



# Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General

## **Ability to Communicate with Federal Air Marshals While in Mission Status**

**(Unclassified Summary)**



Office of Inspector General

U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, DC 20528

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**Homeland  
Security**

### Preface

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Office of Inspector General (OIG) was established by the *Homeland Security Act of 2002* (Public Law 107-296) by amendment to the *Inspector General Act of 1978*. This is one of a series of audit, inspection, and special reports prepared as part of our oversight responsibilities to promote economy, efficiency, and effectiveness within the department.

This report addresses the effectiveness of the Transportation Security Administration's dissemination of intelligence and situational and awareness information to Federal Air Marshals, while in mission status, to include when they are in-flight. It is based on interviews with employees and officials of relevant agencies and institutions, direct observations, and a review of applicable documents.

The recommendations herein have been developed to the best knowledge available to our office, and have been discussed in draft with those responsible for implementation. We trust this report will result in more effective, efficient, and economical operations. We express our appreciation to all of those who contributed to the preparation of this report.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Carlton I. Mann".

Carlton I. Mann

Assistant Inspector General for Inspections

# OIG

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*Department of Homeland Security*  
*Office of Inspector General*

## **Unclassified Summary**

Federal Air Marshals provide coverage on U. S. commercial air carrier flights, both domestic and international, to detect, deter, and defeat hostile acts that target air carriers, airports, passengers, and flight crews.

We assessed the Federal Air Marshals ability to communicate while in mission status. Our objectives were to determine whether: (1) the Federal Air Marshal Service provides Federal Air Marshals with timely and accurate intelligence and situational awareness information when they are preparing for or are in mission status, and (2) the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) was maximizing its communication capabilities to ensure that Federal Air Marshals who are in mission status can receive and send time-sensitive, mission-related information through secure communication while in flight.

TSA's Office of Intelligence (OI) reviews, synthesizes, and analyzes transportation specific intelligence. OI coordinates and shares information with Department of Homeland Security components, the intelligence and law enforcement communities, other government agencies, and the transportation industry. OI also assists the Federal Air Marshal Service (FAMS) by creating products that provide a framework to prioritize security resources.

The FAMS Office of Administration and Technical Services is responsible for the management of the Air to Ground Communications program. Through this program, FAMS is pursuing communication capabilities for Federal Air Marshals.

We made recommendations to enhance the Federal Air Marshals' ability to receive intelligence and situational awareness information when they are preparing for or are in mission status.



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