



Homeland Security

IT Program Assessment TSA – Freight Assessment System (FAS) (2010)

Review Assessment

The DHS Chief Information Officer conducted a comprehensive program review of the TSA Freight Assessment System (FAS) on April 13, 2010. The TSA FAS was designed to support specific mandates set forth by the Aviation Transportation Security Act (ATSA) signed into law in November 2001, which required TSA to design and develop a system that can identify elevated risk cargo. FAS was designed to accomplish this objective utilizing commercially available data from the air cargo supply chain industry, without collecting any Privacy Data. FAS is in the operations and maintenance stage and provides capabilities to do cargo screening, risk assessment and targeting based on shipment data provided by industry and provides results to TSA users and other stakeholders to contribute to enhanced security for air transport. The scope of FAS is screening of cargo carried on domestic passenger aircraft. FAS scope does not include screening of cargo carried on cargo aircraft, nor does it include screening of cargo on international flights.

The 9/11 Commission Act of 2007 changed the landscape by requiring more detailed screening and reporting requirements for air cargo, specifically requiring establishment of a system to screen 100% of cargo transported on passenger aircraft to provide a level of security commensurate to that of passenger baggage. As a result, FAS is no longer planned as TSA's primary cargo pre-screening system, but has currently been leveraged as a cargo reporting tool for industry to meet the 9/11 Act benchmark reporting. This system is the primary interface point between DHS and industry for cargo reporting.

Findings from the program review include:

- FAS was given authority to operate (ATO) through May 23, 2010 and is currently undergoing the recertification and accreditation process for renewal of the ATO.
- FAS is resident in DHS Data Center 2.
- The FAS Privacy Threshold Analysis indicates that FAS does not collect privacy data, therefore no Privacy Impact Assessment is required.

Assessment

TSA – FAS has developed capabilities in accordance with mandates in place at the time it was designed and developed, and has been granted an Authority To Operate (ATO). Subsequent to FAS development, and in response to new Congressional requirements for 100 percent screening of cargo transported on passenger aircraft, TSA has developed capabilities that tend to supersede the original rationale for developing FAS. FAS is currently being leveraged as an enterprise cargo reporting system for industry to meet the 9/11 Act benchmark reporting requirements. FAS has the potential to also select airway bills, manifests, or screening results for potential secondary screening based on risk assessment results. OCIO will facilitate meetings going forward between TSA FAS and other DHS Risk Management/Targeting programs to explore where the FAS capabilities may be leveraged by other business needs across the Department.

Score: 4