



Committee on  
**HOMELAND SECURITY**  
Chairman Michael McCaul

*Opening Statement*

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**Statement of Subcommittee Chairman John Katko (R-N.Y.)  
Subcommittee on Transportation Security**

**“A Review of Access Control Measures at Our Nation’s Airports, Part II”**

**Remarks as Prepared**

I would like to welcome everyone to today’s hearing on airport access controls which serves as a follow-up to the Subcommittee’s first hearing of the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress on this very important topic.

At the outset, I would like to express my support for President Obama’s announcement of his intent to nominate Vice Admiral Peter Neffenger, current Vice Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard, to be the next Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration. TSA provides vital security to protect our nation’s transportation systems and it is imperative that the agency is equipped with the necessary leadership to ensure that it is operating in the most effective and efficient manner. I urge the Senate to act quickly on the nomination of Vice Admiral Neffenger to be TSA Administrator.

A number of serious security breaches by employees at major U.S. airports in recent months have highlighted the need for the Transportation Security Administration, the airport stakeholder community, and this Subcommittee to take a hard look at how we can work together to improve access controls and employee vetting at our nation’s airports. I hope today’s hearing can provide a positive and productive dialogue on how this can be accomplished.

In January of this year, Acting Administrator Carraway requested that the Aviation Security Advisory Committee conduct a review of airport access control measures. Today, with the final report in hand, the Subcommittee intends to better understand the ASAC’s findings and discuss the feasibility of the recommendations.

The ASAC report included 28 recommendations to improve airport employee access control in five general areas including: (1) security screening and inspection; (2) vetting of employees and security threat assessment; (3) internal controls and auditing of airport-issued credentials; (4) risk-based security for higher risk populations and intelligence; and (5) security awareness and vigilance.

I am eager to hear how TSA and the airport community plan on improving the employee vetting process for individuals who have access to secure and sterile parts of the airport, as well as how the screening of these employees when they come to work can be improved.

In response to Acting Administrator Carraway's request, the Aviation Security Advisory Committee created a working group tasked with analyzing the adequacy of existing security measures, as well as issuing recommendations on what additional measures could be implemented to improve employee access controls.

One of the initial areas the working group examined was the practicality of conducting 100% employee screening. Rather than 100% screening, the working group believes TSA should expand random employee screening and inspection under its playbook operations. I am pleased that TSA has already begun increasing the random screening for aviation employees at our nation's airports. I look forward to hearing about the methodology TSA uses to determine the frequency of conducting such screening, as well as whether that methodology is effective in providing airport employees with the expectation that they will be subject to screening while working at an airport.

Today, we have the Assistant Administrator of TSA as well as two representatives from the airport community to address how those recommendations can be implemented at airports nationwide.

I applaud the efforts of the Aviation Security Advisory Committee in finding ways in which access controls at our nation's airports can be further improved through the cooperation of TSA and industry stakeholders. Further, I look forward to having a meaningful discussion with TSA and airport stakeholders on what can be done going forward to improve employee vetting and screening for those with access to sensitive and sterile parts of airports.

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