working group and they examined the incident and identified areas that needed improvement, and the areas that needed improvement were training, emergency response equipment, as well as law enforcement presence.

So the training that TSA has been involved in over the last year, we have completed active-shooter training on well over 55,224 employees. It is a yearly training, a mandatory training, and within that training TSA created a video with run, hide, and fight, which

are some of the tactics which we train our officers to utilize during an active-shooter scenario.

As far as the emergency response technology, we did recognize that the most immediate and the quickest way for our officers to get help, especially during an imminent threat, is to have duress alarms. We have been installing duress alarms at our airports, and it is a work in progress. We have completed most airports. Presently, if we don't have any new technology in place, each airport does have either a panic button or a phone, a direct line to the Port Authority—I am sorry, I am speaking directly for JFK—but directly to the airport authority, and we do test our alert notification system weekly to ensure that it is working.

Also, as far as law enforcement presence, we have required that the airports put into their airport security program a maximum response time. For the most part, that is normally 5 minutes or less.

So those are some of the things that we are doing since the LAX shooting. Sir, on behalf of the TSA, we do want to thank the subcommittee for passing the Gerardo Hernandez bill. We have a working group that has convened that is looking at the provisions of the law, and they will be helping us to identify what needs to be carried out. In particular, the bill does talk about or requires TSA to disseminate best practices to our stakeholders, but it also requires for the airports and for TSA to work with the airports to have individualized incident response plans at their airports.

Mr. KATKO. Thank you. I want to follow up on a few of those things.

As far as the emergency response, you have responded with respect to technology and duress alarms and stated that was a work in progress. What do you mean by that was a work in progress?

Ms. MAOLA. So specifically within my region, I am working with the Port Authority for JFK, as well as Newark. So those airports do have means in place. We are working with a contractor and hope to have complete installation of the new duress alarms by this November.

Mr. KATKO. Now, regarding the active-shooter training scenarios, you said that you touch about 55,000 workers, and you do it by video training. What other types of training do you do to assist with the active-shooter situation?

Ms. MAOLA. So, we work very closely with our law enforcement partners. Specifically for our officers, we do have a training video, but we also exercise it. We conduct exercises at our checkpoints. I could speak specifically for JFK. Again, working closely with the Port Authority, the Port Authority built a state-of-the-art, if you will, checkpoint and mock ticket counter in one of our buildings, Building 208, with the Port Authority Police, along with Port Authority Office of Emergency Management. Several times throughout the year we invite our TSOs, as well as our Behavior Detection Officers, along with the police and the law enforcement community, and we conduct active-shooter drills at mock checkpoints similar to an airport environment. So we do that first-hand.

Not all airports are doing that, but we do have a requirement to have table-top drills and active-shooter drills, as well as at our checkpoints we conduct quarterly breach drills with our officers.

Mr. KATKO. Now, the Port Authority, I would expect, is always going to have their antenna up high with respect to terrorist activities, because we all know New York City is a high-priority target for international terrorists. But with the phenomenon developing of these lone-wolf situations, whether they are fueled on the internet by an ISIS type of group or just some sort of hate group Nationwide, a domestic terrorism type, there is more of a possibility that airports outside of New York City are going to be high-value targets.

Do you have any sense from what type of stuff they are doing in those airports outside of the New York City area, and do we need to do more at those airports to beef up the active-shooter scenarios and training?

Ms. MAOLA. Yes. So, it is not just exclusive to New York. All airports are required to conduct active-shooter training.

Mr. KATKO. How often do they have to do it?

Ms. MAOLA. It is a yearly requirement for our officers, but as far as the law enforcement community, they are continually working together with TSA, as well as other law enforcement agencies, to carry out some of the training that they may have learned. But more importantly, TSA did distribute over 500 copies of threat mitigation active-shooter training to our airport partners where the airport partners brief not only their own employees but the entire airport community on active shooter.

Mr. KATKO. Now, Mr. Martelle, could you give us your perspective? Obviously, you are at a different airport, and you head the New York State Association. How do you see the active-shooter and emergency response programs at the airports that you oversee?

Mr. MARTELLE. Well, we have an annual conference where we bring airports across the State together to talk about issues, and typically what we will do is we will go to the host airport and conduct an activity there geared to bringing directors and airport managers in to talk about issues. We conducted last year, September of 2014—Syracuse airport hosted the conference, and the Syracuse staff conducted an active-shooter training where they utilized the emergency operation center that brought first responders, airport law enforcement, TSA, all of the groups together and went through a scenario and activated their emergency operations center.

So for us, it is more of an education and training and supporting our member airports, and I think the airports are really on the cutting edge when it comes to this type of training and working with our partners with the TSA and local law enforcement, because this is such a serious subject.

Mr. KATKO. Thank you.

What I want to ask both of you just briefly is, is there more that you could be doing if you had the resources that Congress could help you with as far as active-shooter emergency response is concerned? You had better say yes, right?

Mr. MARTELLE. Absolutely. As most of my testimony was regarding funding, funding is absolutely critical. Putting those dollars where it will support the TSA and help their mission and help airports back-fill some of the areas that they see as being critical to these types of programs is critical. So any funding that can be put towards preventing these types of actions is definitely helpful.

Mr. KATKO. Ms. Maola.

Ms. MAOLA. Yes, and thank you, sir. Congress has been incredibly supportive, especially following the LAX and New Orleans incidents.

Specifically, any policy presently does not require—TSA is not looking for anything. But, of course, funding is always on the table. We can always use more funding to help support some of the resources that we have at our airports.

Mr. KATKO. Okay. Switching gears a little bit, the training you have is trying to detect and respond to an active-shooter situation. But these incidents also point up a problem with respect to TSA Officers at airports, at least. They are unarmed, and they don't have the ability really to defend themselves in the traditional way, through weaponry. So you have to rely on other security support that is at the airports.

This letter that I sent Homeland Security today to Neffenger that I referenced a few moments ago has to do with defensive tactics. I am concerned that there doesn't seem to be enough training going on, if any training at all, with respect to how TSO Officers are to protect themselves and defend themselves if they are engaged in an active-shooter situation in an assault-type setting.

So, if you could, Ms. Maola, talk about that; and, Mr. Martelle, if you can add anything, please do so.

Ms. MAOLA. I can't speak specifically on the defensive tactics, but I can speak with regard to the active shooter.

So you may have heard, Chairman Katko, that just following the New Orleans incident and what occurred there, Officer Richel did say that some of the tactics they used to defend themselves came directly from the training that they had received with the run, hide, and fight, where they actually used, say, a suitcase to push the passenger away.

So our goal is the safety of our officers. There are other things that we have done with regard to the incident at LAX, and one of those does have to do with police officer presence. The law enforcement officers have been very supportive, especially after LAX, where they do perform some patrols in and around our checkpoints.

We also have our VIPR teams. Our air marshals have VIPR teams at the airports where they also are patrolling our ticket counters and checkpoint areas.

We also do receive additional support from other law enforcement within the airport such as CPB and the National Guard if they are posted at specific airports, where they also provide visibility, especially during peak times.

Mr. KATKO. Thank you very much.

Mr. Martelle.

Mr. MARTELLE. Dedicated law enforcement at security checkpoints is something that not all airports are doing, but a lot of airports have been voluntarily policing LEOs at security checkpoints landside, which is where the passengers come up to the checkpoints. Syracuse Airport I know for a fact is doing that, and that program has been well received.

Once again, it is a funding issue. You are taking resources from other locations, but the airport feels that it is something that is important and is part of an overall larger program. But arming the

TSA security screeners or anything of that nature I can't comment on because I don't have enough information.

Mr. KATKO. Thank you.

I could go on for a lot longer, but I am going to try to stick to somewhat of a schedule here and yield my time for Mr. Keating.

Mr. KEATING. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

This is a great opportunity for me to see here in New York how things compare to what I am most familiar with in the Boston region. But I did notice, coming through these automated exit lanes, how new technology can be helpful.

Under the regulations, statutory and regulatory language that currently exists, there is some ambiguity about who is going to be in charge of the staffing, who is going to be responsible for the costs, and this can be a great problem. For instance, if this were going to be retrofitted in another airport and they had to do configuration remodeling, changing the terminal, some of the interpretation is that once you do that, you are totally responsible, going along the lines, at least temporarily is my understanding, of still funding the cost of the exit lane personnel from TSA and not imposing that on the airport, something our subcommittee has worked to try and not make a result of these interpretations because all these airports are different.

You have small airports, municipal airports, authorities—it runs the whole gamut. Putting the cost and the responsibility on these airports that aren't doing, frankly, enough now is a problem.

So, first of all, Mr. Martelle, from your perspective, how do you deal with these lack of interpretations, or what happens if you are trying to ultimately go to this, but in doing so you are triggering all kinds of costs to yourselves? To me—and I have said this before at hearings with TSA's top officials and Homeland officials—if this is going to be required and it is that important, TSA should be responsible for it and not leave it in the hands of the airport organization.

So if you could comment on that problem, have you seen that ambiguity? Is it something that airports can absorb? What do you see here?

Mr. MARTELLE. It is difficult for airports to absorb that because it does require additional staff, and historically that is not a function that the airport has undertaken. I can speak to the exit portals at Syracuse Airport. There are numbers associated with it. They have 8 portals total. With equipment and vendor installations, it was about \$623,000, and the cost to put in the infrastructure to accommodate those was approximately \$180,000. So it was a significant investment up front.

While the portals do take up significant resources from an infrastructure standpoint, the cost to man them without the portals is about \$300,000 a year for an ASO and about \$550,000 a year for an LEO. You can recoup those costs over a period of time. Right now there is no paying for maintenance and the operations.

Mr. KEATING. So you are doing the airports and absorbing this cost for these new—

Mr. MARTELLE. Yes. The Syracuse Airport is absorbing the cost for the maintenance and operation of those.

Mr. KEATING. Don't you think that would be a huge deterrence to other airports going forward, the expense of this?

Mr. MARTELLE. It could be. If there was a grant or something available to the airports to do the initial installation, that would be very helpful.

Mr. KEATING. What about the remodeling that goes with it? I mean, maybe this was easy to configure here, but it could be significant because you have wide-open spaces that you would have to reconfigure, build walls, and the expense could be enormous. So if you are trying to move to this and they are absorbing the cost, especially medium and smaller-size airports, where are they going to get the funds for this?

Mr. MARTELLE. That is a point well taken. In my testimony I did talk about a \$60 million improvement that the Syracuse airport underwent in recent times here. They were planning for this. So if you have an airport that needs to be reconfigured, it could be a significant cost. It could be millions of dollars to reconfigure the terminal.

Mr. KEATING. It won't happen, even if it might be helpful.

The other thing I want to mention, too, is you mentioned cameras at airports, and you are looking to remodel that. I assume you are absorbing some of that cost, too? Or is TSA?

Mr. MARTELLE. What I am familiar with, Federal funding is generally used for a lot of the security—

Mr. KEATING. Who oversees it to make sure the camera is in the right place?

Mr. MARTELLE. Well, I would hope that airports would work with our partners, with law enforcement and the TSA, but there isn't a guarantee of that.

Mr. KEATING. Because I want to tell you that I referenced in my opening remarks a 16-year-old that secreted himself in the air well of a commercial airliner, a major airliner that was going from Charlotte-Douglas to Boston, and how he was only discovered after the landing gear went down over the town of Milton and his body was found, where he had frozen to death.

I was the D.A. at the time. We went back with our police to investigate that, since it was a death, and we found out that the cameras didn't even pick his coming up through the perimeter, didn't pick up his even being near the airplane. Nothing was detected with the existing cameras that were there, which is even more amazing.

It is not that a 16-year-old boy did this and went in, but also that after knowing he did it, nothing ever showed up that he was ever there. To me, when you are talking about cameras, that is not just within the terminal but should be outside around the perimeter, certainly around the area where the planes are, so that can be detected.

Is that being done here? Do you have outside cameras? Could the same problem occur here?

Mr. MARTELLE. At Syracuse Airport, they do have external cameras. The systems have become antiquated very quickly. I do know that they are looking at trying to secure investment once again from a State grant program to help support putting in additional cameras, especially out on the aircraft parking aprons, which would

assist and help with detecting. But there again, you have to have somebody on the other side of the camera sitting in a room and making sure—

Mr. KEATING. Well, overall, we use a process, the Joint Vulnerability Assessment that is being done, looking at all the issues, outside and inside of the airports. But I must tell you, and just again for the record, that when that young man died, they were showing vulnerability assessments of 17 percent, I believe, of all the airports, only 17 percent, despite the numbers I said in my opening remarks, and now it is down to 3 percent. So it is going the other way.

So if you are looking at improving security, don't you think, Ms. Maola—what is your experience here? Are you, like, the norm, 3 percent of all the airports in the region where you are looking at it? I mean, how can we judge vulnerability on a piecemeal basis, and how can we do it with a decrease in these kinds of assessments?

Ms. MAOLA. Thank you, Congressman. That is a great question.

So, my job as a Federal security director is to ensure that no one gets onto the air operations area. It is not only my job for the TSA but it is an airport community initiative where everyone is involved in it.

So presently what we do at many airports, and this goes across our Nation, but we have a very robust compliance team of inspectors that are out there every day. I can speak first-hand for JFK. I have well over 50 inspectors that are out there on a daily basis looking at perimeter, looking at cargo, catering, et cetera.

We also specifically at JFK have roving patrols where the Port Authority did contract the company that works 24/7 just looking at our perimeter. We have well over—

Mr. KEATING. I must say that JFK is one of the best, most secure airports. Yet a man a few years ago was jet skiing—

Ms. MAOLA. Yes, yes.

Mr. KEATING. He got into an accident, and he just went right up on the runway to the planes.

Ms. MAOLA. Yes.

Mr. KEATING. It is a tough balance, too.

The other pressure we hear from airports is the speed of getting through the airports, because you weigh the risk versus what you have to do to expedite people. It is a tough equation. But there has been a decrease in that expediting that is occurring, for people to go through what amounts to the TSA-preferred lanes. We are hearing from—at least I hear from Logan Airport in Boston that that has been a problem.

So, No. 1, if you could just quickly address what, if anything, is happening there.

No. 2, very specifically, I am curious here in your region if you are having the same problems. I think you are getting more resources, frankly, in this regard for international flights. We are reporting an hour, hour-and-a-half delays in screening on international flights in our area, and we are trying to deal with this, the U.S. Customs and Border Patrol issues. Resources are tight, and they helped in our region with kiosks, additional kiosks. We even have the airports saying we'll pay for the overtime for Cus-

toms and Border people to try to alleviate this, yet they are not allowed to do it.

Are there statutory or regulatory roadblocks to that? What can we do when we have an airport that is willing to give more of their own resources to move people along and help customers, but they have a roadblock in doing it? Is there something we can do?

Ms. MAOLA. So, Congressman, TSA has just spent the last 7 months looking at effectiveness, security effectiveness and that balance with the efficiency and the wait times. We trained all of our officers in mission-essential threat mitigation training. It was either a 10- or an 8-hour block for each officer, and what we are seeing at the checkpoint is an officer that is more diligent and screening one passenger, one bag at a time, identifying the threat. So we are seeing that.

What we are seeing, especially when we had a very busy peak summer, we saw tremendous growth across our system, a 5 or 7 percent increase in growth. Of course, it was attributed to additional wait times. But, as you may be aware, our administrator made a policy decision to cease Managed Inclusion 2. So all airports have ceased the Managed Inclusion 2. We do also rely heavily on our other lanes of security such as our BDOs, our law enforcement partners that are out there that help mitigate some of the potential vulnerabilities or threats prior to the checkpoint.

Mr. KEATING. But the real issue I had, too, the specific one, drilling down, is even when you have airports willing to take that cost and you have existing personnel, why are there still roadblocks allowing more—especially on the international flights, the Customs and Border Patrol people, to be there? Is it regulatory, too? Or is it statutory? Do you know?

Ms. MAOLA. I think I would have to defer that to Customs, because it could be statutory on their end. But from a TSA perspective, we have nothing to do with the Customs side of that, wait times.

Mr. KEATING. The dogs are helping on the TSA side.

Ms. MAOLA. Absolutely.

Mr. KEATING. Moving people through. But there still has been a delay here, too, because you are doing away with some of the other procedures. Is that correct?

Ms. MAOLA. Yes.

Mr. KEATING. It is a very tough balance to get people through and to keep us secure.

I want to thank you for taking the time to be here, and we will continue in this committee to try to be helpful on both fronts, to try and deal with expediting people in and out, but also making people more secure.

I yield back.

Mr. KATKO. Thank you, Mr. Keating.

I want to follow up on some things he was asking with respect to the exit lanes, some of the nuts and bolts of it, because it is an issue that I am wrestling with, and I see how it works here in Syracuse because we have automated exit lanes, and it seems to be, at best, a very minor inconvenience or no inconvenience at all. Some people complain that it takes standing there for 3 seconds as

opposed to 1, or something like that. If that is the biggest inconvenience you have, that is not so bad.

But first of all, I guess we will start with Mr. Martelle. How many airports under your jurisdiction, the New York State Association, have the automated exit lanes? Is Syracuse the only one?

Mr. MARTELLE. Right now, Syracuse plus JFK would make 2, that I am aware of.

Mr. KATKO. Are there any other airports, in the upstate region at least, Buffalo, Rochester, the major airports, that are looking into the automated exit lanes?

Mr. MARTELLE. None that I am aware of at this point. I do know that when Ms. Callahan has the opportunity to talk to other airports, we do discuss that and the benefits of that type of program. But right now I am not aware of any.

Mr. KATKO. What are some of the benefits you talked about?

Mr. MARTELLE. Staffing certainly is a big one. That is one of the key issues, certainly staffing, and the reliability of the checkpoints or the exit portals themselves. They don't take breaks. They are there 24/7, and the ability for implements or anything to enter the sterile area from the non-secured areas is minimized. So you take the human error, that human element out of it, and helping people exit in an efficient manner is a benefit to it.

Mr. KATKO. I will ask you the same question in a moment. But before I get to that, given the fact that there have been studies done that anywhere from \$85 to \$90 million a year could be saved in manpower expenses for just monitoring the exit lane, and you are taking away the human error capability, based on those facts, is there any discussion that people are trying to go toward the automated exit lanes, or is there still a question of whether you can afford the up-front cost to make it work?

Mr. MARTELLE. I think everything is on the table at this point. The technology is definitely something that our member airports are interested in. They are interested in the up-front cost as something that certainly could potentially put a roadblock, so any funding that could be secured to help support that would certainly be welcome. But this is something that I do know that airports are very interested in.

Mr. KATKO. Okay.

Ms. Maola.

Ms. MAOLA. Yes, sir. Thank you, Congressman. TSA has looked at technology, and we work with airports interested in investing in the technology as an alternate to have our employees staff these lanes.

So more specifically, we, TSA, we don't have that funding mechanism in place to pay for this type of technology, so we do rely on our airports, our partners to fund some of the enhanced security projects that are out there. As far as the role, we work together. I mean, everyone is part of the detect, deter, prevent. But we do rely heavily on our airports to fund those types of technologies.

Mr. KATKO. So that is part of the problem.

Now, I will ask you, and then I am going to ask Mr. Martelle the same question. If expenses or costs associated with initially going with exit lanes, automated exit lanes, weren't an issue, which would you prefer based on your expertise? Would you think it is

better to have the automated exit lanes or just keep them the way they are now?

Ms. MAOLA. So, what works in one airport may not necessarily work in another airport. There are differences.

Mr. KATKO. You sound like a politician saying that.

[Laughter.]

Ms. MAOLA. Well, I actually was privy coming to Syracuse last night, landing, and I went through the portal. It is wonderful. I thought to myself, wow, JFK, some of the proposals—nothing is definitive, but the plan would be Terminal 4 at JFK, which is our biggest international terminal, is looking at this portal. But I had said, what would that look like at a JFK? The 3 seconds, 5 seconds that it takes for an individual to get into these portals, that processing time could be pretty detrimental at a larger airport because you would literally have lines that could go back all the way to the gate. So I was looking at that difference and the balance.

So if no cost was involved, if it eliminates the human factor, knowing that you have a great piece of technology like this, of course TSA would have to look at what works at each airport, because not all the airports are the same, and we do not want to impede on the operation either, or slow down the process.

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Martelle.

Mr. MARTELLE. Putting on my airport manager's hat, I would say anytime that we can cut down staffing costs and add some technology that would decrease errors and allow for more efficient screening of people, I would say I would support that. I think that as the technology gets better, certainly it will become more accessible by airports. But there again, it is a funding issue of infrastructure. Some airports aren't designed in the same manner. If you have seen one airport, you have seen one airport. So making sure that the infrastructure is there and the ability for airports to actually work around that infrastructure and install these would be critical. But I would support something like that.

Mr. KATKO. In my previous life as a Federal prosecutor, I often had the opportunity to travel abroad and train prosecutors all over the globe. I was always struck, especially in the European countries, that their technology generally was much better than ours as far as these types of things go.

Have you been to the airport in Munich, by any chance? It is unbelievable. It is high-tech, and they have all automated exit lanes, and they seem to work wonderfully.

It just seems to me that if you have a chance for a billion dollars of savings, close to a billion dollars of savings over a 10-year period if you automate exit lanes, it seems to me we can find a way to help you finance that and that is the way to go.

The problem is you have some of these old airports, like National Airport and JFK and LaGuardia, they are kind-of like old hospitals. There are corridors everywhere, there are rooms everywhere. It is not necessarily the best laid-out place. It just keeps being built as capacity dictates. But as a general rule, it seems to me that if we can somehow find a way to pay for this stuff, it might actually make sense in the long run, and I don't think you have to cut jobs. You can simply move people from one area to another as attrition happens and do it that way. I am not talking about

eliminating jobs. I am just talking about better utilizing the workforce and planning going forward. With the technology the way it is now, anything we can do to stop these issues.

I will just note quickly, when I am leaving National Airport, I get off the plane and come off their Terminal 35, and it is like a zoo, and then I walk out and there are anywhere from three to four law enforcement people sitting at desks playing solitaire on their computer or whatever, just kind of standing there and watching people walk by and leave. It just to me seems incredibly wasteful.

As we progress with our goal to make airports as secure as possible, we ought to keep that in mind.

With that, I will yield back to my colleague.

Mr. KEATING. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I just want to go back on the Customs and Border Patrol issue with Mr. Martelle. Maybe that might be a better venue for the question.

Are you aware of any airports—I am just familiar with Boston—willing to have the cost of the overtime funded by themselves just to expedite that hour, hour-and-a-half wait that exists? If you are not aware, would you think that would be something you would see a utility of from the airport side if that is a problem there?

Mr. MARTELLE. I am not aware of any situation where that has come into play, but certainly if an airport has that funding available and they are willing to do that, that might be something that could be entertained. But I think as far as the Customs and Border Patrol situation is concerned, I can't speak to that specifically because I am not familiar with it.

Mr. KEATING. Maybe in part because your area is getting extra Customs and Border people funded. That is something that if an airport wanted to go ahead—we will follow that up on both fronts, not as much with TSA but with Customs and Border.

I want to see, in terms of best practices and some of the things we mentioned, where do we stand right now with upgrades in communications so that airport officials and TSA officials and local law enforcement can all communicate with each other in real time? Both of you, if you can answer.

Mr. MARTELLE. I think this is still a significant challenge with the interoperability of equipment. The technology from my previous life at Albany airport, we had various systems that were patch-worked together. One had a digital system. Another agency had a different kind of analog system. I think those challenges still exist. Things are getting better between law enforcement agencies as old equipment becomes obsolete. I believe that all the partners in the security for an airport are getting together and discussing how they can make their systems interoperable and communication between local law enforcement, the TSA, and the airport sponsor together. That is always important, and I do know that that is something that many airports are working on currently.

Mr. KEATING. My recollection of the 9/11 Commission study dealt with the World Trade Center bombings, the airplanes crashing into the World Trade Center. If they had more viable first responder coordination back and forth, there is not one other factor that they could identify that would have saved more lives in that process of reacting to that. So wouldn't you think that that would be a pri-

ority, Ms. Maola, of all the things that we are doing, making sure they can all communicate in real time?

Ms. MAOLA. Absolutely, Congressman. That is one of the reasons why we did aggressively install the duress alarms, to ensure that that communication between a truly life-and-death situation, where it is imminent and they reach out directly to the law enforcement officers to respond, that that is one of those things that I couldn't agree with you more, sir.

Mr. KEATING. The radio communications necessary following that up would be—

Ms. MAOLA. The interoperability of communications is always certainly a Government-wide challenge. One of the things that we did do in light of the LAX incident was any TSA employee phone that is issued has been uploaded with airport contact information where there is immediate contact information uploaded into every device, as well as we can only encourage employees with their personal phones to do the same. So we do provide guidance out there to the workforce. We are constantly communicating with them about their well-being, "See Something. Say Something", vigilance, protecting yourself.

Mr. KEATING. Is there still a need to upgrade that coordination with first responders and airport and TSA officials? Is there still a necessary upgrade of that that has to occur, the real-time communication, other than the alarm saying "come here," basically?

Ms. MAOLA. There is always room for improvement, and that is one of the things that we are looking forward to in the Gerardo Hernandez Act. As I mentioned earlier with Congressman Katko, we have a working group that is convening looking at the law so we can carry out the provisions in the law. But part of that does discuss the incident response where every airport will have to individualize their plans to ensure that we have communications which are going to be included within that response plan.

Mr. KEATING. One reason I ask here is because if there is any place in the country where there is an ability to do that given the resources and the training of the first responders in the New York area, as well as in the airports, it is here. If it is not up to speed here, my conclusion would be that it is not up to speed anywhere the way that it should be. So I am curious.

If you could contact the committee and tell us what upgrades you are doing, how that first responder communication is going. Not every airport is the same as the airports here, yet if you can do it here, you can do it in the smaller and medium airports as well. It is probably in many of the smaller airports more necessary than anyplace else.

In terms of deterrent issues, the VIPR program—and you can take a minute to probably explain it better than I can—the budget for that has been decreased \$23 million, and the budget for 2016 another \$3.1 million decrease is in place for elimination of two VIPR teams. They are deployed not only in aviation facilities but also surface sector areas where I think in our country bus, trains, and other surface transportation, we haven't had the threats actually occur the way they have in Europe, for instance, but there is reason to believe they might be forthcoming.

I mean, what is your reaction to the cuts in this area? Should it be a concern? Should it be something we look at in Congress to make sure we are funding?

Ms. MAOLA. From a TSA perspective, the President did sign that law, so there were cuts and the funding was taken away. The VIPR, which is the Visible Intermodal Prevention and Response, it is really—

Mr. KEATING. Notice I had you say that.

[Laughter.]

Ms. MAOLA. I like saying VIPR. But we do have that in place where, yes, the resources were cut, but we have limited resources at our airports. But we do utilize, as I mentioned earlier—whether it is our Federal Air Marshals, we bring in law enforcement at those airports, officers, BDOs, to be on this VIPR team.

So I understand the cuts; and, of course, if there was any way to have more funding to increase some of the VIPR activity, of course, in my own personal opinion, I would support it.

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Martelle, are they valuable to the airports? Have you found that?

Mr. MARTELLE. I am sorry, I am not familiar with the VIPR teams, but we have rapid intervention teams that we use that are only geared toward aviation. To cut that program, we found them very useful and I wouldn't see a need to cut a program unless it was found it wouldn't be useful in certain respects. But I can't really comment on the VIPR teams.

Mr. KEATING. Thank you, and I yield my time back. Thank you very much.

Mr. KATKO. The last thing I want to touch on before I wrap up my portion of the testimony is on access controls. As you know, I have introduced a bill that hopefully will be voted on in November about access controls in airports. The bill that I introduced was precipitated by a number of acts that occurred over the last few years at airports Nation-wide, the most poignant one of which was a gentleman that was caught coming off the plane from Atlanta to LaGuardia with a backpack full of guns. He had either 14 or 15 guns, maybe as many as 17, 9-millimeter guns and two assault rifles, most of which were loaded.

It turns out this gentleman had made about 10 trips with similar amounts in the past, and he had an airport employee from Delta Airlines in Atlanta who would simply walk the bag through from the non-secure area of the airport into the secure area of the airport using a SIDA badge, and just handed him the bag. The guy got on a plane and went up to New York and sold them. Of course, the possibilities for something to go wrong are incalculable, and the tragedies that could have resulted are amazing, but it really pointed up this lack of security at airports.

Some of TSA's responses included the VIPR team. Then we hear more incidents, like the drug trafficking ring that was disrupted at LAX and Dallas-Ft. Worth where they were simply talking to each other, the employees, about where the VIPR teams were in the secure areas of the airport, and they were just going through other doors that weren't secure and bringing the drugs into the airports. You overlay that with the fact that one of the individuals, it came up at his preliminary hearing, was offering to bring anything

through the employee access doors, including bombs. That, to me, is frightening.

We have an obligation to try and beef up security. You look at all that and you say, well, let's make them secure. Let's let them go through just like travelers have to go through. The way these airports have been designed—we talked about it earlier, how they kind of have been expanded in sometimes a hodge-podge manner to meet demand—there are a lot of access points. Some airports have as many as a couple of hundred access points. Some have a lot less. Atlanta is going from 64 access points, trying to get down to 4, and they are trying to go to 100 percent screening. There are only a few airports in the country that can do 100 percent screening.

We have developed testimony about that, but as long as you are here I just wanted to get your take on it, each of you, what your concerns are with respect to access controls. You have a very good perspective also because you have small airports that you oversee and have influence on, and then you have the big mammas in New York City. You have LaGuardia and Kennedy. So, you have everything.

I understand the practical problems with trying to secure all the access points, but God forbid we don't do everything we possibly can and something happens, because when you have close to a million airport employees Nation-wide, you just need one bad guy. If you think about what is going on now in the country with respect to ISIS and how people are getting radicalized over the internet from afar and someone is having a bad time in their life, and then they get this thing where you can get everybody back by blowing something up or putting a bomb on a plane or whatever, it is really kind of scary. For people offering to take bombs on planes, it is kind of scary stuff.

So with that heavy overlay, I would just like to get your take on the access control or, more importantly, what we can do to beef up the access controls and what is realistic. Anyone can start because it is a real fun topic, I'm sure, for you two.

Ms. MAOLA. So, Congressman, aside from the logistics and the cost involved in conducting 100 percent employee screening, the individuals that work at the airport are vetted and are a trusted population. It sort of contradicts what you just mentioned, some of the examples that you provided. But we do have a system in place with access control, with identification that, of course, we can close down access immediately, especially if the I.D. badges are lost or stolen. But we also have to have our workers trust their fellow workers.

Basically, with the individuals that they are working with every day, they practice challenge procedures, "See Something. Say Something." We have increased some of our Playbook activity at some of these access points. The airports in Syracuse have done a great job as far as reducing access points, whether it is a small airport, a large airport. We are making every attempt and effort to mitigate as much as we can. We are forcing individuals and employees to either utilize a checkpoint or some sort of screening or going through limited doors where we have visibility there, whether it is VIPR, Playbook, law enforcement, where there is some sort of additional screening done at those doors.

Mr. MARTELLE. Access control is definitely something that, from a financial perspective and a facility perspective, is very significant. The screening of all airport employees can take—if you have an initial push in the early morning and you are screening thousands of employees arriving at some airports in the morning, the insider threat is a big thing. Teaching people that if you see somebody coming in who is not scheduled to work with a backpack full of whatever, say something about it, tell somebody that something doesn't look right.

So we rely on the airport employees to do a lot of the internal part of security, and the practicality of screening everybody right now is that it really isn't practical, even though that is not a good way to look at it, just because of the sheer nature of the way things are laid out in an airport environment. I think screening product is definitely something that needs to occur. You can screen employees, but you are also going to need to screen product. There is product that goes into the sterile area of airports out in the secured area that may not be screened, and it is just as easy for somebody to do something wrong with that as well.

So it is a comprehensive plan of people, product, and then airport employees being diligent and notifying people when they see something that is not right.

Mr. KATKO. Yes, and the bill that is being contemplated virtually came out prescribing what should be done at all access points, and we have heard enough of the articulation of what you both talked about today to realize that we need to look at it more. So we are asking them to do an analysis of the cost and the types of things that make the most sense going forward.

But my overall sense is that we need to do more and beef up access controls more than what we have right now. We owe it to the American public and we have to get a handle on it because it is a vulnerability that I had no idea existed until I got into this job. We sometimes tell people if you knew what we know, sometimes you wouldn't even get on a plane.

But I understand the American public is best served as it possibly can be with the people at the airports and the security they are trying to do. But it is very, very difficult, and as air traffic and air capacity increases, like it is projected to over the next couple of decades, it is our duty to make sure that we do everything we can to make sure we get in place the proper security measures, both for employees and people visiting the airports.

So, Mr. Keating, do you have any more questions?

Mr. KEATING. No, I just apologize for the notes back and forth. There is a little irony here with airport management, but our flight was cancelled back to the District of Columbia, so we are scrambling to try and see if we can get back.

Mr. KATKO. That is payback for talking about access controls, I think.

[Laughter.]

Mr. KATKO. Well, we really appreciate both of you coming up here today, and we appreciate your professionalism. We appreciate your candidness. Just so you know, when you testify, it doesn't go into a vacuum. We have a bunch of people here listening, and the staffers are far smarter than we are, and they are going to take

this information, synthesize it, and use it. So it is not just a question of putting on a show and having to come here. We take your input, and we take it very seriously, and we value it. So, we appreciate it.

On behalf of Mr. Keating and myself, I want to thank both of you for being here. Your testimony was great. The Members of the committee may have some additional questions for the witnesses, and we ask you to respond to those questions in writing. Pursuant to Committee Rule 7(e), the hearing record will be held open for 10 days.

Without objection, the subcommittee stands adjourned. Thank you.

[Whereupon, at 12:11 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

