



TSA MANAGEMENT DIRECTIVE No. 400.3
AVIATION SECURITY STANDARD OPERATING
PROCEDURE (SOP) REVIEW AND APPROVAL

To enhance mission performance, TSA is committed to promoting a culture founded on its values of Integrity, Innovation and Team Spirit.

1. **PURPOSE:** This directive provides TSA policy and procedures, and supports Transportation Security Administration (TSA) Office of Security Operations (OSO) policy and procedures for the development, coordination, and issuance of new or amended Aviation Security Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and associated guidance (“Aviation Security SOP change”). This directive describes the roles and responsibilities of non-OSO stakeholders and all TSA offices when developing or updating policy and requirements that have impact on Aviation Security procedures.
2. **SCOPE:** This directive applies to all TSA offices with policy-making authority or interests that potentially affect Aviation Security SOPs or other security-related documents, regardless of origin. This directive does not apply to the development, coordination, and issuance of SOPs that do not address Aviation Security procedures.
3. **AUTHORITIES:**
 - A. 49 U.S.C § 449
 - B. Aviation and Transportation Security Act, Public Law § 107-71
 - C. Homeland Security Act of 2002, Public Law § 107-296
4. **DEFINITIONS:**
 - A. Concept of Operations (CONOPS): Documentation of a proposed system or solution to address a security need. A CONOPS for proposed aviation security SOPs will include background information, overall objectives, significant performance and procedural requirements, general qualitative or quantitative evaluation criteria, and timeline.
 - B. Interim Change (IC): A change, either temporary or permanent, to a procedure or part of a procedure in an approved SOP made without issuance of a revision or change to the entire SOP. IC provisions will be incorporated subsequently into an SOP.
 - C. Non-Urgent Change: Non-emergency change that addresses administrative, process improvement, organizational, or any other needs or purposes. Non-urgent changes are made on a regular, periodic basis, may be requested by various entities, and proceed through the normal processes for release in a scheduled SOP update or revision or new SOP in a standard timeline.
 - D. Standard Operating Procedures (SOP): Policy and procedure document that describes regular recurring screening activities relating to aviation security operations within TSA. These documents are applicable to all individuals performing aviation security operations within TSA jurisdiction.

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- E. Urgent Change: Immediate response to TSA senior leadership requests to address a security emergency or intelligence-based imminent threat information.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES:

Within the purpose and scope of this directive:

- A. OSO is responsible for developing, coordinating, issuing, and maintaining Aviation Security SOPs and published documentation of SOPs covered by this Management Directive (MD). Within OSO, the Aviation Security SOP change process is managed by the Operations Performance Division (OPD) Security Procedures Branch (SPB), whose responsibilities include:
- (1) Serving as Subject Matter Experts (SME) for Aviation Security SOPs and the change process;
 - (2) Developing, disseminating, and communicating the requirements of Aviation Security SOPs and other published Aviation Security procedures and changes with an operational impact on domestic and international operations;
 - (3) Receiving, referring, processing, and coordinating and tracking the review and approval process for all Aviation Security SOP changes and related procedural requests in accordance with OSO policy and procedures as detailed in *Administrative Directive (AD) – Development and Amendment of Aviation Security Standard Operations Procedures*;
 - (4) Receiving, referring, and processing all communication from TSA Offices or their Divisions or Branches concerning any new or developing action (policy, programs, or guidance) having impact on or requiring an Aviation Security SOP change;
 - (5) Conducting outreach and facilitating meetings or communications with stakeholder TSA Offices, OSO field leadership and personnel, and other entities regarding Aviation Security SOP changes, as necessary;
 - (6) Conducting and overseeing risk and operational assessments related to Aviation Security SOPs and changes; and
 - (7) Coordinating with the Offices of Acquisition Program Management (OAPM), Capabilities and Requirements Analysis (OCRA), Training and Development (OTD), and Human Capital (OHC) for development of technical, training, and screening certification testing materials related to Aviation Security SOPs and changes.
- B. OAPM and OCRA are responsible for providing technical expertise in identifying, procuring, and implementing security-related technologies and other assets and developing policies, procedures, and technical requirements related to the use of such technologies and assets in Aviation Security procedures;
- C. OTD is responsible, in coordination with OSO, for developing and disseminating training products related to existing, new, and amended Aviation Security SOPs;

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- D. The Offices of Chief Counsel and Civil Rights and Liberties/Ombudsman and Traveler Engagement are responsible for reviewing new or amended Aviation Security SOPs to ensure legal sufficiency and enforceability, provide counsel on legal risks, and, in coordination with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Privacy Office, confirm policy and legal alignment on civil rights and liberties of the traveling public;
- E. The Offices of Intelligence and Analysis, Inspections, and Chief Risk Officer are responsible for providing information, guidance, and findings on current threats and other intelligence, covert test results, and security-related and enterprise risks and risk mitigation, respectively, that may form the basis for or have impact on Aviation Security SOP changes;
- F. The Offices of Security Policy and Industry Engagement and Global Strategies are responsible for ensuring that requirements and operational impact of SOPs and other published Aviation Security procedures are communicated to and acknowledged by domestic and international regulated parties and stakeholders, as necessary; and
- G. OHC is responsible for reviewing new or amended Aviation Security SOPs to determine if the changes impact basic conditions of employment as a Security Officer, such as medical guidelines, Annual Proficiency Review testing, performance plans, etc.
- H. All TSA Offices are responsible for providing information and guidance in the development of new or amended Aviation Security procedures upon request of OSO.

6. POLICY:

- A. Requests for Aviation Security SOP Change:
 - (1) Requests for Aviation Security SOP changes must include an Action Memorandum (approved and signed by an Assistant Administrator (AA), justifying a new or amended Aviation Security SOP to address the specific security issue.
 - (2) All requests for Aviation Security SOP changes and other published Aviation Security-related procedures are classified as Urgent or Non-Urgent by the Procedures Branch Manager or OSO senior leadership.
 - a. *Urgent* changes will be completed on a priority timetable to be determined by SPB, in coordination with OSO senior leadership and based on the nature of the threat and other relevant factors.
 - b. *Non-Urgent* changes will be incorporated into the established update and release schedule for the specific document requiring change and development timelines will be determined by SPB.

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B. Vetting and Pre-Issuance Communications:

- (1) To ensure a rigorous, thorough, and intelligent review of Aviation Security SOP changes, TSA follows an organized process prior to issuance allowing for consideration and vetting by relevant stakeholders of all proposed procedures, directive language, and communications, as well as pertinent assumptions, risk factors, and assessment findings.
- (2) All TSA Offices and their Divisions and Branches with policy-making authority or interests possibly affecting or having impact on Aviation Security SOPs or their execution are required to initiate direct communication with SPB to:
 - a. Provide all information and details concerning any new or developing actions (policy, programs, or guidance) having impact on screening procedures (new or amended), prior to initiation of a proposal or CONOPS for those actions; and
 - b. Communicate the information within a sufficient time period (as determined by SPB), to allow appropriate review by SPB and development of resulting Aviation Security SOP changes, prior to release or dissemination.

7. PROCEDURES:

Requests for Aviation Security SOP Changes may originate from a variety of sources, including internal TSA Offices and external entities such as DHS and the U.S. General Accountability Office.

- A. All internal and external entities involved in developing, coordinating, issuing, or otherwise supporting or having impact on SOPs, SOP ICs, or published Aviation Security SOPs are responsible for ensuring that these activities are conducted in accordance with this directive and other applicable laws, regulations, and policies.
- B. All Offices within TSA submitting requests for new SOPs or amendments to current SOPs must follow the procedures and guidance described in *AD – Development and Amendment of Aviation Security Standard Operations Procedures*.
- C. All entities external to TSA seeking an Aviation Security SOP change are asked to submit a request through the TSA Administrator or a TSA AA, the Office of which would submit in accordance with Section 7.B. Requests from external entities must include the following:
 - (1) Action Memorandum signed or endorsed by the TSA Administrator or a TSA AA justifying a new or amended Aviation Security SOP to address the specific security issue;
 - (2) The following, where applicable and available:
 - a. CONOPS;
 - b. Test Plan and/or Data;
 - c. Risk Assessment; and

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d. Other supporting materials.

8. APPROVAL AND EFFECTIVE DATE: This policy is approved and effective the date of signature unless otherwise specified.

APPROVAL

Signed

March 27, 2017

Darby LaJoye
Assistant Administrator
Office of Security Operations

Date

EFFECTIVE

Date

Distribution: Offices of Acquisition Program Management, Capabilities and Requirements Analysis, Chief Counsel, Chief Risk Officer, Civil Rights and Liberties/Ombudsman and Traveler Engagement, Global Strategies, Inspections, Intelligence and Analysis, Law Enforcement/Federal Air Marshals Service, Security Operations, Security Policy and Industry Engagement, and Training and Development

Point-of-Contact: Branch Manager, OSO/OPD/SPB, SOP.Change.Requests@tsa.dhs.gov, 571-227-3075