

Transportation Security Administration (TSA)

Customer Service Branch

TSA Contact Center

Using TSA Contact Information to Improve Customer Service

October 1, 2014 through September 30, 2015

Introduction

Providing an avenue by which passengers can provide feedback to or ask questions of TSA is an integral part of the Transportation Security Administration's (TSA) customer service program. The TSA Contact Center (TCC) is part of TSA's Office of Civil Rights and Liberties, Ombudsman and Traveler Engagement (CRL/OTE). This office is responsible for ensuring that TSA employees and the traveling public are treated in a fair and lawful manner, consistent with federal laws and regulations protecting privacy, affording redress, governing freedom of information, and prohibiting discrimination and reprisal, while promoting diversity and inclusion.

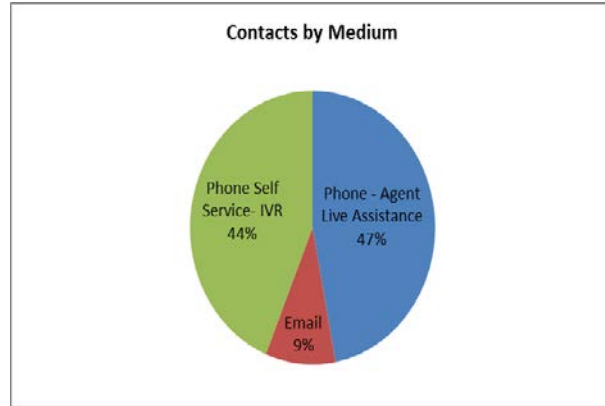
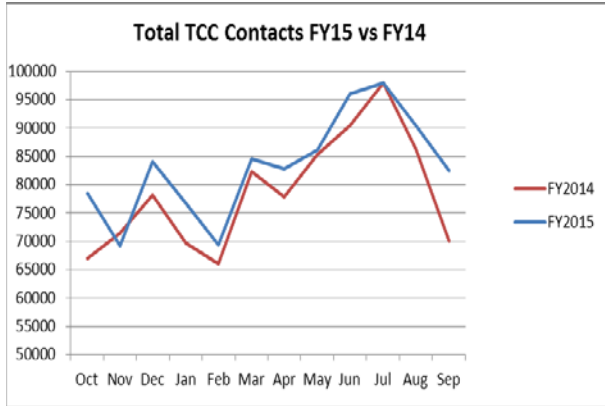
TCC responds to large volumes of non-media public inquiries and complaints and communicates accurate, consistent messages regarding general organizational information and the impact of transportation security policy on the traveling public. Travelers may contact a TCC customer service representative Monday through Friday 8 a.m. – 11 p.m. and weekends/holidays 9 a.m. – 8 p.m. EST. Travelers may also contact TCC via e-mail. In addition, TCC maintains a self-service menu of frequently asked questions on our Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system, which is available 24 hours a day/7 days a week.

TCC hears directly from the public about the challenges they face when traveling; the TCC assists in addressing a traveler inquiry by responding directly or directing the inquiry to the appropriate airport or office for action and as appropriate, relating complaints and concerns to the attention of TSA leadership.

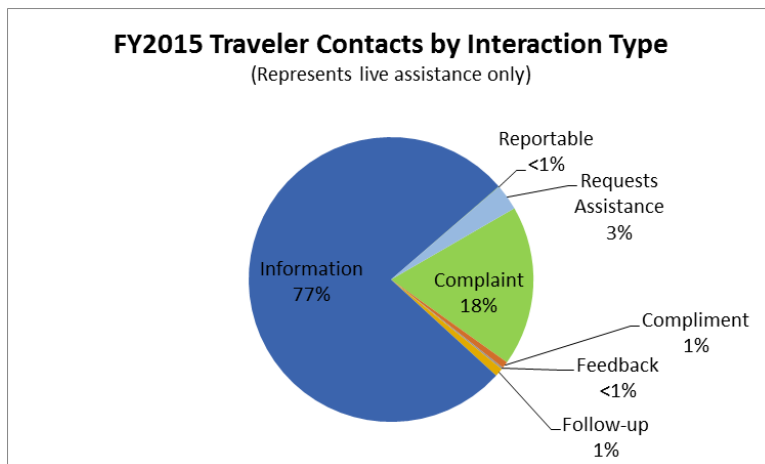
The information contained in this report is a consolidation of information from TSA's main incoming portal for passengers: The TSA Contact Center.

Overall Contacts

From October 2014 through September 2015, the TCC received a total of 993,742 contacts via email, agent live assistance and self-service using the IVR. The diagram below reflects the volume of contacts Fiscal Year (FY) 2015 compared to FY 2014 as well as the medium used.



TCC categorizes all contacts in two ways: 1) Subject Category and 2) Interaction Type. There are seven interaction types that refer to the sentiment behind the caller’s inquiry: 1) Request for Information; 2) Complaint; 3) Compliment; 4) Report of a Security Vulnerability; 5) Request for Assistance, 6) Feedback and 7) Follow-up. From October 2014 through September 30, 2015, 44% of individuals who contacted TCC obtained a response to their inquiry via the self-service menus. Of the remaining 56% of contacts, 77% were requests for information, 18% were complaints and 3% were requests for assistance. The remaining interaction types contributed approximately 1% each.



The subject category for TSA contacts references the topic of the contact, such as passenger screening, air cargo, TSA employment, etc. TCC maintains a list of approximately 46 primary subject categories with over 310 sub-categories.

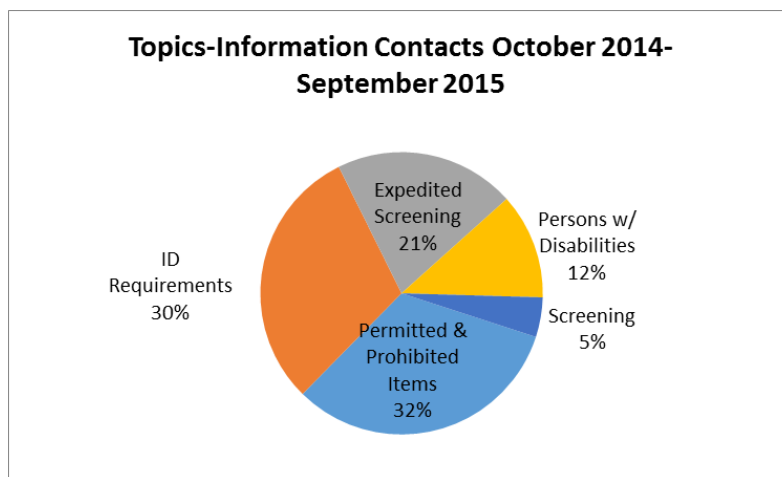
The top topics of TCC traveler contacts vary based on seasonal travel or implementation of new screening procedures. Overall, contacts for October 1, 2014, through September 30, 2015, were on the following topics:

TCC Contacts – Topics	
Permitted & Prohibited Items	25%
Expedited Screening	21%
ID Requirements	20%
Persons w/Disabilities	13%
Screening	4%

Requests for Information

As previously mentioned, 44% of the calls received by TCC are handled via the self-service menu during normal business hours, implying that, although the caller could speak to a live agent, they were able to obtain the answer to their inquiry via the self-service information provided. Passengers may also receive assistance from a Customer Service Agent via phone or email.

The chart shown below represents the breakdown of informational contacts received by TCC either via live agent or e-mail. Information requests on prohibited and permitted items made up 32% of the inquiries for this period. These include questions from travelers requesting clarification on items that can be carried through the passenger screening checkpoint or are limited to checked baggage, including inquiries on electronic devices, food and beverages, and medically necessary items. Identification document inquiries made up 30% of information requests—an ID being lost or stolen, a name change due to marriage, or documents required for an infant, etc. Approximately 21% of information requests were inquiries about the TSA Pre✓[®] program – how to enroll, eligibility requirements, participating airports. An additional 12% of inquiries were from passengers with disabilities or medical conditions and 5% were from passengers inquiring about the screening process in general.

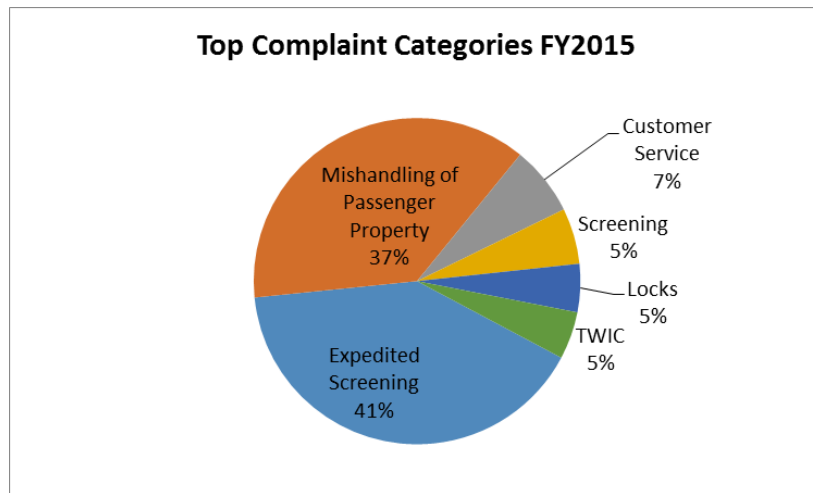


How the TCC Handles Complaints

From October 2014 through September 30, 2015, (discounting calls that have been dropped or abandoned) the TCC received 90,383 traveler complaints (live assistance only). TSA provides several options for travelers to lodge complaints with the agency. While passengers may voice their concerns immediately to a supervisor at the passenger screening checkpoint, passengers may also send e-mail to or telephone the Contact Center, or they may use the Contact form on the TSA website. All traveler discontent with TSA over a specific travel/screening experience is filed as a complaint. All complaints related to general TSA policy, which do not involve a specific travel experience, are categorized as “feedback.”

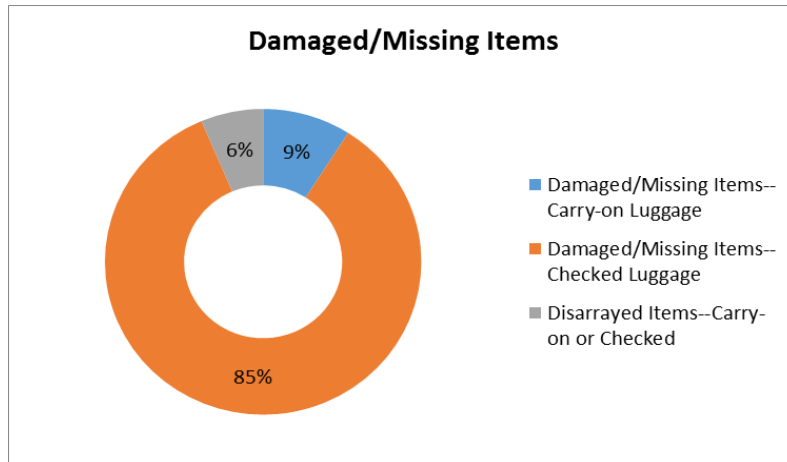
The TCC forwards passenger complaints to the appropriate airport for action. If the complaint is related to discrimination including a disability, the complaint is sent to the Disability and Multicultural Division for investigation.

The chart below displays the subject matter of the most common complaints received by TSA :
1) Expedited Passenger Screening Program; 2) Mishandling of Passenger Property; 3) Customer Service; 4) Screening; 5) Locks and 6) Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC).



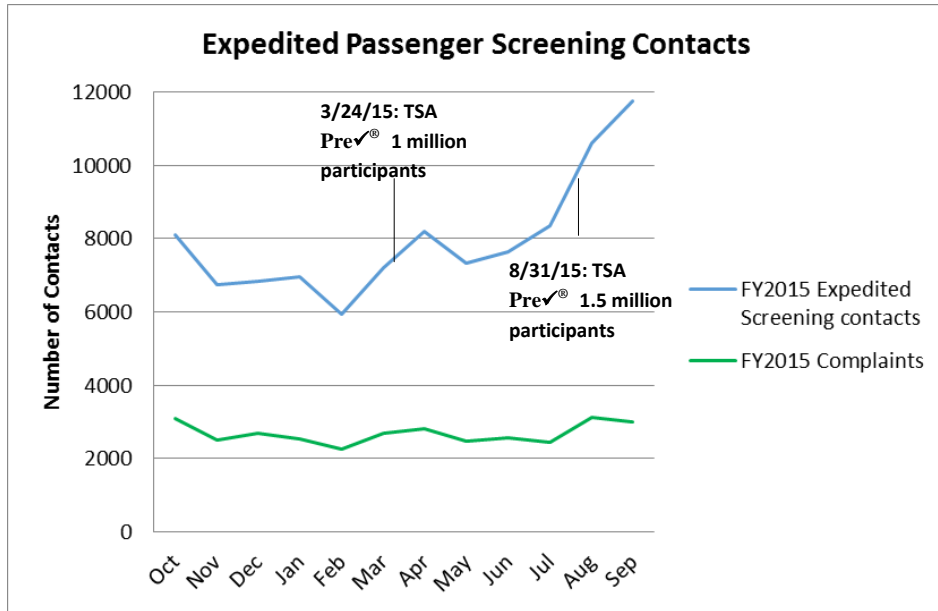
Mishandling of Passenger’s Property

The chart shown below provides a breakdown of complaints about mishandling of passenger property including personal items being damaged, in disarray, or missing in either checked luggage or carry-on baggage. All complaints are investigated, but it is important to note that the airlines share liability for checked luggage with TSA.



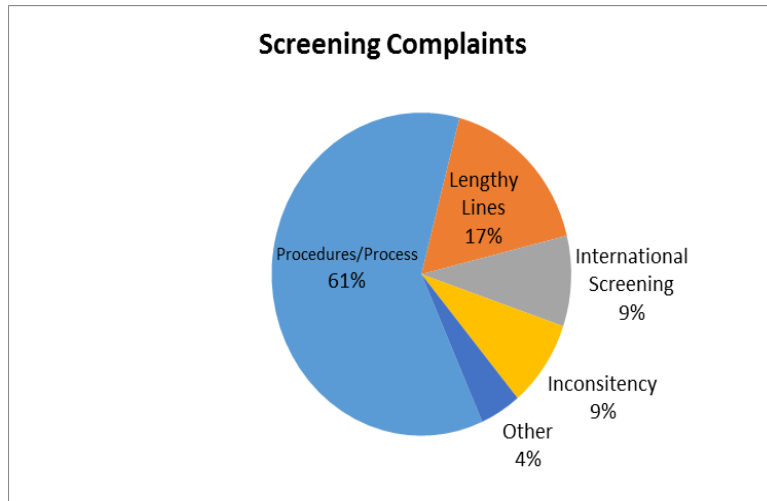
Expedited Passenger Screening Program

As part of TSA’s risk-based approach to security, many passengers contact TCC to resolve problems experienced with the TSA Pre✓® program. Problems with TSA Pre✓® include individuals entering erroneous information in their travel profile such as incorrect date of birth, not properly entering their Known Traveler Number, not being eligible for the program, and being suspended for committing a violation at the checkpoint.



Screening Complaints

The chart below displays the breakdown of traveler complaints about screening. Passengers' primary concern (61%) in this category is the screening procedures and processes used at the passenger screening checkpoint including inconsistent screening practices from one airport to another. Approximately 17% of the screening complaints were related to lengthy lines at the checkpoint. Other (4%) screening complaints were comprised of subjects such as the screening of airline employees and crew, screening of confiscated items and traveling with cash.



Customer Service Complaints

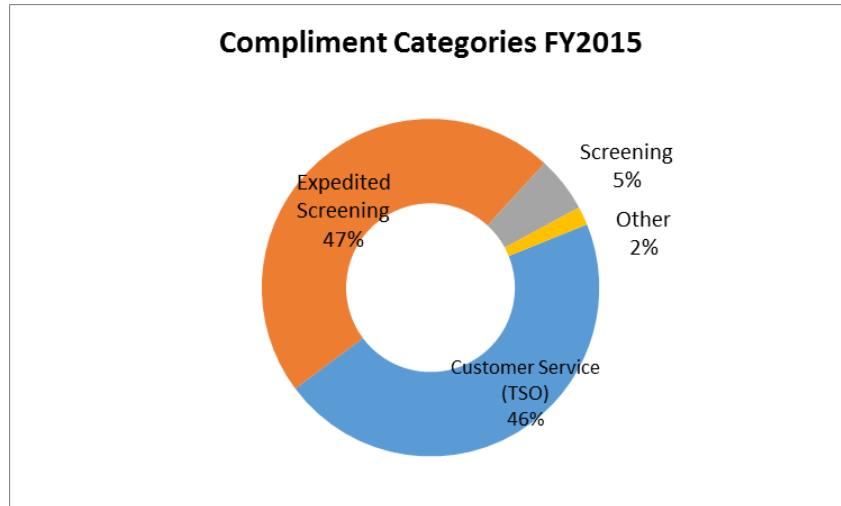
Travelers filing complaints related to customer service accounted for 7% of complaint totals. Customer service complaints include perceived rude or discourteous treatment by a Transportation Security Officer (TSO), a Customer Service Manager (CSM), TSA Contact Center personnel, or non-TSA individuals.

Complaints Concerning Locks

Five percent of TSA complaints were associated with locks on passenger baggage. Missing or damaged locks accounted for 93% of the complaints in this category. Passengers often cite they used a "TSA approved lock." However, TSA does not endorse any particular lock. TSA screens each passenger's baggage before it is placed on an airplane. While our technology allows us to electronically screen bags, there are times when we need to physically inspect a piece of luggage. TSA has worked with several companies to develop locks that can be opened by security officers using universal master keys so that the locks may not have to be cut. These locks are available at airports and travel stores nationwide. The packaging on the locks indicates whether they can be opened by TSA. Using a TSA-recognized lock will lessen the likelihood of delays for checked baggage; however, TSA cannot guarantee that such locks will never be damaged or lost while TSOs and airline employees handle checked baggage.

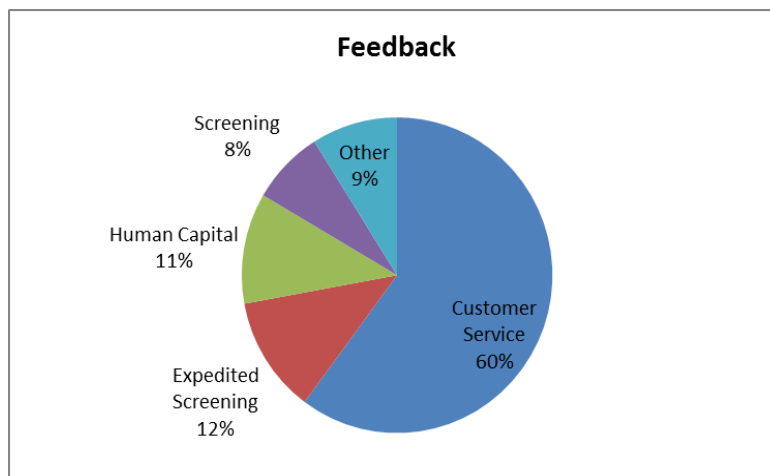
Compliments

During FY 2015 passengers provided significant positive comments concerning the TSA Pre✓[®] program. These compliments make up 47% of the customer compliments. An additional 46% of compliments refer to excellent customer service received from TSOs at the nation's airports.



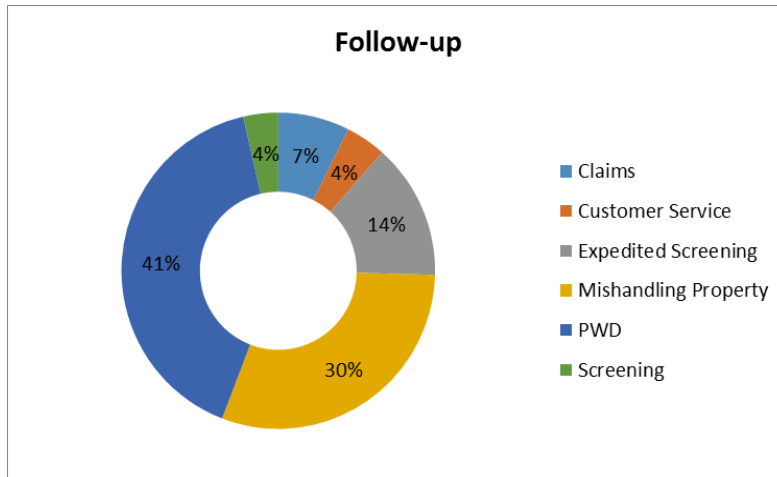
Feedback

Feedback consists of contacts received from passengers who have not had a specific travel experience and are merely providing their opinion about TSA. About 12% of the feedback is related to the TSA Pre✓[®] program where individuals have commented that they like the concept of the program. Other feedback received has no specific subject category and includes general comments such as dissatisfaction or appreciation for the work TSA performs.



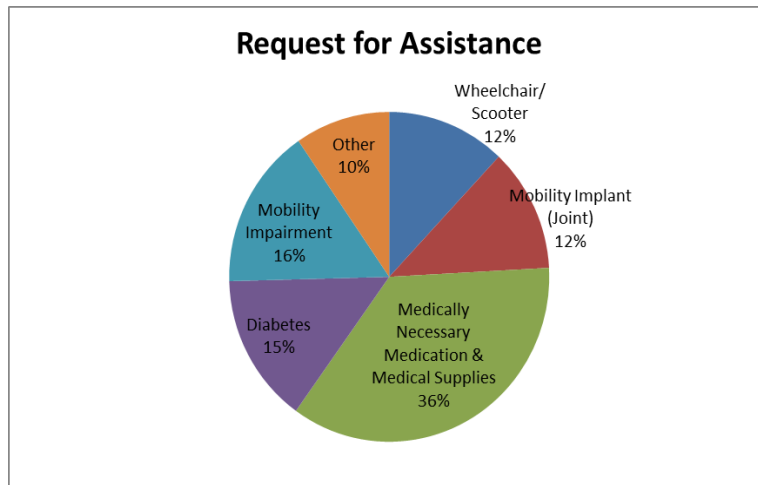
Follow- Up

In FY2015 TCC began utilizing a new interaction type called Follow-Up. Contacts where the passenger has previously communicated with TSA on a particular matter, then contact us to follow up on that same matter are categorized as follow up. This includes providing the bag tag number for a lost item or providing flight information for requesting assistance. Below are the frequent categories for Follow-up interaction type.



Request for Assistance

In December 2011, TSA launched TSA Cares, a dedicated help line for passengers with disabilities and medical conditions or those that may require additional assistance through the passenger screening checkpoint. During FY2015 TSA airport staff assisted nearly 15,000 passengers including wounded military personnel.



Summary

Listening and responding to passengers is an integral part of TSA's work to understand the concerns of the traveling public. Our analysis of complaint data assists us in identifying new ways to improve our processes and make them as efficient, effective and user friendly as possible. For example, we have successfully assisted more than 15,000 passengers with disabilities and medical conditions through the checkpoint and expanded the scope of TSA Cares to provide assistance to any passenger that may need special attention.

TSA continues to analyze its data in all areas to make informed decisions concerning transportation security to ensure a respectable, reliable, efficient, and safe traveling experience for everyone.

TCC Contact Information

Online: <http://www.tsa.gov/contact-us>

Telephone (Toll Free): 1-866-289-9673

Hours of Operation: Monday – Friday 8 a.m. – 11 p.m.; weekends and holidays 9 a.m. – 8 p.m. EST.