

Surface Transportation Security Advisory Committee (STSAC)



Meeting Minutes

February 18, 2021



Meeting Summary

The seventh meeting of the Surface Transportation Security Advisory Committee (STSAC) was held virtually via an operator-assisted teleconference call due to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The meeting was closed to the public.

TSA Senior Official Performing the Duties (SOPD) of the Administrator, Darby LaJoye; SOPD of the Deputy Administrator (DADM), Stacey Fitzmaurice; STSAC Executive Sponsor, Victoria Newhouse; Policy, Plans, and Engagement (PPE) Surface Division Executive Director, Scott Gorton; Policy, Plans, and Engagement (PPE); Security Operations Surface Operations (SO) Assistant Administrator (AA), Sonya Proctor; and the STSAC Chair, Thomas Farmer and Vice Chair, Polly Hanson addressed the Committee.

Presentations were provided by TSA on the Term of Office for voting members, the recommendations review and implementation process, the status of the Surface Security Directive, TSA Surface Operations, and an unclassified threat briefing.

Call to Order

Before the formal start of the meeting, STSAC Designated Federal Officer (DFO), Judith Harroun-Lord, provided a brief explanation of the teleconference rules of engagement. She called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m. EST, proceeded with a roll call of the Committee members, and announced a quorum of members present. Additional participants were asked to email their names to STSAC@tsa.dhs.gov for an accurate record of attendance.

STSAC Executive Sponsor Introductory Remarks

STSAC Executive Sponsor, Victoria Newhouse (PPE Deputy Assistant Administrator), provided introductory remarks.

Ms. Newhouse opened her remarks by expressing how grateful she was to serve the STSAC as their Executive Sponsor. She thanked all the Committee members for their participation and recognized the tremendous work performed during unimaginable conditions, going the extra miles to develop and deliver valuable and actionable recommendations to the TSA Administrator. Ms. Newhouse noted that future discussion will touch on how to move forward with implementing the recommendations and looking to STSAC to collaborate on the way ahead.

Citing General Colin Powell, U.S. Army (Ret), Ms. Newhouse highlighted the extraordinary diplomacy exhibited by the members of the Committee throughout their term. General Powell says that diplomacy is "listening to what the other guy needs." It is "preserving your own position but listening to the other guy." She expressed the need to develop relationships with

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other people so that when tough times come you can always work together. She stressed how well members of the Committee worked together. TSA is pleased to have received the draft of the STSAC Annual Report; it is very thorough and Committee members should be proud of their work. The Annual Report will eventually be posted on the TSA website.

Ms. Newhouse welcomed TSA's Regional Security Directors to the call and acknowledged the partnership within TSA between Security Operations and Operations Support.

She closed her remarks by expressing her appreciation to SOPD DADM Fitzmaurice, PPE Assistant Administrator Eddie Mayenschein, and SO AA Proctor. She thanked Surface Division Executive Director Gorton and his entire team for organizing the meeting, and Chair Farmer and Vice Chair Hanson for their leadership and perseverance. Ms. Newhouse quoted Administrator Pecoske, calling the STSAC and the ASAC the "finest advisory committees in government."

Ms. Newhouse shared a quote from Babe Ruth, "The way the team plays as a whole determines its success. You may have the greatest bunch of individual stars in the world, but if they don't play together the club won't be worth a dime." Throughout the pandemic, this has been proven over and over again.

Senior Official Performing the Duties of the Acting Administrator Opening Remarks

TSA SOPD ADM, Darby LaJoye, addressed the Committee with opening remarks by thanking the members for their continued contributions to the work of the Committee despite the significant impacts COVID-19 had placed on their organizations and on their personal and professional lives. He offered his heartfelt condolences to the Committee for what they have had to go through in the face of unprecedented challenges.

Mr. LaJoye appreciated the hard work and collaborative effort made to implement President Biden's Executive Order on Promoting COVID-19 Safety in Domestic and International Travel. He recognized the dedication that collectively went into the development and rollout of the recent security directive (SD) issued on February 1, 2021, requiring masks be worn on public transportation, passenger rail, and bus conveyances, and at transportation hubs/facilities to protect the safety and security of the traveling public and the transportation system. He acknowledged that implementing these requirements is not without its challenges and emphasized TSA is here to support the Committee members.

Mr. LaJoye stated that the 18 formal inaugural STSAC recommendations aligned with the priorities established in the April 2020 tasking letter. The recommendations were well supported, actionable within TSA's control to achieve, and had defined outcomes to enhance surface transportation security and emergency preparedness and resiliency.

TSA will review all of the recommendations and provide a formal response to each one. TSA looks forward to frank, open, and fruitful discussions with the Committee in their advisory capacity in 2021 to implement the recommendations and identify additional opportunities for coordination. TSA is committed to partnership and collaboration with the STSAC. Continuing dialogue and knowing each other's perspectives is invaluable.

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Mr. LaJoye again thanked everyone for their participation in what he anticipated would be a very productive meeting. He asked everyone to please stay safe for themselves and for all of their colleagues.

Membership Terms

TSA Surface Division Executive Director, Scott Gorton, addressed the Committee on the Term of Office for voting members by saying that the Administrator does intend to have the current members continue to serve on the Committee. Should any members elect to resign within the next 12 months, TSA will fill vacancies as appropriate.

Going forward, TSA plans to establish a committee-membership rotation in accordance with the Committee By-Laws. In order to maintain institutional knowledge within the Committee, TSA's intent would be to retain a cadre of voting members on the Committee, while rotating in an appropriate number of new members. Nonvoting members will rotate as determined by their respective agencies.

TSA wants to maintain the proper balance of representation and expertise while equitably balancing representation between modes, carriers, employees, and users of surface transportation and welcomes suggestions from current Committee members on the best way best to achieve this balance.

In 2022, TSA will invite persons interested in serving on the STSAC to apply via a notice published in the Federal Register.

STSAC Chair and Vice Chair Opening Remarks

STSAC Chair, Thomas Farmer, thanked Mr. LaJoye and Ms. Newhouse for their opening remarks and shared an analogy with meeting participants. He spoke of the attributes that helped lead the Tampa Bay Buccaneers to a recent Super Bowl victory and how the STSAC is seeking to emulate those attributes. Mr. Farmer credited Tampa's win to planning and preparation and a game plan executed to perfection. He believed that the Kansas City Chiefs were the superior team and that only a narrow opportunity existed for the Buccaneers to win the game, which they did. The Buccaneers executed a simple, disciplined offensive and defensive game plan made possible by their planning and preparation. In short, the Buccaneers created the conditions in which they could win.

The STSAC recommendations are about planning and preparedness and creating the conditions necessary for success in transportation organizations across all modes. They focus on structures, on information sharing procedures, on developing tools and capabilities, and on collecting and disseminating effective practices. In a sense, the STSAC is both the offensive and defensive coordinator seeking to create the conditions for enhanced execution of surface transportation security. The recommendations are designed to provide capabilities in a number of areas so that those with responsibilities have resources to draw upon, have structures to look to, and have information flows to take advantage of that are far superior to what they have had up to this point.

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Mr. Farmer expressed his appreciation and respect to all those involved in the formulation of the recommendations and committed to help implement and transform them into effective actions to enhance surface transportation security, preparedness, and resiliency.

He thanked all the Committee members for extending their original two-year time commitment to a three-year commitment to FY22.

Vice Chair, Polly Hanson, dedicated her opening remarks to celebrating a number of African American transportation safety and security pioneers in honor of Black History Month.

- In 1926, the Safe Bus Company was founded in North Carolina by 13 African American jitney bus drivers as a way to provide transportation for their neighborhoods. It was considered at the time the largest African American-run bus company. It operated until 1972 and then was bought out by the city of Winston-Salem, North Carolina.
- Andrew Jackson Beard was born enslaved on a plantation in Woodland, Alabama. He was injured in a rail coupling accident. Mr. Beard went on to patent an improvement to railroad-car couplers that automatically joined cars by simply allowing them to bump into each other. His improvement came to be called the Jenny Coupler and it revolutionized the railroad industry.
- William Coleman Jr. was appointed as the fourth U.S. Secretary of Transportation by Gerald Ford. He created the Materials Transportation Bureau that addressed pipeline safety and the safe shipment of hazardous materials.
- Elbert Robinson refined the electric railway trolley. In 1839, he received a patent for an invention that focused on the trolley wheels and improved the way trolleys turned.
- Lois Cooper made history by becoming the first female African American professional transportation engineer to be hired in the engineering department in the Division of Highways, which is now known as the California Department of Transportation or CALTRAN.

Vice Chair Hanson admitted that the accomplishments of the STSAC may not be recognized in the same way as these first historic individuals and actions, but did highlight that the recommendations put forward to the Administrator are intended to make surface transportation safer and she wished to thank all the contributors for making this possible.

Overview of the Recommendations Review and Implementation Process

TSA Surface Division Executive Director, Scott Gorton, provided meeting participants with an overview of the recommendations review and implementation process. As was noted by Mr. LaJoye, TSA will provide written responses to the Committee on each of the 18 Committee recommendations.

While work is already underway to implement some of the recommendations, there will be a need to consider the best path forward and the resources required to implement others. PPE Surface Policy will coordinate with subcommittee co-chairs and other TSA offices to scope and develop implementation plans. A tracking system is being developed to monitor and report progress made in implementing each of the recommendations. Reports from this system will be

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available to the Committee. The tracking system will also assist TSA in complying with the TSA Modernization Act requirement to report to Congress on its progress in implementing the STSAC's recommendations.

Mr. Farmer noted for clarity that there is nothing to preclude any of the subcommittees from working on initiating plans for implementing the recommendations. Mr. Gorton said that nothing excludes the subcommittees from meeting to work on plans and action items to implement their recommendations while awaiting TSA's formal response. The plan is to memorialize the work through joint coordination with subcommittee co-chairs, the PPE Surface Division, and other TSA offices.

Status on the Surface Security Directive (SD)

PPE Surface Division Executive Director, Scott Gorton, provided meeting participants with the status on the Security Directive (SD) for surface transportation. On February 1, 2021, TSA issued an SD to owner/operators of public transportation, passenger rail, and certain over-the-road bus companies. The SD requires owner/operators to provide prominent and adequate notice to passengers that face masks are required by federal law to be worn at all times on conveyances and in public areas of transportation hubs/facilities controlled by the owner/operator (such as stations, terminals, and when boarding/d disembarking conveyances). Additionally, the SD requires that persons who refuse to wear a mask be denied boarding and removed from the transportation hub/facility, or removed from the conveyance, at the earliest opportunity. The SD is an instrument to implement the President's Executive Order of January 21, 2021 and the CDC Mask Order of January 29, 2021.

This is the first SD for surface transportation that TSA has issued since 2004. TSA consulted with Committee members while drafting the SD and many of their comments were incorporated into the final version.

The SD is in effect for 100 days, which is until May 11, 2021. The SD will be reviewed and ratified by the Transportation Security Oversight Board (TSOB) within the next 30 days per 49 U.S.C. § 115. The TSOB is chaired by the Senior Official Performing the Duties of the Deputy Secretary of Homeland Security and has representation from all executive branch agencies including the Department of Defense and Department of Transportation (DOT). Without TSOB ratification, the SD can only remain in effect for 90 days.

To help everyone understand the requirements of the SD, TSA hosted informational sessions for entities covered by the SD and participated in a number of webinars/conference calls hosted by the Federal Transit Administration, Federal Railroad Administration, and Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration.

There is a requirement for covered entities to acknowledge receipt of the SD and, as written in the SD, a person who refuses to wear a mask constitutes to a significant security concern and must be reported to the TSA Transportation Security Operations Center (TSOC). To date, TSA has received 354 acknowledgements from covered parties that they have received the SD. TSA has also received 34 notifications from surface transportation owner/operators of incidents where a person's refusal to wear a mask constituted a "significant security incident." These

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notifications have come from both small and large systems. TSA received 326 aviation notifications.

TSA will continue to work with DOT and its operating administrations to provide clarifying information through FAQs and direct responses to inquiries about the provisions of the SD. TSA is taking questions at TSA-Surface@tsa.dhs.gov.

The most important point to remember about the TSA SD, the CDC Mask Order, and the Presidential Executive Order (13998) is that the goal is to maximize the number of people wearing masks when they are on public transportation conveyances and in transportation venues, whether on the ground or in the air.

There have been a number of questions about very specific circumstances for both passengers and employees and who is required to wear a mask and when. TSA's response has been "when in doubt, wear a mask." There are exemptions that preclude someone from wearing a mask for medical and safety conditions, but for the vast majority of surface employees and passengers they should be wearing a mask when they are in an environment where there are other people.

TSA Surface Operations personnel are working with operators at the local level by assisting with information and support to implement the SD. The Transportation Security Inspectors (TSIs) are also following up on the reports of persons refusing to wear a mask to determine if further action is warranted. There are provisions in the SD to issue civil penalties against individuals who refuse to wear a mask.

Threat Brief and NTAS Update

TSA Intelligence and Analysis (I&A) Analysts, Tony Lewis and Bill Cauley, provided unclassified physical and cyber threat briefings on surface transportation. Briefing points also included discussion of the distribution of the DHS National Terrorism Advisory Bulletin released on January 27, 2021.

Mr. Lewis addressed potential threats in the homeland, which include physical threats to freight rail, mass transit/passenger rail, highway and motor carrier, and pipelines and an overview of recent significant events in the U.S.

Mr. Lewis said that based on a review of intelligence reporting, law enforcement reporting, and suspicious-event reporting that TSA receives, I&A assesses that the current threat of physical attacks to all surface modes in the homeland is low and will remain low in the near term. Threat levels remain constant because of the violent-extremist intent and capability to conduct an attack targeted at each mode have not changed over the past year.

Homeland Violent Extremists (HVEs), lone offenders, Environmental Rights Extremists (EREs), and other Domestic Violent Extremists (DVEs) are the primary threats to surface modes of transportation. Many of these individuals almost certainly have the capability to conduct simplistic attacks such as vehicle ramming, sabotage, small bomb attacks, or attacks using rudimentary Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs). Currently, these actors lack the intent to target transportation with the exception of EREs. EREs are likely to maintain the intent to conduct disruption activities against pipeline operations—particularly pipeline construction—

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and the shipment of oil and natural gas on freight lines. However, I&A sees no credible evidence that EREs are currently planning violent attacks against either mode.

There have been no terrorist attacks against domestic surface transportation operations in the past two years. However, disruptive criminal activities, notably sabotage, vandalism, trespass, blockages, and even intentional equipment shutdowns have targeted oil and natural gas operations. Freight railroads have experienced periodic trespass, track shunting, and blockade actions.

Violent extremists continue to release messages calling for attacks against domestic transportation. However, I&A has no evidence to link these messages to credible, operational attack plotting.

Since I&A last briefed the STSAC, a number of significant events have occurred in the U.S. that while not directly related to surface transportation do illustrate the current domestic threat environment and highlight potential threats to transportation in the homeland.

First, on December 25, 2020, a suicide bomber detonated a recreational vehicle-borne improvised explosive device (VBIED) in downtown Nashville, Tennessee, injuring eight people and damaging dozens of buildings. The incident occurred adjacent to a telecommunications company network hub, resulting in days-long communication-service outages. Federal and local law enforcement agencies are still investigating this event to determine a motive and to ensure that no additional individuals were involved.

Second, on January 6, 2021, the U.S. Capitol was breached. I&A assess that DVEs are unlikely to directly select transportation modes as primary targets in this current period of political and social unrest. Any attacks against transportation are likely to be opportunistic and may involve violence as DVEs transit from sites where protests are taking place. I&A has no evidence or credible operational reporting to indicate that domestic terrorists are actively plotting to attack surface transportation within the homeland. DVEs have conducted low-level acts of sabotage against transportation modes rather than violence. Some individuals within domestic terrorist groups have tried to urge others—largely on social media platforms—to conduct transportation related attacks. However, these are likely meant as calls to inspire and provide general direction, but do not provide specific attack planning.

I&A wants to ensure that members of the Committee are aware of the DHS National Terrorism Advisory Bulletin (NTAS) released on January 27, 2021. Due to the heightened threat environment across the U.S., which I&A assess will likely persist in the near term, some ideologically motivated violent extremists with objections to the exercise of governmental authority and the presidential transition, as well as other perceived grievances fueled by false narratives, could continue to mobilize or insight individuals to commit violence. This NTAS is set to expire on April 30, 2021. Highlights from the bulletin are copied below:

- Throughout 2020, Domestic Violent Extremists (DVEs) targeted individuals with opposing views engaged in First Amendment-protected, non-violent protest activity. DVEs motivated by a range of issues, including anger over COVID-19 restrictions, the 2020 election results, and police use of force have plotted and on occasion carried out attacks against government facilities.

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- Long-standing racial and ethnic tension—including opposition to immigration—has driven DVE attacks, including a 2019 shooting in El Paso, Texas that killed 23 people.
- DHS is concerned these same drivers to violence will remain through early 2021 and some DVEs may be emboldened by the January 6, 2021, breach of the U.S. Capitol Building in Washington, D.C. to target elected officials and government facilities.
- DHS remains concerned that Homegrown Violent Extremists (HVEs) inspired by foreign terrorist groups, who committed three attacks targeting government officials in 2020, remain a threat.
- Threats of violence against critical infrastructure, including the electric, telecommunications and healthcare sectors, increased in 2020 with violent extremists citing misinformation and conspiracy theories about COVID-19 for their actions.
- DHS, as well as other Federal agencies and law enforcement partners, will continue to take precautions to protect people and infrastructure across the United States.
- DHS remains committed to preventing violence and threats meant to intimidate or coerce specific populations on the basis of their religion, race, ethnicity, identity, or political views.
- DHS encourages state, local, tribal, and territorial homeland security partners to continue prioritizing physical security measures, particularly around government facilities, to protect people and critical infrastructure.

TSA does not have any evidence or credible operational reporting indicating domestic terrorists are actively plotting to target transportation within the homeland.

On February 11, 2021, DHS published a list of probable indicators of violence in the wake of the U.S. Capitol breach. The list was created for the D.C. area. However, its indicators could be applied more broadly to other areas. These probable indicators of violence include:

- Online calls by event organizers to bring weapons to protests or counter protests.
- Widespread calls by event organizers for violent extremists to attend protests or counter protests.
- Increase in the frequency of violent flashes occurring between ideologically opposed groups.
- Public announcements that prominent figures associated with ideological movements will attend planned protests.
- Calls for violence in response to arrests of individuals involved in the breach of the U.S. Capitol.
- Online calls for violence in response to discussions about political or policy changes.

Some of these observed indicators may include constitutionally protected activities and should be evaluated in the totality of circumstances. If members of the Committee do not have a copy of the reference aide published by DHS, I&A will ensure they receive a copy.

Mr. Cauley then went on to address cyber threats in the homeland.

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In early February, unidentified cyber actors gained unauthorized access to a supervisory control and data acquisition system at a Florida-based drinking water treatment plant. The actors used the system software to increase the amount of sodium hydroxide, also known as lime, which is a toxic chemical. Water treatment personnel immediately noticed the change and corrected the issue before the supervisory control and data acquisition system software detected the manipulation and alarmed due to the unauthorized change. As a result, the water treatment process remained unaffected and continued to operate as normal. The actors likely accessed the system by exploiting cybersecurity weaknesses, including poor password security and an outdated operating system. Early information indicates that TeamViewer may have been used to gain unauthorized access to the system.

Cyber actors target and exploit desktop-sharing applications, software, computer networks, and operating systems with end-of-life status to gain unauthorized access to systems. Desktop-sharing software can be exploited by malicious actors using social engineering tactics and other illicit measures.

Windows 7 will become more vulnerable to attacks due to a lack of security updates, technical support, and the discovery of new vulnerabilities. Continued use of Windows 7 increases the risk of cyber actor exploitation. Microsoft and other industry professionals strongly recommend upgrading computer systems to an actively supported operating system as continuing to use unsupported systems provides cyber actors a path into the computer system.

I&A observed multiple cyber-espionage campaigns directed against the U.S. in 2020 including U.S. aviation. These actions could be utilized against surface transportation modes as well. In September 2020, Russian state-sponsored advanced persistent threat (APT) actors conducted a campaign against a wide variety of U.S. targets including aviation networks. In March 2020, an advanced persistent threat actor, likely Russian in origin, compromised U.S. government agencies, critical infrastructure entities, and private sector organizations as part of a wide-ranging campaign encompassing multiple sectors and entities worldwide.

In order to gain broad access to a wide range of systems, APT actors embedded malware into SolarWinds software updates which are routinely pushed to the company's customers. To avoid detection, the malware rests dormant for up to two weeks and then establishes a backdoor allowing attackers to access and victimize networks.

The attackers' post-compromise activity leverages multiple techniques to evade detection by obscuring their activity and maintaining persistence including privileged escalation, creating and adding valid but unauthorized token credentials, allowing movement using different credentials, user impersonation, and using virtual private servers (VPS). The attackers are using VPSs with IP addresses in the home country of the victim, behind communications along legitimate user traffic, and frequently rotate last mile IP addresses to obscure their activity and avoid detection.

On December 17, 2020, CISA reported evidence of additional initial access vectors and tactics, techniques, and acknowledged that attack procedures are being used by this highly sophisticated threat actor which have yet to be discovered. This condition highlights that the scope and impacts of this campaign have yet to be determined.

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Security Operations SO AA, Sonya Proctor, provided a brief overview of the role of SO with regard to the Surface SD and introduced TSA's five Regional Security Directors (RSDs).

Ms. Proctor acknowledged that many in the meeting are in the Security Directive's (SD) effected group and thanked them for the support they provided during its rollout. From an operational perspective, TSA worked to dispel any concerns regarding the implementation of the SD in the field with an approach to educate, inform, and encourage. The purpose of the SD is to minimize the transmission of coronavirus in public transportation by wearing a mask. TSA wants to inform entities how they can comply with the SD and encourages its regulated parties to maintain practices that keep them in compliance with the SD. To date, there have been cases referred to the Transportation Security Operations Center (TSOC) for review. TSA's inspection workforce will individually review each reported case. Field inspectors receive their operational direction from TSAs RSDs. There are five RSDs across the country—each is a participant in today's meeting and will discuss his or her region. Ms. Proctor encouraged participants on the call to get to know TSA's RSDs and to participate in further discussions with them about surface transportation security within their respective regions.

DFO Harroun-Lord invited each of the five TSA RSDs to address the meeting participants by providing overviews on surface operations within their respective areas of reporting.

Surface Region 1—FEMA Regions I, II

- Regional Security Director, Marisa Maola
- Field Office Location: New York, NY
- Marisa.Maola@tsa.dhs.gov

Region 1 Regional Security Director, Marisa Maola, provided Committee members with details about Region 1 and her goals for the coming year.

Region 1 encompasses the northeast corridor of the United States. Its footprint on the map is small, yet it is one of the highest threat areas in the country. Pre-pandemic, millions of people transited daily; however, mass transit system ridership remains down due to COVID-19.

There are five surface field offices in Region 1—New York City; Newark, New Jersey; Boston, Massachusetts; Albany and Buffalo New York.

- New York's JFK office covers New York City and the five boroughs as well as Nassau, Suffolk, Westchester, Rockland and Putnam counties.
- Newark covers the state of New Jersey.
- Boston covers New England and includes Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine.
- Albany and Buffalo together cover the entire western and upstate New York area.

Each of the five surface offices have Surface Inspectors who report to Supervisory Surface Inspectors and/or Assistant Federal Security Directors (FSD) for Inspections. Supervisory

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Surface POCs in each of the surface offices report through Ms. Maola's Regional Security Inspector, Mr. Kevin Hoban, with anything surface-transportation related. Mr. Hoban, Ms. Maola, and Region 1 program analysts are all available contacts to members of the STSAC.

Region 1's biggest challenge is the pandemic. Stakeholders are reluctant to expose employees to the virus and TSA conducts many activities virtually.

Ms. Maola's goals and priorities for the coming year include

1. Continuing to support and develop her staff with training and career progression.
2. Increasing planning and readiness with stakeholder training and exercises and Regional Response Framework workshops.
3. Conducting quarterly regional multimodal security roundtable meetings which increase information sharing and provide intelligence via a Field Intelligence Officer.
4. Establishing 'Train the Trainer' workshops to support cybersecurity awareness and conducting stakeholder training workshops in each surface field office.
5. Continuing to promote partnerships across surface transportation systems with Structured Oversight activities.
6. Providing continued stakeholder engagement activities around security such as targeted BASE assessments, cybersecurity awareness training, First Observer Plus, and conducting EXIS workshops.

Surface Region 2—FEMA Regions III, IV

- Regional Security Director, Mary V. Leftridge Byrd
- Field Office Location: Atlanta, GA
- Mary.leftridgebyrd@tsa.dhs.gov

Region 2 Regional Security Director, Mary Leftridge Byrd, provided Committee members with details about Region 2 and her background.

Region 2 encompasses 13 states and three territories: Alabama, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the National Capital Region. The region includes 13 High Threat Urban Areas and 15 surface field offices staffed with 58 Transportation Security Inspectors.

The College Park, Georgia, regional office includes Ms. Leftridge Byrd, two program analysts, and an executive assistant. The office is located near Hartsfield Jackson Atlanta International Airport (ATL). There is another program analyst in northern Virginia and a Regional Security Inspector in northeast Florida.

Region 2 is unique in that it has responsibility for the full spectrum of surface transportation modes, including pipelines, maritime, passenger and freight rail, public transit systems, and over

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the road bus operations. This in addition to having responsibility for the National Capital Region, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico.

Ms. Leftridge Byrd became the Region 2 RSD in September 2020. Immediately prior, she served 11 years as the Aviation Division FSD for the state of Georgia. She directed security operations at ATL and seven spoke airports across the state. As FSD, Ms. Leftridge Byrd worked alongside surface security professionals on a number of critical activities across many surface modes and subject matter areas. Her interactions span local, state, and federal jurisdictions and include public and private partnerships. She believes in investing in partner engagement before a crisis and shared several lessons she has learned over the years. First, it is best to prepare for war in times of peace. She noted it is not who you can call at 3:00 a.m., but who will pick up at 3:00 a.m. if need be. Second, it is better to ask than to assume how someone might want to engage, saying it is a critical cornerstone to partnerships. Finally, one's best work can be done in support of your responsibilities outside the institution's field, regional, or headquarters environment.

Region 2 is also challenged by the pandemic and the continued impact of COVID-19 on its activities. Ms. Leftridge Byrd looks forward to the opportunity to again share a handshake and look across the table eye-to-eye with TSA's partners. She thanked meeting participants for the opportunity to introduce herself and Region 2. She said she will always prioritize the safety of her staff and partners, but hopes to soon work in person again to collaboratively identify and address mutual challenges, share creative approaches and resolve issues, and efficiently employ resources.

Surface Region 3—FEMA Regions V, VII

- Regional Security Director, Jim Spriggs
- Field Office Location: Chicago, IL
- Jim.Spriggs@tsa.dhs.gov

Region 3 Regional Security Director, Jim Spriggs, provided Committee members with details about his background and goals for the new year.

Mr. Spriggs began by thanking the Committee for the work already done to improve partnerships between industry and TSA. He noted in-person meetings have been replaced by video conference calls as work is re-imagined and individuals conform to a 'new normal' due to the pandemic. Its impact on transportation systems has been severe. Year-over-year passenger traffic in all modes of travel is down more than 75% and the financial challenges have in some cases been devastating.

After 15 years with American Airlines, Mr. Spriggs joined TSA as an Industrial Engineer in 2004. He served in a number of airport management positions before becoming the FSD first in Cleveland, Ohio and second in St. Louis where he was responsible for the entire state of Missouri. There, he managed a large group of federal employees as well as one of TSA's largest contract screening teams in Kansas City, Missouri.

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In March 2020, Mr. Spriggs assumed the role of RSD for Surface Operations Region 3. His office is located in Chicago, Illinois. Chicago has been a leading hub for transportation since the late 19th century. Throughout the Midwest, large rail and over-the-road bus partners continue to connect passengers, finished products, and raw materials. Region 3 hopes to help its partners to do their work safely and securely.

TSA's regional surface security framework creates opportunities to share information, and RSD Spriggs hopes to focus on three areas in the upcoming year. First, he wants to partner with public and private sector teams to conduct exercises and improve response capabilities during emergencies. Second, he wants to focus on mitigating the effects of extremists and insider threats to employees, infrastructure, and citizens. Third, he wants to add value to the cybersecurity discussion. He was recently selected as a member of a TSA steering group to review TSA policies and address cybersecurity risk within the Transportation Systems Sector. He noted the work of the STSAC Cybersecurity Subcommittee and offered to advocate for the incorporation and implementation of their work within TSA.

Surface Region 4—FEMA Region VI, VIII

- Regional Security Director, Melvin Carraway
- Field Office Location: Dallas, TX
- melvin.carraway@tsa.dhs.gov

Region 4 Regional Security Director, Mel Carraway, provided Committee members with details about upcoming activities in Region 4.

Mr. Carraway thanked the STSAC members for the opportunity to share his experience and speak about Region 4. Mr. Carraway is based in Dallas, Texas. Region 4 reaches from Louisiana through Salt Lake City, Utah to the Canadian border and provides structured oversight to buses, trains, and pipelines. Region 4's key staff include Mr. Carraway, Jeremy Towns, and Jay Bagley. Mr. Towns is a Regional Security Inspector and Mr. Bagley is a seasoned surface security professional.

Over the past year, multiple hurricanes have impacted Region 4. Severe weather events in the region highlight the need for TSA to work with FEMA and other federal partners to cover its responsibilities.

Region 4 has a number of upcoming events and RSD Carraway shared those with members of the Committee. On February 24, Region 4 will host a roundtable summit and all surface entities within the region are invited to attend. A number of topics on the agenda include emergency management, START and assessment programs, and cybersecurity. TSA will discuss emergency management issues and share emergency management applications with its stakeholders in the region in order to better respond to and recover from hurricanes and other emergencies.

TSA is also planning a tabletop exercise at the Port of Morgan City. It will cover response tactics and necessary operational activities to an attack on the Port, the dam, bridges, and levies in the area. It is important not only to train, but to apply applications in real life settings.

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Just as Tom Brady has been to the Super Bowl multiple times, TSA has experienced a number of disasters, derailments, explosions, and emergencies over the years. TSA's experience, planning, and preparation means it can execute its plans and knows exactly what to do when faced with a challenge. Mr. Carraway's years of experience in emergency management and law enforcement serve him well in carrying out his responsibilities as the Region 4 RSD. He wants to continue to discuss and collaborate on surface security issues and find new ways to partner and grow with industry to ensure surface modes across the country are safe and secure.

Surface Region 5—FEMA Region IX

- Regional Security Director, Annmarie Lontz
- Field Office Location: Seattle, WA
- Annmarie.Lontz@tsa.dhs.gov

Region 5 Regional Security Director, Ms. Annmarie Lontz, provided members of the Committee with details about Region 5 and an upcoming event.

Region 5 covers Alaska, Washington, Idaho, Oregon, California, Arizona, Nevada, Hawaii, Guam, and the Pacific Islands. It is home to several significant transportation assets including the ferry system in Washington state, a major port in Los Angeles, California, and the Alaskan pipeline.

Region 5 surface personnel are located in Seattle, Washington; Portland Oregon; Phoenix, Arizona; Las Vegas, Nevada; and Sacramento, Oakland, Los Angeles, and San Diego, California. Ms. Lontz' office is located in Seattle, Washington across from SeaTac airport in the 13 Coins Building. Her key staff include Robert McGuire, Nate Anderson, Ryan Adams, Lu Schworchert, and Harrison O'Connell. Robert is a Regional Surface Inspector. Nate, Ryan, and Lu are program analysts and Harrison is an executive assistant.

Region 5 personnel are keenly interested in supporting each stakeholder and working to enhance security across the region. Ms. Lontz enjoys meeting the surface operators in her region and learning about their operations. She appreciates the cooperation and is grateful for their support for transportation security.

Region 5 conducts quarterly roundtables with its stakeholders. The next roundtable is Tuesday, February 24 from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Ms. Lontz and her team look forward in continuing the open communication with their partners.

RSD Question and Answer Session—Open Forum

Chair Farmer thanked the RSDs for their contributions and participation, and asked for their thoughts on the challenges when working collaboratively with surface transportation partners. "In the cooperative efforts between government and industry, what are your most significant challenges?"

In response, paraphrased summaries of the RSDs' replies are as follows.

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RSD Spriggs—“I have team members in 10 field offices covering 12 high threat urban areas who have developed strong partnerships and relationships in the region through voluntary activity. The biggest challenge for us is not associated with those partnerships. It is the challenges we face as a result of the pandemic. We are all trying to learn a new way of doing business. How to maintain relationships? How to conduct exercises? How to work closer together while staring at a computer screen? We’ve had to adapt and learn how to do these things. For me personally, it is combining all of that with the fact this is a new role and position covering a large geographic area with an inability or reduced ability to travel and meet stakeholders; but my team and I are making strides. From a security perspective, cyber is all encompassing and is something we are all going to have to focus on going forward.”

RSD Carraway—“The environment has changed over the last five to six years. The level of trust between the private sector and government is not where it should be. The private sector is apprehensive about the government’s regulatory actions. The STSAC wants to adhere to a cooperative environment. However, that environment has been more difficult to achieve. This “I gotcha” environment has crept into the business within the last few years. I understand that these are businesses and sometimes businesses simply do not want to change, share, or expose issues of concern within their companies. Overcoming those issues and creating an environment of information sharing to better our business activities has been one of the largest obstacles over the last few years.”

RSD Mary Leftridge Byrd—“I have not experienced anything that looks like hesitation. But, as highlighted by Melvin and Jim, it is how we are currently working that impedes our ability to shake hands and sit down and have a cup of coffee to begin to know each other as individuals within the organizations we represent. I go back to the mantra that it is best to prepare for war in times of peace. Knowing someone is everything, because out of that comes the increased trust factor. So while it is and has been a challenge, it certainly is not unmanageable. These days we just have to do things differently that will still serve both parties to a discussion.”

Open Discussion

Chair Farmer then opened the floor for further discussion.

Committee member Ms. Denise Krepp, an elected official from Washington, DC, and former TSA employee, encouraged TSA to look into a potential security situation near the Washington, DC, National Guard Armory. After the January 6, 2021, breach of the United States Capitol, tens of thousands of National Guard troops deployed to Washington, DC, and staged operations at the Armory. There is both a metro station and public bus stop at the Armory. Transport busses lined streets near the Armory, blocking certain streets and potential escape and emergency routes. This situation exacerbated the risk and potential impacts of any form of on the Stadium – Armory Metro Station or bus stop. AA Proctor assured Ms. Krepp that the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority’s (WMATA) security plans were in full effect and volunteered to conduct a separate briefing on the inaugural and post-election security situations, if requested. AA Proctor also agreed to speak to WMATA again based on Ms. Krepp’s description. Committee member and District DOT official, Ms. Natalie Jones Best, Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (ASHTO), also agreed to speak offline with Ms.

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Krepp, and said any such discussion should also include District of Columbia government officials and the city's Homeland Security and Emergency Agency.

In response, Mr. Farmer noted that these type of areas can be opportunistic locations for an attack.

Ms. Proctor recommended setting up a meeting with the STSAC to discuss this issue. Chair Farmer and Vice Chair Hanson agreed to schedule this as an agenda item at a future meeting.

Committee member Robert Gatchell, Brightline, thanked Mr. Farmer and Ms. Hanson for their leadership during the past two years and is looking forward to continued participation on the Committee.

Administrative Discussion and Vote to Accept Meeting Minutes

Chair Farmer instructed members of the Committee of the need to take action on meetings held November 5, 2020 and January 25, 2021. Minutes for both meetings had been distributed in advance to Committee members for their review. Mr. Farmer requested a motion to accept the November 5, 2020 minutes. Ms. Jennifer Gibson, National Association of Chemical Distributors, moved to accept the minutes and the motion was seconded. The motion carried by voice vote and the minutes were accepted.

Mr. Farmer requested a motion to accept the January 25, 2021, meeting minutes, at which the STSAC voted unanimously to approve its recommendations to the Administrator. Mr. Al Hancock, Excel Energy, moved to accept the motion and Mr. Robert Finnegan seconded the motion. The motion carried by voice vote and the minutes were accepted.

Closing Remarks

Chair Farmer had opened the meeting speaking about the planning and preparedness of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. During the meeting, Ms. Leftridge Byrd highlighted the need to prepare for war in times of peace. Mr. Farmer stated that one of the first casualties of an emergency is staff discipline if you have not prepared well. During an emergency, an organization and its staff should use the same structures and processes it does during normal times – but at a higher operations tempo and frequency. If it does not use the same processes in an emergency situation as it does in normal times, then the work becomes immensely more difficult because staff discipline can break down that much more easily. During the Super Bowl, the Buccaneers' staff discipline didn't waiver, whereas that of the Kansas City Chiefs did.

Adversaries are not super human or supremely capable. They are people subject to impatience and frustration like anyone else. The Committee's work is designed to make providing security, emergency response, and the flow of information easier. Discipline now helps ensure discipline during an emergency and the Committee's recommendations are designed to build a foundation for effectiveness and success. As the recommendations are implemented, Chair Farmer encouraged everyone to continue to learn and improve. He closed by thanking everyone for their time, effort, and collaboration in the face of the unique circumstances and demands raised by COVID-19.

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Vice Chair Hanson closed by quoting Vince Lombardi, “Winning is not everything, but making the effort to win is.” She said there had been a tremendous amount of effort displayed over the last 20 months and thanked everyone for their work.

TSA SOPD DADM Stacey Fitzmaurice thanked meeting participants for their updates and discussion. She said the partnership, dedication, and insight provided to TSA by the STSAC is extremely valuable.

Implementing President Biden’s Executive Order was a yeoman’s effort and Ms. Fitzmaurice credited teamwork and collaboration between industry and government partners for the successful rollout of TSA’s Security Directive on face masks in passenger transportation. The process is a model for how government and industry must coordinate and communicate on threats and collectively respond to them.

TSA will follow that model in its review and response to the STSAC recommendations. It will work together to make the transportation system safer. All recommendations will be reviewed and a formal response to each will be provided. TSA is required to respond within 90-days of the submission date. Each STSAC recommendation was carefully considered and Ms. Fitzmaurice vowed TSA’s responses will be equally so.

The STSAC has worked cooperatively and collectively with TSA and partner agencies to enhance transportation security, emergency management, and resiliency in a manner that is remarkable, especially during a global pandemic.

Ms. Fitzmaurice closed her remarks with a special thanks to Executive Sponsor Newhouse, DFO Harroun-Lord, Executive Director Gorton, and the PPE Surface Division staff members for their efforts in organizing, coordinating and supporting the recommendation development and submission process, and for today’s successful virtual meeting.

Ms. Newhouse thanked Ms. Fitzmaurice for her closing remarks. She noted that the name of the first African American owned bus company, Safe Bus, is indicative of what surface transportation means to TSA and its STSAC partners. Ms. Newhouse acknowledged that what the Committee does saves lives and thanked its members for their continued efforts. Ms. Newhouse also thanked AA Proctor and her team of Regional Security Directors along with Executive Director Scott Gorton and the PPE team. She said that collectively the RSDs have 150 years of experience, and when combined with others at TSA and on the Committee, there is nearly a 1000 years of experience upon which to draw. She closed by thanking everyone for what they do and wishing them all good health.

Adjournment

DFO Harroun-Lord sought a motion to adjourn the meeting. Chief Joseph Perez, Northeast Illinois Commuter Railroad, motioned to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Anthony Mercogliano, New York City Metropolitan Transportation Authority, seconded the motion. The motion to adjourn was carried by a voice vote of the Committee.

The seventh meeting of the STSAC meeting was adjourned at 3:33 p.m. EST.

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Certification of STSAC Meeting Minutes

I hereby certify that this is an accurate record of the activities of the Surface Transportation Security Advisory Committee on February 18, 2021.



Thomas L. Farmer
Surface Transportation Security Advisory Committee Chair