

# Effectiveness of TSA Regulations in General Aviation within the United States



**FOR  
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# Spotting the Weaknesses: My Motivation



# Transportation Security Administration

# Gathering Information



- Findings are based upon facts gathered from several government, scholarly, and personal resources while taking account stakeholders opinions and the critiques of others.
  - Airport Security Advisory Committee Working Group
  - Government Accountability Office
  - Office of Inspector General
  - Transportation Security Administration
  - National Business Aviation Administration
  - J.J. Carafano, J. Sammon, D.J. Benny, and others

# Problem Statement



Are regulations in the GA industry efficient when one considers stakeholder perspectives, current regulation, and proposed rules?

If not, how can the process be modified to eliminate weaknesses?

# GA Definition and Importance



- **General Aviation**
  - All non-commercial and non-military aviation
  - 77% of all US air traffic
  - One person ultra-light aircraft to maxi jets
  - 200,000 aircraft
  - 19,000 facilities
  - \$102 Billion economic impact annually
- **GA security is highly debated**
  - Many opinions
  - Aim to be safe, affordable, and convenient

# State of Regulation



- **Federal Aviation Administration**
  - Oversees all aspects of aviation
- **Transportation Security Administration**
  - Authority over all modes of transportation within the US
  - Acts as an overseeing body: implementing requirements, providing guidance, enforcing regulations, offers some funding
- **Responsibility for securing GA rests with airport owners, operators, and users**
  - GA is too big and too diverse
  - Commercial sector has many needs
  - 85% GA aircraft not subject to regulation
  - Self-administered risk assessments

# Identifying the Threat



- **Unauthorized access examples in 1998 and 2010**
  - Embry-Riddle flight instructor
  - Angered single-engine pilot
- **Wildlife**
  - Often found in secured areas
- **Conflicting Opinions**
  - GAO: threat is not attractive
  - FBI: “major vulnerabilities”
  - Sammon’s critique: introduction of harmful materials

# State of the Industry



- **GAO Security Assessments at Selected Airports (2011)**
  - 13 airports (3 commercially serviced, 10 GA only)
  - 3 passed all assessed security measures (commercially served, subject to TSA regulation)
  - 3 reports of unauthorized access
  - 2 stolen planes
  - 12 had fencing, 50% of which was inadequate
  - 13 had hangar lighting, 10 did not have perimeter lighting



# Controversial Regulatory Initiatives



- **Airspace Restrictions**
  - Costly, inconvenient, little security benefit
- **Airport Watch**
  - Successful because it empowers the aviation public
- **Private Charter and Twelve Five Standard Security Programs**
  - Cumbersome programs to pilots; cover 15% GA aircraft
- **Large Aircraft Security Program**
  - Highly debated regulation applying commercial security standards to private aircraft

# Possible Problems



- **Convenience and affordability**
  - Passengers have less incentive to fly privately
  - Increased costs would be passed to customer
- **Difficult to enforce all regulations for every flight**
  - Increased regulations require more equipment and manpower, therefore, a larger cost
  - DHS notes a lack of funding would be an issue
  - Would commercial security suffer?

# Conclusions



- GA stakeholders would resist increased regulation.
- Proactive approaches and contingency plans
- Inconsistencies between airports creates weaknesses
- Increasing regulation is impractical
  - Review regulation, modify, and eliminate the unnecessary.
  - Enforce industry-wide and act upon recommendations
  - Increase enforcement and implement consequences
  - Minimum standards of security
  - Changing attitudes of stakeholders

Thank you for your attention!



Questions?

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