

APR 11 2014



Transportation
Security
Administration

Information Memo

DATE: April 9, 2014

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Assistant Administrator
Office of Security Operations

FROM: Melanie Harvey *MH*
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SUBJECT: Suspending the Assessor Play

Purpose

The purpose of this memo is to provide notification that the Threat Assessment Division (TAD) intends to suspend the Assessor Playbook Play option at Boston Logan International Airport (BOS) and Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport (DTW) effective April 15, 2014.

Background

TSA conducted an Assessor Proof of Concept (PoC) from August 15, 2011 to June 29, 2012 in BOS and October 17, 2011 to June 29, 2012 in DTW, exploring the effectiveness and efficiency of Assessor interviews at the Travel Document Checker (TDC) position. Officers performing Assessor operations received training from the International Security Defense Systems (ISDS), LLC. The proprietary, commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) training provided students with five days of additional interviewing skills based on travel documentation and observable behavioral indicators. Officers also received on average 20 hours of On-the-Job Training (OJT) to perform the Assessor function in real-time operations at the TDC position. Refresher training was not included in the PoC and has not been provided to the Officers.

The Assessor function was incorporated into TSA Playbook in July 2012 for use at BOS and DTW only. It provided for 100% passenger engagement during specific timeframes. At present, use of the play is limited. According to the Playbook database, BOS last employed the Play on September 8, 2013 and DTW logged approximately nine hours on March 2, 2014.

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Discussion

On March 5, 2014, the BDA Program and OSC began the BDO Targeted Conversation (BTC) PoC at Baltimore Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport (BWI). This PoC is designed to provide a targeted conversation capability, increase Behavior Detection Officer (BDO) engagement opportunities, and develop and maintain BDO proficiency in areas of active listening and questioning techniques.

BDOs have not received recurrent training on Assessor at either airport since 2011. Neither airport operates the play with the frequency required to maintain proficiency. Other factors make the expansion of Assessor impractical for TSA. As proprietary COTS training, the content has not been modified to reflect observations and concerns raised by the Department of Homeland Security Office of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL). The course is taught with one lead instructor and two supporting instructors, limiting expansion both in terms of excessive time and expense. The attachment provides an estimate to roll out Assessor to the 10 highest risk airports.

Given the above, the BDA Program will archive the Assessor play in the Playbook database and notify both BOS and DTW that the Play has been suspended. Meanwhile, BDA and OSC will complete BTC OJT on April 11, 2014. OSC will begin testing and evaluation on or about April 14, 2014, and the PoC will end on or about May 10, 2014. The BDA Program will continue to explore potential follow on actions at the conclusion and subsequent review of the Testing and Evaluation report.

Attachment

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