



TSA's Reimbursable Screening Services Program

Fiscal Year 2021 Annual Performance Report

January 20, 2022

Fiscal Year 2021 Report to Congress



**Homeland
Security**

Transportation Security Administration

Message from the Administrator

January 20, 2022

I am pleased to present the following report, “TSA’s Reimbursable Screening Services Program,” which was prepared by the Transportation Security Administration (TSA).

This report was compiled pursuant to the Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act (P.L. 116-6). It describes the activities of TSA’s Reimbursable Screening Services Program (RSSP) and certifies that the implementation does not reduce security or efficiency of screening services already conducted at the primary passenger terminals of participating airports.

This report is provided to the following Members of Congress:

The Honorable Rosa L. DeLauro
Chair, House Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member, House Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Chairman, Senate Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Vice Chairman, Senate Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Bennie G. Thompson
Chairman, House Committee on Homeland Security

The Honorable John Katko
Ranking Member, House Committee on Homeland Security

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Chair, Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

The Honorable Roger Wicker
Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation



Inquiries relating to this report may be directed to me at (571) 227-2801 or to TSA's Legislative Affairs office at (571) 227-2717.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David P. Pekoske". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent 'D' at the beginning.

David P. Pekoske
Administrator

Executive Summary

Congress authorized an RSSP pilot in FY 2019, under which TSA may provide reimbursed screening services outside of an existing airport passenger terminal screening area where screening services normally are provided, pursuant to TSA's annual appropriations. TSA is required to submit a report annually on the status of the pilot that includes:

- The amount of personnel and nonpersonnel costs reimbursement that TSA received from each entity in the pilot program for the preceding fiscal year;
- An analysis of the results of the pilot program;
- TSA staffing changes created at the primary passenger screening checkpoints and baggage screening as a result of the pilot program; and
- Any unintended consequences created by the pilot program.

Prior to FY 2021, TSA executed reimbursable service agreements at two locations: Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) and Minneapolis St. Paul International Airport (MSP). At LAX, the security and/or efficiency of screening services already provided in the primary passenger terminals were not reduced. Additionally, TSA staffing at LAX primary screening locations was not reduced. The agreement with MSP was made before the Coronavirus Disease 2019 pandemic drastically reduced passenger volume. Screening at this location was suspended temporarily pending a return to sustainable passenger volume. On the basis of the timing of the suspension of services at MSP, MSP did not receive reimbursable services pursuant to the executed agreement.

During FY 2021, four separate entities requested general information on TSA's RSSP and two applied to participate. The two airports that applied were the City of Atlanta Department of Aviation at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport (ATL) and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey at LaGuardia Airport (LGA). TSA approved the ATL request, but a third-party entity paused the request for review. The LGA request is pending a decision at TSA headquarters.



Homeland Security

TSA’s Reimbursable Screening Services Program

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I. Legislative Requirement

This document is submitted pursuant to the Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Appropriations Act (P.L. 116-6), which states:

Sec. 225. (a) Subject to the provisions of this section, the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration (hereafter in this section referred to as “the Administrator”) may conduct a pilot program to provide screening services outside of an existing primary passenger terminal screening area where screening services are currently provided or would be eligible to be provided under the Transportation Security Administration’s annually appropriated passenger screening program as a primary passenger terminal screening area. ...

... (h) The Administrator shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate—

... (3) annual performance reports, by not later than 60 days after the end of each fiscal year in which the pilot programs are in operation, including—

(A) the amount of reimbursement received by the Transportation Security Administration from each entity in the pilot program for the preceding fiscal year, delineated by personnel and non-personnel costs;

(B) an analysis of the results of the pilot programs corresponding to the evaluation plan required under paragraph (2);

(C) any Transportation Security Administration staffing changes created at the primary passenger screening checkpoints and baggage screening as a result of the pilot program; and

(D) any other unintended consequences created by the pilot program.

II. Background

Through the FY 2019 DHS Appropriations Act, Congress authorized the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) Reimbursable Screening Services Program (RSSP). This pilot program allows TSA to enter into reimbursable services agreements with up to eight TSA-regulated entities, such as the airport operator, to provide screening services at locations other than primary passenger terminal screening areas. Under the reimbursable services agreement, selected participants will reimburse TSA fully for all personnel and nonpersonnel costs associated with providing these additional security screening services.

TSA publicly released information on the establishment of its RSSP on June 3, 2019, on its public website (<https://www.tsa.gov/for-industry/reimbursable-screening-services-program>), and shared guidance with industry partners through various communication fora. TSA's implementation plan included criteria to evaluate requests for participation, including impacts to TSA operations, funding reliability, communities, health and safety, and other agency support, as well as feasibility and timelines.

III. Discussion

Before the RSSP pilot was authorized, TSA provided temporary security screening services at Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) with U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP). With congressional RSSP authorization, TSA determined that LAX temporary screening services met the criteria for the RSSP and executed a reimbursable agreement with LAX. TSA later executed a reimbursable agreement with Minneapolis St. Paul International Airport (MSP).

LAX – LAX’s Private Suite (PS) operates from a facility outside of the primary passenger screening areas in LAX. Through the reimbursable services agreement, PS provides screening services to business executives, celebrities, and other high-profile travelers.

TSA used its implementation plan criteria to review the proficiency of screening operations in LAX’s PS pilot. The review found that the pilot:

- Has no negative impact on normal TSA operations,
- Has provided TSA with reliable funding,
- Provides a safe and healthy operation,
- Is supported by local CBP operations, and
- Was executed and operated in a timely manner, as agreed upon by all parties.

MSP – At MSP, an RSSP passenger screening checkpoint is located on a terminal walkway connecting the InterContinental Hotel to the main airport terminal. The RSSP proposal from MSP was evaluated using the same criteria as LAX, and the RSSP agreement with MSP was completed just before the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic drastically reduced passenger volume. As a result, RSSP screening at this location never was initiated, and the program was suspended pending a return to sustainable passenger volume.

During FY 2021, TSA received two additional requests to participate in its RSSP at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport (ATL) and LaGuardia Airport (LGA). By comparison, in FY 2020, there were 18 requests for review; the decrease is likely because of fluctuating passenger throughput caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. TSA approved the ATL request, but a third-party entity since has paused the request for review. The LGA request is pending decision at TSA headquarters.

Reimbursement Received by TSA

TSA negotiated estimated costs for both LAX and MSP before the COVID-19 request for reduced services. In FY 2021, TSA received \$364,462 from LAX for reimbursement of personnel costs; actual reimbursement expenditures will be adjusted per the agreement. There were no nonpersonnel costs required for reimbursement in FY 2021.

TSA did not receive any reimbursement under the executed agreement at MSP because of the timing of the suspension of services as a result of COVID-19.

The Future of the Program

TSA discovered that starting reimbursable operations with interested entities will take more time than initially expected because of multiple complexities, such as required infrastructure renovation or buildout and budgetary constraints.

TSA's authorization to pilot reimbursable screening programs ends in September 2023.

IV. Conclusion

The impact of COVID-19 on TSA's RSSP is substantial because reduced passenger volumes may cause interested entities to pause their pursuit of participation. Of the two entities with executed agreements, one has suspended the program and the other is experiencing a significant reduction in the number of passengers requiring TSA screening services.

In the future, as air travel recovers, TSA projects renewed program growth and expects that innovative concepts being discussed with interested parties will continue to have a positive effect on TSA screening operations, its industry partners, and the traveling public.

Appendix: Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Definition
ATL	City of Atlanta Department of Aviation at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport
CBP	U.S. Customs and Border Protection
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
FY	Fiscal Year
LAX	Los Angeles International Airport
LGA	Port Authority of New York and New Jersey at LaGuardia Airport
MSP	Minneapolis St. Paul International Airport
PS	(LAX's) Private Suite
RSSP	Reimbursable Screening Services Program
TSA	Transportation Security Administration