

Government Actions

The federal government has taken an active role in ensuring the security of general aviation with a multi-layered system of security procedures to identify and thwart an act of terror before it occurs. A few measures taken by the federal government include:

Airspace

- **Flight restrictions and “No Fly Zones.”** Extensive flight restriction zones are in place around Washington DC and 15 additional locations nationwide. Restrictions are commonly placed around traveling dignitaries, select military installations, sport stadiums, and nuclear facilities. These restrictions are enforced through a multi-agency cooperation that includes the Transportation Security Administration, U.S. Customs, Secret Service, and the Federal Aviation Administration.

Pilots

- **Advanced screening of Pilot Databases.** Based on TSA information as well as that provided by other security agencies, information in the FAA’s databases of current pilots and student pilots is reviewed for links to known or potential terrorists.
- **Requirement to Carry Photo ID.** An FAA requirement, adopted in October 2002, requires a pilot to carry government-issued photo identification.
- **New Airman Certificate.** In July 2003, the Department of Transportation began to issue new difficult-to-counterfeit pilot certificates. The new certificates help pave the way for future inclusion of biometric information.
- **Restrictions for Foreign Pilots.** Includes background checks for individuals seeking to receive a U.S. pilot certificate on the basis of a foreign pilot certificate, as well as mandates for the TSA to conduct background checks for non-U.S. citizens seeking flight training in the United States.

Operations

- **Charter Flight Security Program.** The TSA established a rule for certain aircraft operators, typically business jets, to carry out additional security requirements specific to their operations.
- **Flight School Security.** In January 2002, the FAA issued a number of actions addressing security for flight schools. These actions include close monitoring of student pilots, control of aircraft keys, ensuring aircraft are locked, and positive identification of students and aircraft renters.

TSA General Aviation Airport Security Guidelines

Recently the TSA issued “Security Guidelines for General Aviation Airports.” The 48-page document is intended to address vulnerabilities and ensure that general aviation is not attractive for misuse by terrorists. As a cornerstone to the guidelines, the TSA recommends use of AOPA’s Airport Watch Program and provide security recommendations for the following aviation areas:

- Personnel
- Aircraft
- Airports/Facilities
- Surveillance
- Security Procedures and Communications
- Specialty Operations



AOPA has helped distribute the TSA guidelines directly to airport operators, pilots and local leaders, including urging the National League of Cities (NCL) to distribute the information to some 18,000 cities, towns, and villages. The TSA guidelines are available at: http://www.tsa.gov/public/interapp/editorial/editorial_1113.xml

Industry Actions



AOPA AIRPORT WATCH

By their nature, general aviation airports are like a suburban neighborhood. At a general aviation airport rows of homes are replaced with rows of airplanes - most no heavier than a Honda Civic. Neighbors know neighbors and everyone does their part to ensure the security of their airplane as well as the security of their neighbor's airplane.

That is precisely why AOPA worked in conjunction with TSA to launch AOPA's Airport Watch program. The Airport Watch program includes warning signs for airports, informational literature, and training videotape to educate pilots and airport employees as to how security of their airports and aircraft can be enhanced. Department of Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge calls Airport Watch, "a great example of government and the private sector working together to secure the homeland."

AOPA Airport Watch is supported by a centralized toll free hotline (**1-866-GA-SECURE**) provided by the government who operates the reporting system through the National Response Center. Members of Congress and TSA officials have hailed Airport Watch as a "blueprint" for government/industry partnerships in other transportation modes.

Informing Pilots

Timely information concerning newly imposed flight restrictions is critical for pilots. As the voice for general aviation, AOPA has taken a leadership role in getting information concerning airspace restrictions directly to pilots. Already in 2004, AOPA has sent out 103 e-mail bulletins to more than 2.2 million subscribers informing them of airspace restrictions. AOPA's broadcast of pertinent and timely information is critical to ensuring pilots have the information they need to avoid and plan around flight restrictions.

Help Get The Word Out

Much has been done to improve general aviation security however; we need your help in spreading the word! Please distribute and promote programs like AOPA Airport Watch and the TSA's "Security Guidelines for General Aviation Airports." Help us ensure your constituents and airport operators are remaining vigilant and security minded. AOPA and the aviation community will continue to work with the government on sensible security solutions. By working together we can continue the growth of general aviation in a safe and secure environment.

*If you have any questions on general aviation, please contact the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association at
(202) 737-7950*

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