Terminally Slow Agency: The Case For Privatizing TSA

By “Coach Vance” Trefethen & Emily Jensen

***"Resolved: The United States federal government should substantially reform its transportation policy."***

This case argues that the TSA is a slow, inefficient and incompetent government agency, resulting in massive delays for travelers and waste of taxpayers’ money. Canada and Europe have long allowed airports themselves to be responsible for airport security, either hiring their own screeners or contracting with private agencies. The United States should get TSA out of the screening business and let them simply be in the oversight and regulatory role of setting standards for screening done by others.

Terminally Slow Agency: The Case For Privatizing TSA 3

OBSERVATION 1. Our DEFINITIONS. 3

OBSERVATION 2. INHERENCY, the structure of the Status Quo. One key FACT: the TSA 3

The Transportation Security Agency is the current federal policy for airport security screening of passengers and baggage 3

OBSERVATION 3. The HARMS. 3

HARM 1. Delays and missed flights 3

A. The Link: TSA causes massive delays 3

B. Impact 1: 500 more deaths per year. Frustrated passengers take cars instead, which are more dangerous than flying 4

C. Impact 2: Economic loss. Passenger delays cost the economy billions of dollars 4

HARM 2. Weaker security 4

Security split between TSA and airports creates security gaps and failures 4

OBSERVATION 4. We offer the following PLAN implemented by Congress and the President 5

OBSERVATION 5. ADVANTAGES 5

ADVANTAGE 1. Better security 5

A. Better accountability. The Plan produces better accountability for screening performance 5

B. Better threat detection. Private security finds bomb materials 3 times better than TSA 5

ADVANTAGE 2. Faster screening 6

Privatized screening solves long lines 6

ADVANTAGE 3. Cost savings 6

Over $1 billion in cost savings over 5 years if we implemented private screening 6

2A Evidence: Privatize TSA 7

OPENING QUOTES / AFFIRMATIVE PHILOSOPHY 7

Wouldn’t be hard to do better than TSA in Status Quo 7

INHERENCY 7

A/T “Airports can already opt out of TSA using SPP” – 1) TSA has to approve it. 2) Process is complicated & flawed 7

MINOR REPAIR RESPONSES 8

Minor Repairs to TSA won’t solve: The entire structure of TSA regulating itself is flawed 8

A/T “Just give TSA more funding, its problems were caused by budget cuts” – Budget cuts are a good reason to privatize 8

HARMS / SIGNIFICANCE 9

Delays / Missed Flights 9

TSA sends bags to parking lots and causes thousands of passengers to miss flights 9

Security Failures 9

TSA has never caught a terrorist, and missed quite a few 9

TSA itself is a security threat: Homeland Security discovered TSA ‘insider threats’ 9

Hundreds of TSA agents failed drug and alcohol tests 10

TSA employees charged with drug smuggling 10

25,000 security breaches with TSA since 2001 (that we know about!) 10

TSA machines mistake chocolate for explosives 11

TSA agents failed 67 out of 70 tests 11

TSA failed 95% of DHS tests 11

SOLVENCY / ADVOCACY 12

Most other Western countries have already adopted the AFF model for airport security 12

When Congress created TSA, airports endorsed instead the AFF plan for airport security (which didn’t pass Congress) 13

Screening should be privatized, TSA should only set standards and oversee 13

ADVANTAGES 13

If we “hate the wait,” we should privatize airport security: Works fine in Canada & Europe 13

Privatized screeners can process 65% more passengers per screener than TSA 14

Privatized screeners would speed up the process 14

Privatized screening is more cost effective and as good or better at screening performance than TSA 14

Private screening is much less expensive. For example, if LAX converted to private screeners, they would save 42% 15

DISAVANTAGE RESPONSES 15

A/T “Privatized screening costs more” - “Catapult Consultants” and TSA internal studies are flawed 15

A/T “Poor screening = another 9/11” – Hijackings of 9/11 had nothing to do with effectiveness of screening 16

Works Cited 17

Terminally Slow Agency: The Case For Privatizing TSA

They’ve never caught a terrorist. But they’ve grabbed and groped grandmothers and made millions miss flights. The TSA has been a colossal failure, and it’s long past time we affirmed that: The United States federal government should substantially reform its transportation policy. We’ll prove the comparative advantages of our reforms in 5 observations, starting with…

OBSERVATION 1. Our DEFINITIONS.

**Policy**: “a high-level overall plan embracing the general goals and acceptable procedures especially of a governmental body” (*Merriam Webster Online Dictionary, copyright 2017* [*http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/policy*](http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/policy))  
  
**Substantial**: “considerable in quantity” (*Merriam Webster Online Dictionary, copyright 2017* [*http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/substantially*](http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/substantially)*)*

**Transportation**: “means of conveyance or travel from one place to another” (*Merriam-Webster Online Dict. 2017* [*https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/transportation*](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/transportation)*)*

OBSERVATION 2. INHERENCY, the structure of the Status Quo. One key FACT: the TSA

The Transportation Security Agency is the current federal policy for airport security screening of passengers and baggage

Dept of Homeland Security 2015. “Transportation Security Overview” 10 Sept 2015 <https://www.dhs.gov/transportation-security-overview>

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) was created in the wake of 9/11 to strengthen the security of the nation’s transportation systems while ensuring the freedom of movement for people and commerce. Within a year, TSA assumed responsibility for security at the nation’s airports and deployed a federal workforce to screen all commercial airline passengers and baggage.

OBSERVATION 3. The HARMS.

HARM 1. Delays and missed flights

1. The Link: TSA causes massive delays

Judson Phillips 2016 (attorney) “Abolish the TSA” 22 May 2016 WASHINGTON TIMES <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2016/may/22/judson-phillips-abolish-tsa/>

Meanwhile, millions of Americans miss their flights because the TSA is worse than the post office. Who cares if the line is three hours long? There will only be a couple of TSA agents working and they are certainly not in any hurry to get people through. It’s not like they are the ones who will miss an important business meeting or may be not make it to a family reunion. It doesn’t matter how many people miss their flights or how many tests are failed, there are no consequences.

1. Impact 1: 500 more deaths per year. Frustrated passengers take cars instead, which are more dangerous than flying

Ronald Bailey 2016 (journalist) 18 May 2016 “[Would You Be Afraid to Fly If the TSA Were Abolished?](https://reason.com/blog/2016/05/18/would-you-be-afraid-to-fly-if-the-tsa-we)” <https://reason.com/blog/2016/05/18/would-you-be-afraid-to-fly-if-the-tsa-we>

Assume terrorists take out one fully-loaded 747 per year (416 passengers) - your risk of dying from a bombing attack would be about 1 in 8.7 million passengers traveling annually or 1 flight in 37 million annually. For perspective, your annual risk of dying from a lightning strike is 1 in 4.5 million and car accidents 1 in 17,000. In addition, the increased costs and delays due to airport security encourages people to switch from short-haul flights to driving with the result that about 500 people more year die from auto accidents than would otherwise have done.

1. Impact 2: Economic loss. Passenger delays cost the economy billions of dollars

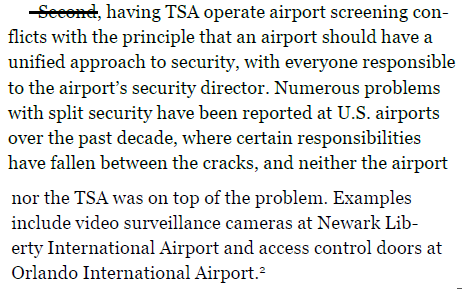
NICHOLAS E. CALIO 2014. (PRESIDENT AND CEO, AIRLINES FOR AMERICA, airline trade association) Statement BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE, NOV. 18, 2014 FAA REAUTHORIZATION: ISSUES IN MODERNIZING AND OPERATING THE NATION’S AIRSPACE <http://airlines.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Calio-Written-Testimony-FAA-Reauthorization-Hearing-11-18-14.pdf>

 In 2010, the FAA’s National Center of Excellence for Aviation Operations Research (NEXTOR) completed a comprehensive study of the costs and effects of flight delays in the United States. It estimated that the annual cost of flight delays for our nation’s economy was nearly $33 billion. An astounding $16.7 billion of that amount is attributable to economic losses that passengers suffer because of delays.

HARM 2. Weaker security

Security split between TSA and airports creates security gaps and failures

Shirley Ybarra 2013 (senior transportation policy analyst at Reason Foundation, a nonprofit think tank; former Secretary of Transportation for the Commonwealth of Virginia) Overhauling U.S. Airport Security, July 2013 <http://development.reason.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/overhauling_airport_security.pdf>



OBSERVATION 4. We offer the following PLAN implemented by Congress and the President

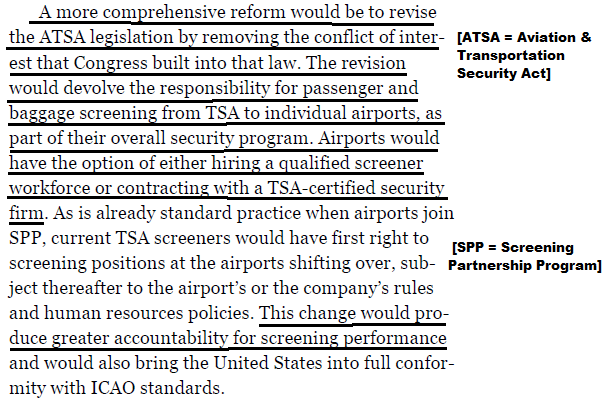
1. TSA is removed from responsibility for security screening in all US airports. Airports are mandated to either hire their own qualified screeners or contract with TSA-certified private security companies.  
2. TSA is limited to only setting security screening standards   
3. Funding is canceled for TSA screening.   
4. Plan takes effect 2 years after an affirmative ballot. All airports that want to opt out of TSA screening in advance of that date may do so immediately.  
5. Enforcement through the Dept of Homeland Security. Airports not in compliance will be closed.  
6. Affirmative speeches may clarify

OBSERVATION 5. ADVANTAGES

ADVANTAGE 1. Better security

1. Better accountability. The Plan produces better accountability for screening performance

Shirley Ybarra 2013 (senior transportation policy analyst at Reason Foundation, a nonprofit think tank; former Secretary of Transportation for the Commonwealth of Virginia) Overhauling U.S. Airport Security, July 2013 <http://development.reason.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/overhauling_airport_security.pdf> (brackets added)



1. Better threat detection. Private security finds bomb materials 3 times better than TSA

Shirley Ybarra 2013 (senior transportation policy analyst at Reason Foundation, a nonprofit think tank; former Secretary of Transportation for the Commonwealth of Virginia) Overhauling U.S. Airport Security, July 2013 <http://development.reason.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/overhauling_airport_security.pdf>

In practice, no matter how dedicated TSA leaders and managers are, the natural tendency of any large organization is to defend itself against outside criticism and to bolster its image. And that raises questions about whether TSA is as rigorous about dealing with performance problems with its own workforce as it is with those that it regulates at arm’s length, such as airlines and airports. This comes up again and again in news stories—such as a *USA Today* investigation in 2007 that found TSA screeners at Chicago O’Hare International Airport and Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) missed three times as many hidden bomb materials as did privately contracted screeners at San Francisco International Airport (SFO).

ADVANTAGE 2. Faster screening

Privatized screening solves long lines

Robert Poole 2016 (M.S. in mechanical engineering; director of transportation policy and Searle Freedom Trust Transportation Fellow at Reason Foundation; former advisor to the Federal Highway Administration, the Federal Transit Administration, the White House Office of Policy Development, National Economic Council, Government Accountability Office, and state DOTs in numerous states) 31 May 2016 Airport Policy and Security News #112 <http://reason.org/news/show/airport-policy-security-news-112>

These aviation professionals look with envy on the absence of long screening lines at SPP members like San Francisco (SFO) and Kansas City (MKC), where TSA-regulated private screeners have been in place since the creation of TSA. They may also be aware that all screening in Canada, and at most large airports in Europe, is carried out by government-certified and regulated screening companies. This follows the basic good government principle of *separating regulation from service provision*.

ADVANTAGE 3. Cost savings

Over $1 billion in cost savings over 5 years if we implemented private screening

Rep. Darrell Issa 2016 (congressman from California) 26 May 2016 CNN “A simple solution to the TSA breakdown” <http://www.cnn.com/2016/05/24/opinions/privatize-the-tsa-darrell-issa/index.html>

Private screeners are also shown to process passengers more efficiently, too, meaning faster-moving lines and more taxpayer savings. In fact, [research](http://archives.republicans.transportation.house.gov/Media/file/112th/Aviation/2011-06-03-TSA_SPP_Report.pdf) from the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure found potential savings of $1 billion over five years if just our top 35 busiest airports operated as efficiently as the private screeners at San Francisco's airport do.

2A Evidence: TSA Privatization

OPENING QUOTES / AFFIRMATIVE PHILOSOPHY

Wouldn’t be hard to do better than TSA in Status Quo

Rep. Darrell Issa 2016 (congressman from California) 26 May 2016 CNN “A simple solution to the TSA breakdown” <http://www.cnn.com/2016/05/24/opinions/privatize-the-tsa-darrell-issa/index.html>

No system will completely eliminate the problems we face when it comes to transportation security, but we can surpass the low bar set by the TSA. By opening up the system to competition and new ideas, we'll be able to undo some of the problems passengers have faced and make the skies friendly once again.

INHERENCY

A/T “Airports can already opt out of TSA using SPP” – 1) TSA has to approve it. 2) Process is complicated & flawed

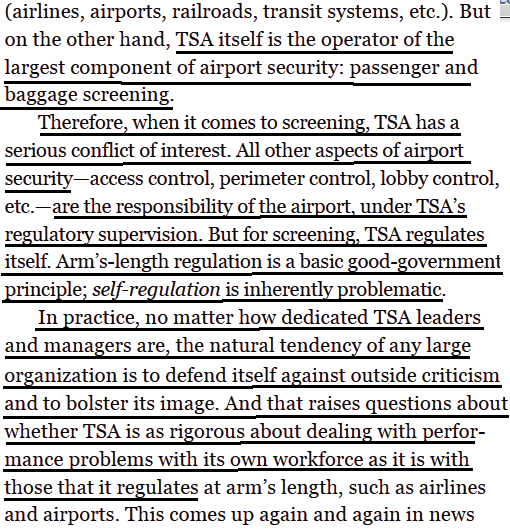
Brian Finch & David Inserra 2016 (Finch - Senior Fellow with the George Washington University Center for Cyber and Homeland Security. Inserra - homeland security analyst in The Heritage Foundation’s Allison Center for Foreign and National Security Policy) Airports are fed up with the TSA. Here's why it will be hard to break up with them, FOX NEWS 19 May 2016 <http://www.foxnews.com/opinion/2016/05/19/airports-are-fed-up-with-tsa-heres-why-it-will-be-hard-to-break-up-with-them.html>

Even when the TSA approves an airport’s “opt out” application, it’s the TSA—*not* the airport—that starts the process of finding a private alternative. That’s right: the TSA not only chooses whether it can be evicted; it also gets to select which company will provide the new screeners to the airports. Unsurprisingly, the TSA can make this step very difficult as well. The contracting process often takes well over a year, leaving TSA screeners in place that whole time. Even more interestingly, the TSA has recently altered how it selects SPP vendors. Previously the TSA selected SPP vendors by determining which one provided the “best value.” Under that formula, qualifications such as prior experience and confidence in the vendor’s ability to provide effective performance were deemed most important. Now, however, the TSA uses a contracting method known as “Lowest Price Technically Acceptable.” That system is exactly what it sounds like – whichever contractor meets minimum performance specifications and offers the cheapest price will win the competition. Nice to see that the TSA thinks airport screeners should be purchased using the same model as pencils. We could go on, but the point is quite clear: there is no Vegas-style divorce option for airports. Instead, airports and passengers alike are in for a bitter, lengthy, and unnecessarily cumbersome process to bring in more effective and efficient screeners.

MINOR REPAIR RESPONSES

Minor Repairs to TSA won’t solve: The entire structure of TSA regulating itself is flawed

Shirley Ybarra 2013 (senior transportation policy analyst at Reason Foundation, a nonprofit think tank; former Secretary of Transportation for the Commonwealth of Virginia) Overhauling U.S. Airport Security, July 2013 <http://development.reason.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/overhauling_airport_security.pdf>



A/T “Just give TSA more funding, its problems were caused by budget cuts” – Budget cuts are a good reason to privatize

Rep. Darrell Issa 2016 (congressman from California) 26 May 2016 CNN “A simple solution to the TSA breakdown” <http://www.cnn.com/2016/05/24/opinions/privatize-the-tsa-darrell-issa/index.html>

TSA's defenders point to budget cuts and staff layoffs to justify the agency's poor performance, but if declining budgets are the cause of our problems, then airport security privatization just might be a perfect solution to help the TSA do more, with less. A number of case studies show that private screeners are not only more efficient at their jobs, allowing them to screen more passengers in less time, but are also better at detecting threats.

HARMS / SIGNIFICANCE

Delays / Missed Flights

TSA sends bags to parking lots and causes thousands of passengers to miss flights

Justin Bachman. 2016. (journalist) “More Airports May Ditch the TSA and Use Private Security Instead” 27 MAY 2016. <https://skift.com/2016/05/27/more-airports-may-ditch-the-tsa-and-use-private-security-instead/>

At Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport, where screening glitches sent 3,000 checked bags to a parking lot earlier this month, administrators are “discussing a variety of options,” including replacing the TSA with a private contractor, said Deborah Ostreicher, assistant aviation director at the airport. Sky Harbor officials have considered their TSA service “less than satisfactory for many months,” she said. The Phoenix airport is a hub for American Airlines Group Inc., which has blamed the TSA delays across the country for causing more than 70,000 passengers to miss flights so far this year.

Security Failures

TSA has never caught a terrorist, and missed quite a few

Dr. Abigail Hall Blanco. 2016. (Research Fellow at the Independent Institute and Assistant Professor of Economics at the Univ of Tampa. Ph.D. in economics from George Mason Univ.) “Sick of Airport Delays? Disband the TSA” 18 MAY 2016. <http://www.insidesources.com/sick-of-airport-delays-disband-the-tsa/>

Here’s an alternative that would cut wait times and greatly enhance your flying experience—disband the TSA. While many people complain about the hassle the TSA brings to flying, most are quick to accept it as necessary and would find my suggestion silly. After all, the TSA keeps us safe from terrorists, right? Not even close. First, air travel is incredibly safe. Consider that in 2010 nearly 632 million commercial airplane boardings occurred in the United States, an average of 1.73 million per day. That same year the United States recorded some 470 aviation fatalities for all domestic aircraft, both commercial and private. This includes deaths related to terrorism, mechanical failures, and human error. Your chances of dying in a plane are essentially zero. This was true even for the period before and right after the 9/11 attacks, before the TSA came into existence. But is this safety record the achievement of the TSA? Certainly the TSA has apprehended would-be attackers, right? Wrong again. Although it publicizes cases in which its agents find prohibited items (its Instagram account is a prime example), the TSA has failed to provide any comprehensive data to suggest it has caught a single terrorist, nor has it pointed to any specific cases. On the contrary, according to the Government Accountability Office (GAO), at least 16 people who would later be accused of involvement in terrorist plots flew nearly two dozen times in the United States since 2004. The TSA caught none of them. In fact, passengers seem to do a better job of stopping possible attacks than the TSA! The now infamous “underwear bomber,” for example, was stopped by his fellow passengers, not government agents.

TSA itself is a security threat: Homeland Security discovered TSA ‘insider threats’

Brooke Singman. 2017. (Fox News reporter) “House report: TSA airport security standards could fail to prevent insider threats” 06 FEBRUARY 2017. <http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2017/02/06/house-report-tsa-airport-security-standards-could-fail-to-prevent-insider-threats.html>

The House Homeland Security Committee released a report Monday finding a lack of employee screening and vetting for those working in the TSA - uncovering examples of “insider threats” within America’s airports.

**END QUOTE. The article goes on to say in the same context QUOTE:**

According to the report, there have been a number of “alarming” cases highlighting the threat over the last five years. The report outlined examples, such as the November 2014 instance of three men from Minnesota who worked at Minneapolis- St. Paul International Airport who were recruited to fight for ISIS while having access to any plane that passed through the airport; the Delta Air Lines employee who smuggled a total of 153 firearms onto 17 Delta flights between Atlanta and New York City in 2014; and the January 2015 instance of a Federal Aviation Administration inspector who was arrested at New York’s LaGuardia International Airport after a TSA screener found a firearm in the inspector’s carry-on baggage. The report concluded that without a comprehensive background check for employees, TSA does not have the ability to screen for individuals who may “harbor ill-will” toward the United States, or have connections to individuals who do.

Hundreds of TSA agents failed drug and alcohol tests

[Tré Goins-Phillips](http://www.theblaze.com/author/tre-goins-phillips/). 2017. (Assistant Editor for the TheBlaze, an american news network.) “Hundreds of TSA workers at airports across the US failed drug, alcohol tests” 07 APRIL 2017. <http://www.theblaze.com/news/2017/04/07/hundreds-of-tsa-workers-at-airports-across-the-us-failed-drug-alcohol-tests/>

Hundreds of Transportation Security Administration staffers have failed drug and alcohol tests at major airports around the United States, a new investigation revealed. In its report published this week, KGW-TV found that 858 TSA workers around the country tested positive for drugs and alcohol between 2010 and 2016, according to federal records obtained through a Freedom of Information Act request. And the drug use occurred at some of the nation’s busiest hubs: 51 TSA workers tested positive for drugs and alcohol at Los Angeles International Airport, 41 tested positive at John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York City, 35 at Boston’s Logan International Airport and six at the Portland International Airport.

TSA employees charged with drug smuggling

[Tré Goins-Phillips](http://www.theblaze.com/author/tre-goins-phillips/). 2017. (Assistant Editor for the TheBlaze, an american news network.) “Hundreds of TSA workers at airports across the US failed drug, alcohol tests” 07 APRIL 2017. <http://www.theblaze.com/news/2017/04/07/hundreds-of-tsa-workers-at-airports-across-the-us-failed-drug-alcohol-tests/>

The report follows a 2016 analysis from the U.S. House Homeland Security Committee, which found employee misconduct at the TSA has “increased substantially over time, despite the agency’s attempts to address unacceptable behavior.” “TSA employees have been criminally charged for using cocaine on the job, facilitating large scale drug and human smuggling, and engaging in child pornography activities,” the report stated. And in February, TSA and airport employees were brought up on charges related to an alleged cocaine-smuggling operation going back nearly 20 years. The defendants allegedly transported cocaine-filled suitcases through security at the Luis Muñoz Marín International Airport in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Between 1998 and 2016, Newsweek reported, roughly 20 tons of cocaine made it through the airport.

25,000 security breaches with TSA since 2001 (that we know about!)

Rep. Darrell Issa 2016 (congressman from California) 26 May 2016 CNN “A simple solution to the TSA breakdown” <http://www.cnn.com/2016/05/24/opinions/privatize-the-tsa-darrell-issa/index.html>

Last year, an internal investigation revealed that undercover agents were able to sneak mock explosives or banned weapons through the agency's security checkpoints a whopping 95% of the time. And in the real world, the results with actual air travelers were similar. Since 2001, the TSA has suffered more than 25,000 security breaches (an average of over 200 per month) where passengers were able either to gain access to restricted areas of an airport or get items on board without proper examination. The worst part is that those are just the errors we know about. The real number of breaches is likely much higher.

TSA machines mistake chocolate for explosives

[J.D. Tuccille](http://reason.com/people/jd-tuccille/all) 2017. (contributing editor to Reason; an American libertarian monthly magazine published by the Reason Foundation.) “The TSA Turns Harassing Travelers Into a Fine—and Pointless—Art” 06 JUNE 2017. <http://reason.com/archives/2017/06/06/the-tsa-turns-harassing-travelers-into-a>

"Food can trigger lots of false alarms because of the density of some items," the Wall Street Journal recently reported about the Transportation Security Administration's justifications for imposing yet another round of tighter and more-intrusive airport carry-on baggage restrictions. "Chocolate, for example, can look like some types of explosives to X-ray machines."

TSA agents failed 67 out of 70 tests

[J.D. Tuccille](http://reason.com/people/jd-tuccille/all) 2017. (contributing editor to Reason; an American libertarian monthly magazine published by the Reason Foundation.) “The TSA Turns Harassing Travelers into a Fine—and Pointless—Art” 06 JUNE 2017. <http://reason.com/archives/2017/06/06/the-tsa-turns-harassing-travelers-into-a>

An internal investigation of the TSA, [leaked in 2015](http://abcnews.go.com/US/exclusive-undercover-dhs-tests-find-widespread-security-failures/story?id=31434881), found that many types of explosives apparently look to agents quite a bit like chocolate. Guns seem to closely resemble Tom Clancy novels in their eyes. Knives may be easily mistaken by the thin uniformed line against especially dim terrorists for those fuzzy troll dolls, though that part is a bit unclear. Well, maybe that's not all true. But such confusion would explain why "TSA agents failed 67 out of 70 tests, with Red Team members repeatedly able to get potential weapons through checkpoints." "In one test an undercover agent was stopped after setting off an alarm at a magnetometer," ABC News [noted](http://abcnews.go.com/US/exclusive-undercover-dhs-tests-find-widespread-security-failures/story?id=31434881), "but TSA screeners failed to detect a fake explosive device that was taped to his back during a follow-on pat down.

TSA failed 95% of DHS tests

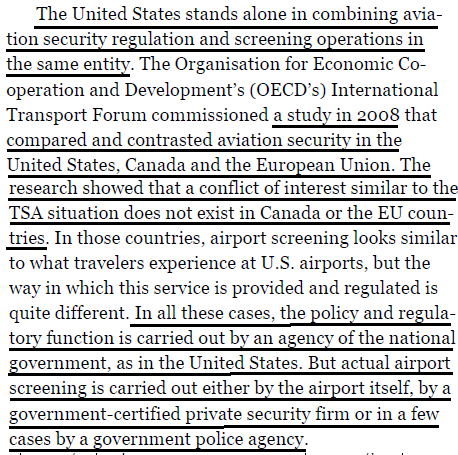
[Andy Campbell](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/author/andy-campbell). 2015. (journalist) “TSA Fails 95 Percent Of Airport Security Tests Conducted By Homeland Security: Report” 01 JUNE 2015. <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/06/01/tsa-fails-95-percent-tests-homeland-security_n_7485558.html>

As thorough as the Transportation Security Administration screeners may be as they rifle through your belongings, the agency isn’t performing where it counts. In a series of trials, the Department of Homeland Security was able to smuggle fake explosives, weapons and other contraband past airport screeners in major cities across the country, according to ABC News. Officials briefed on the Homeland Security Inspector General’s investigation told the station that the TSA failed 67 out of 70 tests conducted by the department’s Red Teams — undercover passengers tasked with identifying weaknesses in the screening process, NJ.com reports. During the tests, DHS agents each tried to bring a banned item past TSA screeners. They succeeded 95 percent of the time. The internal investigation was designed to find the TSA’s most egregious vulnerabilities. The TSA has said Red Team agents are “super terrorists” who “push the boundaries of our people, processes, and technology,” but DHS officials told ABC the test results were frustrating at the very least.

SOLVENCY / ADVOCACY

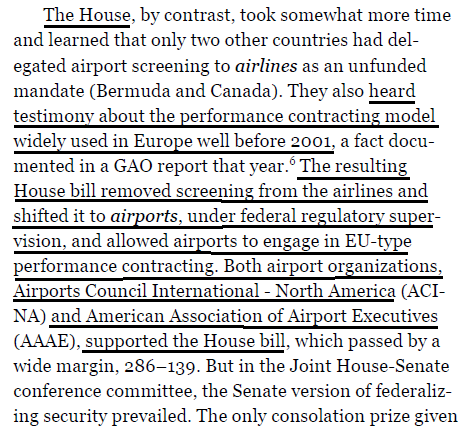
Most other Western countries have already adopted the AFF model for airport security

Shirley Ybarra 2013 (senior transportation policy analyst at Reason Foundation, a nonprofit think tank; former Secretary of Transportation for the Commonwealth of Virginia) Overhauling U.S. Airport Security, July 2013 <http://development.reason.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/overhauling_airport_security.pdf>



When Congress created TSA, airports endorsed instead the AFF plan for airport security (which didn’t pass Congress)

Shirley Ybarra 2013 (senior transportation policy analyst at Reason Foundation, a nonprofit think tank; former Secretary of Transportation for the Commonwealth of Virginia) Overhauling U.S. Airport Security, July 2013 <http://development.reason.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/overhauling_airport_security.pdf>



Screening should be privatized, TSA should only set standards and oversee

Rep. Darrell Issa 2016 (congressman from California) 26 May 2016 CNN “A simple solution to the TSA breakdown” <http://www.cnn.com/2016/05/24/opinions/privatize-the-tsa-darrell-issa/index.html>

Expanding the private screening program, if not privatizing the airport security business entirely, would go a long way to helping improve the experience fliers face at our nation's airports. The TSA, of course, could still exist to set standards and oversee quality control for the companies administering security, but we could do away with the long lines and endless sea of "[suitcase surgeons](http://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2014/01/tsa-screener-confession-102912)" in their iconic blue rubber gloves.

ADVANTAGES

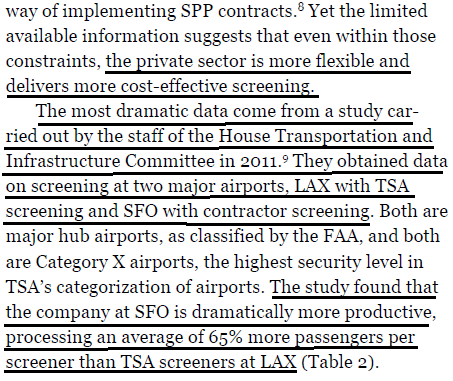
If we “hate the wait,” we should privatize airport security: Works fine in Canada & Europe

Rep. Darrell Issa 2016 (congressman from California) 26 May 2016 CNN “A simple solution to the TSA breakdown” <http://www.cnn.com/2016/05/24/opinions/privatize-the-tsa-darrell-issa/index.html>

These firestorms online and in the media have brought new attention to our broken airport security system, a problem that has been slowly growing for years. But if we really "hate the wait" and want to fix it, the solution couldn't be any simpler: let's get the TSA out of the airport screening business altogether. The idea of privatizing airport security isn't a new one. [Look no further](http://reason.org/files/overhauling_airport_security.pdf) than Canada and almost every single European country, which all use private airport screeners. The U.S. did, too -- before we decided to nationalize airport security in the wake of 9/11. Certainly quick action was called for then, but our government-run screening program hasn't lived up to the level of service or security we had hoped for.

Privatized screeners can process 65% more passengers per screener than TSA

Shirley Ybarra 2013 (senior transportation policy analyst at Reason Foundation, a nonprofit think tank; former Secretary of Transportation for the Commonwealth of Virginia) Overhauling U.S. Airport Security, July 2013 <http://development.reason.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/overhauling_airport_security.pdf>



Privatized screeners would speed up the process

C.J. Ciaramella 2015 (journalist) “Abolish the TSA” WASHINGTON POST 16 Apr 2015 <https://www.washingtonpost.com/posteverything/wp/2015/04/16/abolish-the-tsa/>

One way to speed up the process would be to go back to private screeners, like all airports in the U.S. used before 9/11 and many airports in Europe still use. U.S. airports are currently allowed to opt-out of using TSA screeners, and since a pilot program began in the early 2000s, the number of airports that have joined the TSA’s [screening partnership program](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=http-3A__www.tsa.gov_stakeholders_screening-2Dpartnership-2Dprogram&d=BQMFaQ&c=RAhzPLrCAq19eJdrcQiUVEwFYoMRqGDAXQ_puw5tYjg&r=zZ-ULk44Cmdk_g8Nibpw-jVetFWF8cmowsSgSjx8dqw&m=xqwx05P20UG_wWFNmlt1LhLQNWHl_91QmIlX9iYtL-8&s=UdkQWFrsLNCq_JGjrCTOTUVg6nvO4tgn7ckK2B_uKII&e=) has risen from five to 21. Private screeners are more flexible, [arguably more efficient](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=http-3A__archives.republicans.transportation.house.gov_Media_file_112th_Aviation_2011-2D06-2D03-2DTSA-5FSPP-5FReport.pdf&d=BQMFaQ&c=RAhzPLrCAq19eJdrcQiUVEwFYoMRqGDAXQ_puw5tYjg&r=zZ-ULk44Cmdk_g8Nibpw-jVetFWF8cmowsSgSjx8dqw&m=xqwx05P20UG_wWFNmlt1LhLQNWHl_91QmIlX9iYtL-8&s=hwm6erMouh41GgqlH505d5xm25msHiddWNK6LVxww3Y&e=) according to TSA-haters in Congress, and certainly easier to oversee on an airport-by-airport basis than TSA’s unionized workforce of roughly 50,000 screeners.

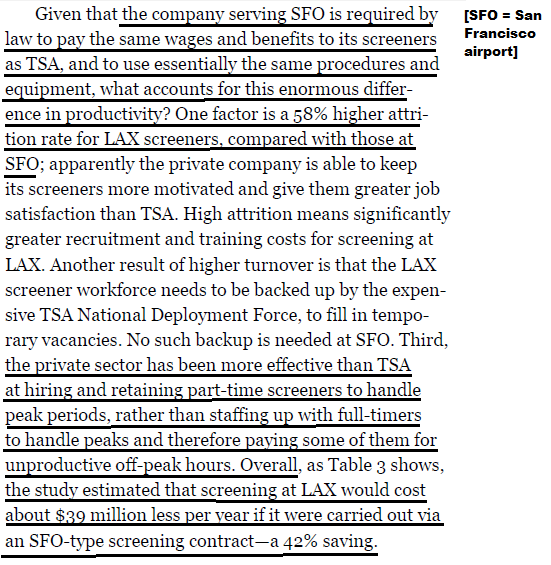
Privatized screening is more cost effective and as good or better at screening performance than TSA

Robert Poole 2016 (M.S. in mechanical engineering; director of transportation policy and Searle Freedom Trust Transportation Fellow at Reason Foundation; former advisor to the Federal Highway Administration, the Federal Transit Administration, the White House Office of Policy Development, National Economic Council, Government Accountability Office, and state DOTs in numerous states) 31 May 2016 Airport Policy and Security News #112 <http://reason.org/news/show/airport-policy-security-news-112>

There is a growing amount of evidence that private screening is more cost-effective than TSA screening. Greater effectiveness than TSA at stopping prohibited items getting through checkpoints is not a very high hurdle, given the DHS Inspector General's finding last year that 95% of such items were being missed by TSA screeners. Back in 2007, an outside study commissioned by TSA but never released (though summarized by GAO) found that screening performance at six SPP airports was as good as or better than screening performance at six comparable TSA-screened airports.

Private screening is much less expensive. For example, if LAX converted to private screeners, they would save 42%

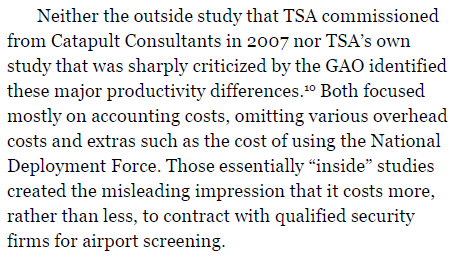
Shirley Ybarra 2013 (senior transportation policy analyst at Reason Foundation, a nonprofit think tank; former Secretary of Transportation for the Commonwealth of Virginia) Overhauling U.S. Airport Security, July 2013 <http://development.reason.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/overhauling_airport_security.pdf> (brackets added)



DISAVANTAGE RESPONSES

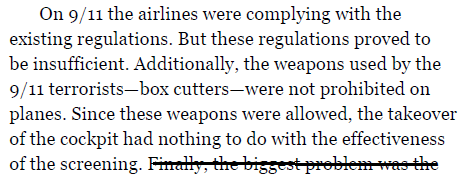
A/T “Privatized screening costs more” - “Catapult Consultants” and TSA internal studies are flawed

Shirley Ybarra 2013 (senior transportation policy analyst at Reason Foundation, a nonprofit think tank; former Secretary of Transportation for the Commonwealth of Virginia) Overhauling U.S. Airport Security, July 2013 <http://development.reason.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/overhauling_airport_security.pdf>



A/T “Poor screening = another 9/11” – Hijackings of 9/11 had nothing to do with effectiveness of screening

Shirley Ybarra 2013 (senior transportation policy analyst at Reason Foundation, a nonprofit think tank; former Secretary of Transportation for the Commonwealth of Virginia) Overhauling U.S. Airport Security, July 2013 <http://development.reason.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/overhauling_airport_security.pdf>



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