**Transportation
Security
Administration**

General Aviation (GA) at Reagan National Airport (DCA)
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
(Document 2 of 2 – General Information)

General

1. Who may apply?

At this time, TSA will permit the following operations access to DCA:

- Operators under a partial security program approved by TSA under 49 CFR 1544.101(b), which operate aircraft with a passenger seating configuration of 31 or more but 60 or fewer seats.
- Operators under a Private Charter Standard Security Plan (PCSSP) approved by the TSA under 49 CFR 1544.101(f), which operate aircraft with a passenger seating configuration of 61 or more seats or a maximum certificated takeoff weight of 45,500 kg (101,309 pounds) or more.
- Operators in scheduled or charter service with a Twelve Five Standard Security Plan (TFSSP) approved by TSA less than 49 CFR 1544.101(d), which operate aircraft with a maximum certificated takeoff weight of greater than 12,500 pounds.
- Aircraft operated by corporations.

2. What is the definition of a "corporate operator"?

For the purposes of implementing this rule, TSA considers a corporate operation as any operation using a paid flight crew, having an operations manual, and requiring recurring flight-crew training. Aircraft that are owned by a corporation but operated by private persons will not be considered for the initial implementation phase of this program. Scheduled and charter operations in aircraft not otherwise under a TSA security program, will not be considered for the initial phase of this program.

After one year, TSA anticipates evaluating the feasibility of allowing other GA operations into DCA.

3. Where should an operator apply to?

An operator can begin the application process by downloading information from the following websites:
- http://www.tsa.gov/public/display?theme=180
- www.nbaa.org
- http://www.nata.aero
- http://www.gama.aero/home.php

4. Can a TFSSP Aircraft Operator Security Coordinator (AOSC) and the DCA Access Standard Security Program (DASSP) Security Coordinator (CSC) be the same person with regard to TFSSP operators?

Yes. The same individual may serve both roles, however, they must have met all requirements for the position and be familiar with all the details of the DCASSP.

5. How does one reserve a slot?

- The operator must have complied with all aspects of the DASSP and been approved by TSA for this program.

- The operator must apply for and receive a tentative reservation from the FAA for a slot for each flight into and out of DCA. These slots will be given on a first come-first served basis.

- Slot reservations can be made at: www.fly.faa.gov/ecvrs/index.html

- Upon receiving the tentative slot reservation, the operator must submit to TSA a request for a DCA flight authorization. Operators must submit this request to the TSA at least 24 hours in advance of the aircraft departure. NOTE – TSA strongly encourages operators to submit flight authorization requests as early as possible to avoid delays due to potential personnel security vetting issues.

- Upon successful review by TSA, the TSA will communicate its approval to the FAA for the confirmation of the slot reservation. Once FAA finalizes the reservation, the TSA will notify the aircraft operator.

6. What are the 12 gateway airports?

- Seattle-Tacoma (SEA)
- Boston Logan (BOS)
- Houston Hobby (HOU)
- White Plains, NY (HPN)
- LaGuardia, NY (LGA)
- Chicago Midway (MDW)
- Minneapolis-St. Paul (MSP)
- West Palm Beach (PBI)
- San Francisco (SFO)
- Teterboro, NJ (TEB)
- Philadelphia (PHL)
- Lexington , KY (LEX)

7. Will additional Gateway airports be authorized in the future?

TSA has built in a measure of flexibility into the Interim Final Rule. Initially, TSA will assess how the program is proceeding. As the program matures, TSA may consider the addition of other gateway airports.

8. What will be screened by TSA?

TSA will screen the aircraft, crewmembers, passengers, and property (both accessible and checked). All crewmembers and passengers must carry a valid government issued picture identification. Expired identification media will not be accepted.

9. For safety reasons, what if an aircraft needs to land after departure from a gateway airport but before arriving at DCA. Can the flight continue to DCA after resolving the safety issue?

No. TSA will require the aircraft operator to resubmit and receive a new approved flight authorization. Additionally, the operator will be required to submit the application 24 hours prior to departure and obtain another slot reservation with FAA.

10. My flight out of DCA will have more passengers than I arrived with. How can I accommodate these passengers?

TSA requires aircraft operators to submit all potential passenger names in advance of the flight (at least 24 hours in advance of the aircraft departure). Additions to the passenger/crew manifest within 24 hours of your departure are prohibited. Manifest changes other than deletions will require completion of a new request for a slot time from the FAA and a new request for a flight authorization from TSA. The previously issued flight authorization will be forfeited.

11. What items will be considered prohibited?

TSA will use the standard prohibited items list for passengers and accessible baggage. That list can be found at: http://www.tsa.gov/public/interapp/editorial/editorial_1012.xml

TSA realizes that some items on the prohibited items list are required by FAA safety regulations. TSA screening personnel will consider each of these items on a case by case basis.

12. Can large companies train their personnel to accomplish the screening to TSA standards?

Currently, only TSA employees are authorized to conduct screening for these operations.

13. Can there be more than one permanent screening position on the field?

Any FBO at the Gateway airports are eligible to apply to become an authorized last point of departure for DCA.

14. May previous Criminal History Record Checks be used to satisfy the requirement of this program?
Yes, under certain conditions. Per CFR 49 Sect. 1562.23 (c) (1), CHRCs conducted previously to satisfy the requirements of CFR 49 Sections 1542.209, 1544.229 and 1544.230 are acceptable to TSA for DASSP purposes. In particular, CHRCs conducted for the purpose of issuing SIDA badges are acceptable for DASSP purposes.

To use for DASSP purposes a CHRC that was conducted previously for the purpose of issuing a SIDA badge, aircraft operators may provide the Aviation Security Clearinghouse (ASC) or the National Air Transportation Association (NATA) (the two organizations that do CHRCs for TSA) with the CHRC case number for the SIDA badge in question, the SIDA badge number, the last name of the person to whom the SIDA badge was issued, and the SIDA badge's expiration date. ASC or NATA will then confirm this information via the same "Results Notification" process used for other CHRCs conducted for this program. Please note that the CHRC in question must have been done while the person was in the employ of the current employer, without break. (Ex.: John Doe has worked continuously for "XYZ Air" for 10 years, and

got his CHRC 5 yrs ago. That CHRC is acceptable. Mary Doe got her CHRC while working for "XYZ Air" 2 years ago, left the company, then returned to "XYZ Air." That CHRC is not acceptable for DASSP purposes.

Aircraft Operators

1. What is the DASSP?

The DASSP is the DCA Access Standard Security Program. All aircraft operators conducting operations into and out of DCA are required to comply with the program.

2. Is a Designated Security Coordinator required?

Yes. The Designated Security Coordinator will be responsible for implementing the DASSP and other security requirements of the IFR. Each security coordinator must undergo a fingerprint based criminal history records check (CHRC) to check for disqualifying offenses described in 49 CFR 1544.229(d). This requirement is met if the Security Coordinator has undergone a CHRC in accordance with another security program described in 49 CFR 1542.209, 1544.229 or 1544.230.

- Fingerprints must be submitted to the TSA
- TSA will adjudicate the results of the CHRC
- Either the Transportation Security Clearinghouse (AAAE) or NATA Compliance Services (NATA) can be used to process the fingerprints.

The Security Coordinator must undergo a security threat assessment conducted by TSA. This will require the Security Coordinator to provide TSA with:

- Legal name, including first, middle, last; any applicable suffix, and any other names used;
- Current mailing address, including residential address if different than current mailing address;
- Date and place of birth
- Citizenship status and date of naturalization if the individual is a naturalized citizen of the United States;
- Alien registration number, if applicable.
- Social Security number is requested to expedite the threat assessment process, but is not required.

3. Are background checks or screening required for flight crew members?

Yes. Flight crews must undergo both a criminal history records check (CHRC) and an FAA records check.
- Each flightcrew member assigned to flights operating into and out of DCA must undergo a fingerprint based CHRC. This check is not required of cabin crewmembers.

    - This check is met if the flightcrew member has already undergone a fingerprint based CHRC in accordance with 49 CFR 1542.209, 1544.229 or 1544.230
    - A crewmember with disqualifying offences will not be allowed to operate aircraft into or out of DCA.

- Each flight crewmember must undergo a check of their FAA record. The flightcrew member must not have any record of the following violations or he/she will not be allowed to operate an aircraft into or out of DCA:

- A prohibited area
- A flight restriction established under 14 CFR 91.141
- Special security instructions issued under 14 CFR 99.7 (ADIZ or defense area)
- A restricted area designated under 14 CFR Part 73
- Emergency air traffic rules issued under 14.CFR 91.139 (emergency conditions)
- A temporary flight restriction designated under 14 CFR 91.137 (vicinity of a disaster or hazard area), 91.138 (national disaster area in the state of Hawaii) or 91.145 (management of aircraft operations in the vicinity of aerial demonstrations and major sporting events)
  - An area designated under 14 CFR 91.143 (flight limitations in the proximity of space flight operations)

Additionally, all flight crewmembers must submit to a TSA name based check prior to departure for DCA.

4. Will TFSSP or PCSSP operators need to sign an additional non-disclosure form?

Yes. An operator will have to sign a new Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA) in order to receive a DASSP.

5. How will Security Directives (SD) be transmitted to operators?

FBOs and operators complying with the requirements of the DCA Access Program will be given access to SDs through TSA's secure web board.

6. Most charter/corporate aircraft do not have inaccessible cargo areas which could be used to transport unloaded declared firearms in "checked" baggage. TFSSP operators have dealt with this issue by keeping a secured lockbox and/or trigger locks (to which only the pilot have keys) as a means of preventing use of a firearm during flight. Will this be an acceptable means of compliance for the DASSP as well?

No. Only aircraft without inaccessible cargo areas people and bags will be screened in accordance with carry-on standards. The only firearms authorized onboard aircraft operating under the requirements of the DASSP will be those carried by the Armed Security Officer. All other weapons are prohibited.

7. Are two pilots required?

No.

8. Have we considered establishing a helicopter service between Dulles and D.C.? Are there any slot requirements for helicopters?

No. At this time only those aircraft that have been screened in compliance with the DASSP at one of the Gateway airports will be permitted to access DCA. Helicopter operators must comply with all DASSP requirements in order to be authorized to access DCA.

9. If a corporate fleet is already holds a Transportation Security Administration Access Certificate (TSAAC), does that have any bearing on satisfying DASSP registration / participation requirements?

Companies who are TSAAC holders in good standing are well positioned for approval of their initial operator applications. In addition, the security improvements inherent in the TSAAC program have prepared the company for implementation of the DASSP. However, TSAAC companies must comply with and be approved by TSA as operators under the DASSP. Only operators complying with the requirements of the DASSP are authorized into DCA.

10. Can they change the aircraft after submitting their request in case a mechanical problem occurs with the original aircraft?

No. Any change to the approved flight authorization for operations into DCA would restart the 24 hour clock.

11. Can operators have access to the No-Fly lists so that they ensure they don't allow an unauthorized person to be manifested on a planned flight?

TSA will be conducting name based checks for all passengers and crew aboard aircraft accessing DCA at all times.

12. Will the confidentiality of a passenger's private information (particularly their names) be kept secure by TSA at all times?

TSA will secure personal information against unauthorized use through a layered security approach involving procedural and information security safeguards. The data will be encrypted using National Institute of Science and Technology (NIST) and Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) standards and industry best practices when being transferred between secure workstations. Only TSA employees and contractors with proper security credentials and passwords will have access to this information to conduct the security threat assessment. Moreover, all TSA and assigned contractor staff receive DHS-mandated privacy training on the use and disclosure of personal data.

13. Some of the aircraft have cargo holds (where the checked baggage is to be stowed) that can be accessed by passengers in the cabin. Does TSA screen all baggage using the "carry-on" prohibited items list versus the "checked baggage" item list for this situation?

Any areas that are accessible to passenger in flight will be screened for items that are on the carry on prohibited items list.

14. How will users know which FBOs at gateway airports are approved, will the TSA be providing a list to the public as they complete their approvals?

Yes. TSA will provide lists of approved FBOs as well as approved Armed Security Officers.

15. Will this rule allow the return of based general aviation aircraft to DCA?

Currently, TSA has not approved based aircraft at DCA. However, TSA has built in a measure of flexibility into the Interim Final Rule. Initially TSA will assess how the program is proceeding. As the program matures TSA will review the measures currently in the Rule.

16. How often must passengers be vetted if they regularly fly into DCA (each flight, each month, each year)?

Every time a passenger submits their name in a flight authorization request they will be vetted by TSA.

17. What methods will the TSA employ to receive payment of the required fees?

Operators will remit fees for the security threat assessments and payment for the costs TSA expends in carrying out this program to Signature Flight Support at DCA. Signature will then be responsible for transmitting these fees to TSA.

18. Will Maryland Three vetted pilots also be vetted for DCA?

No. All pilots must be vetted through the DCA Access Program. In addition only certain charter and corporate operators will be permitted to participate in the program. Private operations will be considered at a later time.

Fixed Based Operators

1. Are all the portal airports subject to Part 1542?

Yes. All of the Gateway airports, except Teterboro are already TSA approved 1542 airports. Teterboro was selected due to the large number of flights it serviced going into DCA prior to 9-11. This airport will be supported by TSA personnel from Newark Airport.

2. Will multiple FBO's at a gateway airport be permitted to participate?

Yes. Any FBO at a gateway airport may choose to participate in the program; however the FBO must have adequate/dedicated areas to allow for screening functions as discussed in the FBO Security Program (FBOSP). Additionally, TSA screeners will conduct all passenger and crew screening.

3. As with the non-TFSSP aircraft operators, how will FBO's obtain SDs?

FBOs and operators complying with the requirements of the DCA Access Security Programs will be given access to SDs through TSA's secure web board.

4. Are there any restrictions/requirements for the FBO related to how much they may charge a DASSP operator for security services provided under the FBOSP?

Any security fees related to TSA screener resources are outlined in the Interim Final Rule and will be collected only by Signature Flight Support upon arrival at DCA.

5. Can an aircraft operator located at a gateway airport comply with the requirements of the FBO Security Program in order to process their own aircraft?

No. For security and efficiency purposes only established FBOs at the gateway airports may participate.

6. Can these "security areas" be turned on and off?

Yes. TSA understands the reality of ramp space constraints on the GA portion of an airport and will require a "sterile" space only when servicing a flight operating into DCA. FBO operators will have to designate an area in which an aircraft or passengers can be located in order that they remain segregated from other unscreened people, baggage, or aircraft. Federal Security Directors will work with FBO operators at the Gateway airports to establish such areas.

7. There may be instances where an FBOSP is also an air charter operator subject to the TFSSP and perhaps complying with the DASSP. Are the training modules required for the FBO security coordinator in addition to or lieu of the training required by the other program(s)?

The DCA Interim Final Rule (IFR) specifies that any aircraft operation into or out of DCA under the IFR must be conducted in accordance with the DASSP and any other TSA-approved security program that covers that operation. If any requirements of the DASSP conflict with the requirements of another TSA-approved security program, such as a Twelve-Five Standard Security Program (TFSSP) or Private Charter Standard Security Program (PCSSP), the aircraft operation into or out of DCA must be conducted in accordance with the requirements of the DASSP.

8. If a corporation or FBO already has screening equipment, can that be used?

Only TSA approved equipment may be used for screening purposes.

Armed Security Officer (ASO)

1. How do I apply to become an ASO?

In order to apply, you must first be nominated by a Fixed Base Operator (FBO) or aircraft operator who has completed an application to the DCA access program. The nomination form is located on this web-site and completed forms should be faxed to 571-227-1943. After review of the nomination qualified candidates will receive additional application material from TSA.

2. What are the eligibility requirements for participating in the Armed Security Officer Program (ASOP)?

To be eligible to participate in the ASOP, a person must meet, at a minimum, the following criteria:
- Be at least 21 years of age;
- Be free from any physical condition which might adversely affect the exercise of the requirements of the position;

- Be free from any emotional or mental condition, including any personality disorder or job-relevant psychopathology which might adversely affect the exercise of the requirements of the position;
- Obtain and hold an FAA class II medical certificate.
- Be a U.S. citizen;
- Be an active Law Enforcement Officer (LEO) in good standing; a qualified retired LEO; or a qualified former LEO in good standing with a minimum of four years law enforcement experience as defined by TSA;
- Have successfully completed a certificated program of basic law enforcement training conducted by an entity authorized to train persons to perform as a law enforcement officer;
- Not have been convicted of any domestic violence offence; and
- Not have had an authorization, deputation, or commission revoked by TSA

To be selected for ASO training, an applicant must:

- Provide and certify the truthfulness of all information, documents, and records required by TSA;
- Consent to and successfully complete any background check, investigation, or assessment required by TSA;
- Successfully complete the on-line application and selection process required by TSA, including the physical, cognitive, medical and firearms assessments; and
- Sign and comply with any nondisclosure agreement required by TSA.
- Arrange scheduled time off to attend training, arrive for training on time, and complete any prerequisite training before class begins.

3. Who is considered to be an active LEO in good standing?

The IFR defines a qualified active LEO as "an employee of a governmental agency who: (1) is authorized by law to engage in or supervise the prevention, detection, investigation, or prosecution of, or the incarceration of any person for, any violation of law; (2) has statutory powers of arrest; (3) is authorized by the agency to carry a firearm; (4) is not the subject of any disciplinary action by the agency; (5) is not under the influence of alcohol or another intoxicating or hallucinatory drug or substance; and (6) is not prohibited from Federal law from receiving a firearm."

4. Who is considered to be a qualified retired LEO?

The IFR defines a qualified retired LEO as an individual who: "(1) retired in good standing from service with a public agency as a law enforcement officer, other than for reasons of mental instability; (2) before such retirement, was authorized by law to engage in or supervise the prevention, detection, investigation, or prosecution of, or the incarceration of any person for, any violation of law, and had statutory powers of arrest; (3) before such retirement, was regularly employed as a law enforcement officer for an aggregate of 15 years or more, or retired from service with such agency, after completing any applicable probationary period of such service, due to a service-connected disability, as determined by such agency; (4) has a non-forfeitable right to benefits under the retirement plan of the agency; (5) is not under the influence of alcohol or another intoxicating or hallucinatory drug or substance; and (6) is not prohibited by Federal law from receiving a firearm."

5. What are the qualifications for individuals other than active and retired law enforcement officers?

Under the IFR, individuals other than active and retired LEOs in good standing must meet qualifications established by TSA, in coordination with the Federal Air Marshal Service (FAMS). At a minimum, these individuals must not be under the influence of alcohol or another intoxicating or hallucinatory drug or substance and must not be prohibited by Federal law from receiving a firearm. Under current ASO program guidelines, such an individual must also be a qualified former LEO in good standing with a minimum of four years law enforcement experience as defined by TSA.

6. Are Federal Flight Deck Officers (FFDOs) eligible to become an ASO?

An FFDO may be eligible to become an ASO only if they meet all ASO eligibility requirements, including qualifying law enforcement experience. Service as an FFDO does not currently constitute qualifying law enforcement experience. FFDOs are not employed by a governmental agency, and their statutory authority does not provide for them to exercise the powers and authorities defined in relation to an active, retired, or qualified former LEO in good standing. An FFDO who is authorized as an ASO shall not serve as a flight crewmember (i.e., PIC or SIC) on any flight to which they are assigned as an ASO.

7. How does the ASO selection process work?

Applicants are selected at the discretion of TSA. Generally, an applicant must be nominated by an authorized FBO or aircraft operator; provide and certify the truthfulness of all information required by TSA; consent to and successfully complete any required assessment or background check (including a credit check and verification of employment); sign and comply with any required nondisclosure agreement; agree to comply with the Armed Security Officer Program (ASOP) issued by TSA, and arrange scheduled time off to attend training. If the applicant is an active LEO, he or she will also need to provide written authorization from their department or agency to participate in the program.

8. Where will an operator go to obtain the services of an Armed Security Officer?

An ASO may request to be included on a list of qualified ASOs that will be provided to FBOs, aircraft operators, and security companies that request the list.

9. Who is responsible for returning an Armed Security Officer back to his home base?

TSA assumes no responsibility for returning an Armed Security Officer back to their home base. Travel to and from home base is an issue between the ASO and the employer.

10. Some corporate officers have executive protection – can they qualify as Armed Security Officers?

Corporate security personnel that meet the ASO qualifications listed above may apply to TSA to become an approved ASO.

11. How does the local TSA know if the armed LEO who shows up is legitimate and has satisfied all the training requirements?

TSA will keep a database of certified Armed Security Officers and will issue TSA credentials. Approved Armed Security Officers will be vetted on the operator's DCA flight authorization. At the time of screening, TSA will verify/validate the Armed Security Officer's identity.

12. Are there any recurring requirements for participation in the ASO program?

Yes. Persons participating in the ASO Program will be required to maintain, at a minimum, an FAA Class II medical certificate, which must be renewed on an annual basis. In addition, ASOs must re-qualify with their firearm at an interval specified by TSA. Finally, ASOs must undergo re-certification every five (5) years.

13. What is an FAA Class II medical certificate, and how can I obtain one?

The FAA defines a medical certificate as "acceptable evidence of physical fitness on a form prescribed by the Administrator." A second-class airman medical certificate is valid for one (1) year plus the remainder of the days in the month of examination. Complete information about required medical standards and how to obtain an FAA medical certificate is located on the FAA website at: http://www.cami.jccbi.gov/aam-300/amcdfaq.html.

14. Must I live or work within the area in which the FBO, aircraft operator or gateway airport is located in order to serve as an ASO?

No. An authorized ASO does not have to live or work within the area in which the FBO, aircraft operator, or gateway airport is located. In addition, an ASO may perform work for other authorized FBOs or aircraft operators operating out of any gateway airport.

15. What are the training requirements for becoming an ASO?

ASO training will consist of a mandatory two day training course. The course will be available at each one of the 21 FAMS field offices. Training topics will cover aviation operations, basic tactics, briefing and reporting procedures, surveillance and counter surveillance, ASOP procedures, and basic defensive tactics. ASOs must also qualify using a firearm and ammunition approved by TSA.

16. Are there any application costs?

Yes. There is a cost of $37.00 for being fingerprinted. Each applicant must arrange for payment of the cost with their sponsoring FBO or aircraft operator.

17. Is there a cost for the training? If so, does TSA pay for it?

Yes, there is approximately a $500 fee associated with the training program. Payment of the cost will be the responsibility of the participant or their sponsoring FBO or aircraft operator. In addition to the course cost, each participant must also pay for their own travel, lodging (if necessary), meals, and ammunition.

18. Will TSA provide firearms and ammunition to ASOs?

No. An ASO must provide his or her own firearm, ammunition, and related accessories in order to participate in the ASO program. Equipment must be of a type approved by TSA.

19. What are the handguns and ammunition approved for use in the ASO program?

The following handguns and ammunition are currently approved for use in the ASO program:

  Authorized Handguns**:**
  1. Beretta Model 92F (9mm);
  2. Beretta Model 96D Brigadier Service Pistol (.40 caliber);
  3. Glock Pistol Models 17, 19, 21, 22, 23, 26, and 27 (9mm, .40 and .45 calibers);

4. Heckler & Koch P2000 (.40 caliber);
5. Heckler & Koch USP40 Compact Law Enforcement Model Pistol (.40 caliber);
6. Sig-Sauer P226 Pistol (9mm and .40 caliber);
7. Sig-Sauer P228 Pistol (9mm);
8. Sig-Sauer P229 Pistol (.357 Sig and .40 caliber);
9. Sig-Sauer P229 DAK Pistol (.40 caliber);
10. Sig-Sauer P239 Pistol (.357 Sig and .40 calibers);
11. Smith & Wesson Model 6906 Pistol (9mm); and
12. Sturm, Ruger & Co. Pistol Models P93 and P95 (9mm);

Authorized Ammunition:
1. 9mm 124 grain, jacketed hollow point (JHP)
2. .357 Sig 125 grain JHP
3. .40 caliber 155 grain JHP
4. .45 caliber 185 grain JHP

20. Does the aircraft operator have to pay for an ASO's return back to their home base upon completion of an authorized flight into DCA?

TSA assumes no responsibility for returning an Armed Security Officer back to their home base. Travel to and from home base is an issue between the ASO and the employer.

21. Does being authorized as an ASO confer Federal law enforcement authority?

No. An ASO is authorized solely to protect the flight deck, passengers, and crew of authorized GA aircraft flying into and out of Washington Reagan National Airport (DCA) with force, including deadly force, from acts that might cause such aircraft to become a weapon of mass destruction.

22. How will TSA verify that an ASO is legitimate and has satisfied all the training requirements?

ASOs will be vetted on the waiver issued to an operator that authorizes them to conduct a flight in and out of DCA. TSA will also issue credentials to ASOs that will be used to verify/validate their identity at the time of screening. An operator may not use an ASO if notified by TSA that the ASO may pose a security threat.