Transportation
Security
Administration

MAR 1 8 2013

ACTION

MEMORANDUM FOR:	J.W. Halinski Deputy Administrator
FROM:	Chris McLaughlin /s/ Assistant Administrator Office of Security Operations
	John Sammon /s/ Assistant Administrator Office of Security Policy and Industry Engagement
	Robert Bray /s/ Assistant Administrator Office of Law Enforcement/Federal Air Marshal Service
SUBJECT:	Visible Intermodal Prevention and Response (VIPR) Program

Purpose

To seek your approval to consolidate operational and administrative responsibility of the VIPR Program with the Office of Law Enforcement/ Federal Air Marshal Service (OLE/FAMS). A proposal to shift the operational focus of VIPR teams also is included.

Background

This proposal is premised on a recommendation from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Office of the Inspector General's (OIG) recent audit of the VIPR Program. DHS OIG characterized VIPR's organizational placement within TSA as a hindrance to the VIPR Program's effectiveness and cited bifurcated decision making as an obstacle to efficiency.

DHS OIG concluded that due to current placement within TSA, "Ineffective coordination hinders TSA's ability to leverage operational capabilities, potentially diminishing its transportation security posture." DHS OIG recommended that TSA "Designate VIPR Program decision making authority to one TSA headquarters office to ensure that overall field operations, program activity and engagement, and oversight are coordinated effectively."

Discussion

VIPR Program Management

At present, the responsibility for program management resides administratively with OLE/FAMS, but operationally is managed jointly by OLE/FAMS and the Office of Security Operations (OSO).

We propose that to promote organizational efficiency, TSA consolidate operational responsibility and administrative oversight over the VIPR Program to OLE/FAMS. The VIPR Program would be under the strategic purview of the Assistant Administrator for OLE/FAMS, with operational responsibility delegated to the Field Operations Division, Regional Director for Field Programs.

The VIPR Program will continue to maintain regular communications with field leadership in both offices at the Regional Director and Federal Security Director (FSD)/Supervisory Air Marshal in Charge (SAC) levels. These communications will provide on-going status information regarding specific operations and performance.

VIPR Planning Process

The VIPR planning process will remain unchanged. VIPR operations planning at the local level will be conducted in conjunction with stakeholders such as facility operators, transportation system entities, and law enforcement. FSDs will work collaboratively with their respective SAC for the area of responsibility in order to execute a joint annual plan. FSDs and SACs will work together to determine the most effective deployment locations to maximize risk mitigation efforts. In the event concurrence cannot be achieved, FSDs and SACs will coordinate through their Regional Directors, who will in turn work collaboratively with the OLE/FAMS Regional Director for Field Programs to obtain a resolution.

VIPR Operational Authority

The Joint Coordination Center (JCC) will continue to report to the VIPR Program Manager and will consist of representation from OLE/FAMS and OSO. The JCC will have operational responsibility and provide operational guidance, oversight and approval for all proposed VIPR operations. The JCC responsibility and oversight will be guided by policies established by VIPR Program leadership.

VIPR Field Personnel Alignment

VIPR field resources, currently managed separately by OSO and OLE/FAMS, will be consolidated into OLE/FAMS VIPR teams. The use of representational allocation will be eliminated. VIPR personnel will be specifically assigned to the VIPR Program and will maintain their program assignments for a minimum of one year.

Office of Security Policy and Industry Engagement (OSPIE) Position Review

The availability of stakeholder vulnerability data and analysis across all transportation modes is important to the success of the VIPR Program, driving the alignment and deployment of resources. Currently, the OSPIE VIPR Liaison is assigned to the OSPIE Mass Transit and

Passenger Rail Division. OSPIE will review how support is provided to the VIPR Program to ensure that the support functions within OSPIE effectively support the VIPR mission.

Operational Focus

The VIPR Program deploys law enforcement, screening, and inspection capabilities to achieve its mission of terrorism risk mitigation. However, the role of inspection assets deployed on VIPR operations has been scrutinized by DHS OIG, the Government Accountability Office (GAO), and internally within TSA. Therefore, we recommend that the future VIPR teams will primarily leverage law enforcement and screening capabilities (Transportation Security Officers, Behavior Detection Officers, and Federal Air Marshals). We will maintain the current role for the Transportation Security Inspectors and Transportation Security Specialists-Explosives as subject-matter experts in the assessment and planning stages and for stakeholder outreach.

Because TSA's capabilities are most effective when visibly deployed in the presence of large numbers of the traveling public, these capabilities will be targeted in the mass transit and maritime modes in high-risk systems nationwide. The VIPR Program anticipates refining deployment strategies based on risk analysis, capability alignment, and stakeholder assessment within the other aviation and surface modes, including air cargo, general aviation, freight rail, highway infrastructure, and pipeline.

Recommendation

We recommend you approve the consolidation of VIPR management, including operational and administrative responsibility, with OLE/FAMS. We further recommend a shift in VIPR operational focus to primarily leverage law enforcement and screening capabilities with an emphasis on mass transit and maritime modes in high-risk systems.

Approve _____ 03/18/13 Disapprove _____ _____
                         Date   Date

Modify _____ _____   Needs more discussion _____ _____
                         Date   Date