

**U.S. Department of Homeland Security**

Office of the Administrator  
601 South 17th Street  
Arlington, VA 22202-4320

**FEB 26 2010**



**Transportation  
Security  
Administration**

The Honorable Peter J. Roskam  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Attention: Ms. Brigitta Johnson  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Roskam:

Thank you for your e-mail of January 19, 2010, requesting information on the Transportation Security Administration's (TSA) Screening of Passengers by Observation Techniques (SPOT) program.

TSA employs approximately 3,000 Behavior Detection Officers (BDOs) at 161 of the Nation's airports. Several factors determine the number of BDOs assigned to an airport, including passenger throughput, checkpoint/airport configuration, and airport risk category.

The initial SPOT curriculum was developed in 2006 at a cost of approximately \$137,812. That amount does not include the cost of curriculum revisions since that time. It costs approximately \$1,665 to train a BDO at his or her home airport or \$2,465 if he or she must travel to another airport for training. The difference in cost is due to lodging, airfare, and per diem costs.

The SPOT certification course consists of 32 hours (four days) of classroom training consisting of lectures, demonstrations, and job knowledge assessment, with a fifth day available if the trainee requires remediation. Successful completion of the classroom training allows the trainee to proceed to a 24-hour (three day) on-the-job training (OJT) period. Upon successful completion of OJT, the trainee is certified as a BDO.

TSA developed the SPOT program in 2003, with assistance from the Massachusetts State Police at Boston Logan International Airport, to meet TSA-specific security and public service needs. Transportation Security Officers performed SPOT as a collateral duty until 2006, when the curriculum was revised into a certification course and the BDO position was instituted. The revised course was based on updated behavior recognition methodology.

All BDO applicants must apply for the position and be selected through the competitive process. Applicants who successfully complete a written and oral structured interview are selected to attend the BDO certification course. Appointment as a BDO is contingent upon successful completion of the course.

The SPOT program office selects and certifies BDO instructors. Expert knowledge of the SPOT program and behavior recognition principles are criteria to be an instructor. Instructors attend a train-the-trainer course and after successful completion of this training, the BDO instructor shadows a primary instructor until he or she is ready to teach the course. Instructors must complete an annual re-evaluation to maintain their BDO instructor certification. Regarding how instructors stay abreast of new techniques, SPOT subject matter experts provide instructors with updates on new methodologies through teleconferences and workshops.


I appreciate that you took the time to share your concerns with us and hope this information is helpful. If we may be of further assistance, please call the Office of Legislative Affairs at (571) 227-2717.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "LaVita LeGrys". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

LaVita LeGrys  
Assistant Administrator  
for Legislative Affairs

**FOR FRONT OFFICE USE ONLY - DO NOT DUPLICATE**

<b>TSA CONTROL NUMBER</b>	TSA-100202-016 ROSKAM	<b>ORIGINATING OFFICE:</b> OSO <b>WRITER:</b> G. Richards <b>PHONE:</b> 7-(b)(6) <b>DUE DATE:</b> 2/19/10
 <b>Transportation Security Administration</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Action Memo <input type="checkbox"/> DHS SOL <input type="checkbox"/> Information Memo <input type="checkbox"/> DHS Congressional <input type="checkbox"/> QFR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TSA Congressional <input type="checkbox"/> Report to Congress <input type="checkbox"/> Other:	

**TSA Executive Level Clearance Sheet**

<b>AA Approvals:</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>SUBJECT:</b>
1. Chad bash f/ Lee Kair	2/18/10	100.1 Writes in with specific questions regarding Behavioral Detection Officer BDO training.
2.		
3.		

**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT PREPARATION**

Title	ES Editor	Date	Approve	Approve w/ edits	Reject	Comments
IMS	Quovia Pevton	2/19/2010	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	To Jewel for distribution to Writer/Editor. <i>SK</i>
W/E	(b)(6)	2/22/10	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	To Bill
Sr. W/E		2/23	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lhead → OLA

**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT APPROVAL**

To: OLA		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
To: FO		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

**CLEARANCE**

Check all Needed	Review Requested?	Reviewer	Office	Initials	Date	Approve	Approve w/ edits	Reject	Use Autopen	Comments
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		LaVita LeGrys	OLA	(b)(6)	2/24/10	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	
<input type="checkbox"/>		Francine Kerner	OCC			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	
<input type="checkbox"/>		Kim Walton	OSC			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	
<input type="checkbox"/>		Art Macias	Chief of Staff			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	
<input type="checkbox"/>						<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	

**APPROVAL**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Keith Kauffman	Acting Deputy Administrator			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Gale D. Rossides	Acting Administrator			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

**Explanation, Special Instructions, Comments:**



TRANSPORTATION  
SECURITY  
ADMINISTRATION

# TSA CLEARANCE SHEET

ORIGINATOR

Gail Richards/OSO/7(b)(6)

DOCUMENT FOR ACTION

OFFICE

PHONE

DATE

Action Memo

Letter

OSO

02/18/10

Info Memo

Other

**SUBJECT:** 100.1 Writes in with specific questions regarding Behavioral Detection Officer BDO training.

TSA  
CONTROL NUMBER

TSA-100202-016

ACTION REQUIRED

REVIEWERS		OFFICE	DIRECT PHONE NO.	INITIAL	DATE	CORRECTION REQUIRED
1.	CBash/OSO/7(b)(6) 2/18/10; DBurche/OSO/7(b)(6) 2/17/10					
2.						
3.	CBash/f/LKair/7(b)(6) 2/18/10					
4.	Doag BLAIR 7(b)(6) 1/2-22/10	SSI	7(b)(6)	D	2 (b)(6)	N O SSI
5.						
6.						

EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT		INITIAL	DATE	CORRECTION REQUESTED
Logging				
Review				
OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR		INITIAL	DATE	CORRECTION REQUESTED
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				

Explanation, Special Instructions, Comments:

6

**Mason, Matthew**

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**From:** Hearing, Peter  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 20, 2010 1:48 PM  
**To:** Mason, Matthew  
**Subject:** FW: TSA training of Behavior Detection Officers

Hey Matt –

Let's add this to the incoming. I suspect that some of the information below is SSI and want Exec Sec and the SSI folks to review before it goes out.

Thanks!  
Pete

Peter Hearing  
Transportation Security Administration  
Office of Legislative Affairs  
571-227-(b)(1)

RECEIVED IN OLA

JAN 20 REC'D

INT. *MJM*

**From:** Johnson, Brigitta [mailto:Brigitta.Johnson@mail.house.gov]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 19, 2010 5:14 PM  
**To:** Hearing, Peter  
**Subject:** TSA training of Behavior Detection Officers

Hi Peter,

Our Homeland Security LA recommend you as the best person at TSA Leg Affairs to talk about TSA training. I pulled some background off of the general TSA website on the training procedures of Behavioral Detection Officers, but was hoping to find some further detail on the below questions.

- How many BDO does TSA currently employ? How are they distributed amongst airports?
- How much did TSA spend to create the curriculum for SPOT training? How much does it cost to train one officer?
- On TSA's website it says SPOT training takes a four day instruction course and 24 booked hours of on-the-job training – is this accurate or are there any other additional training steps used? Who qualifies?
- Who developed the curriculum? Can you disclose any background of the individuals who currently teach the program, how they stay abreast of new techniques, where they trained and learned their behavior detection skills etc.?

I appreciate any input you could add, or passing me along to the appropriate person if I've reached you in error.

Thanks!

BRIGITTA JOHNSON  
Legislative Assistant  
Congressman Peter J. Roskam (IL-06)  
202-225-4561

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

FEB - 1 P 2:56

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TSA-100202-016