



Why This Matters

As of January 2013, 16 airports were participating in the Screening Partnership Program. Under the program, an airport operator may apply to use a private company to screen passengers and baggage rather than use Federal Government screening personnel.

TSA reviews and approves applications to participate, awards contracts to private screening companies, and oversees the private screening workforce.

DHS Response

TSA recognized the importance of the issues in this report and appreciated our efforts to identify improvements to SPP application review. TSA concurred with our two recommendations and noted that it had already made significant progress in implementing them.

For Further Information:

Contact our Office of Public Affairs at (202)254-4100, or email us at DHS-OIG.OfficePublicAffairs@oig.dhs.gov

Transportation Security Administration's Screening Partnership Program

What We Determined

We performed this audit in response to requests from Senator Roy Blunt and Senator Bob Corker. The Senators had concerns about the Transportation Security Administration's (TSA) management of the Screening Partnership Program (SPP), as well as the procurement process at Kansas City International Airport. Our objective was to determine whether TSA administered SPP in accordance with Federal regulations.

Until 2011, TSA had no criteria when considering whether to approve airports' applications to participate in SPP. TSA administered SPP in accordance with the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012, but could improve aspects of its administration.

Specifically, we reviewed TSA's files associated with its five most recent decisions to approve SPP applications and identified documents that had not been finalized, as well as documents that contained inaccurate information. In addition, TSA did not document the rationale used to decide on four of the five contracts awarded during 2011 and 2012.

What We Recommend

We recommended that TSA expedite developing and implementing procedures to ensure that decisions on SPP applications and procurements are fully documented according to applicable Department and Federal guidance. We also recommended that TSA establish and implement quality assurance procedures to ensure that the most relevant and accurate information is used when determining eligibility and approving airports' participation in SPP.