

One Year to Go

The Air Cargo Security Alliance is officially one year old this August - and a first birthday is usually a festive occasion. However, with the 100% air cargo screening mandate now only 12 months away and TSA continuing to oppose an on-airport federal screening option, we really don't have any time to celebrate.

Since our creation last August, the Air Cargo Security Alliance has been pushing for a single objective - the creation of a screening program that will meet the screening requirements enacted by Congress in 2007 and allow small and mid-size forwarders that cannot afford to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars to screen their cargo to continue servicing their customers

Over the past year, the Air Cargo Security Alliance has made some major strides:

- We have gone from zero to over 300 members - making us one of the largest air cargo organizations in Washington
- We have met with over 100 Congressional offices and developed a strong stable of Congressional champions
- We have worked closely with the Obama Administration in order to educate them on the very real impacts that the screening mandate will have on small and mid-size freight forwarders
- We have spoken at over a dozen local, regional and national air cargo meetings about our campaign - and recruited dozens of new allies to the cause

However, it is clear that we have a long way to go and (to borrow a line from Smokey & the Bandit) a short time to get there - The 100% screening mandate is now exactly one year away.

Despite the best efforts of the TSA to design and implement the Certified Cargo Screening Program, it is clear that we are headed for a train wreck:

- There are over 4,200 freight forwarders registered with TSA - less than 30 of them are participants in the CCSP
- Over 500,000 companies relied on the air cargo industry to move their goods in 2007 - less than 50 are participants in the CCSP
- TSA currently has 420 cargo inspectors to handle cargo screening at 84 Category X and Category I airports in the United States - a whopping 5 screeners per airport - and is now expanding its area of enforcement to include road, rail and ports

The US economy relies on expedited airfreight services - and the only solution that TSA has developed to meet the 100% screening mandate put in place by Congress in 2007 will cripple the air cargo industry. Which is why we are honored that you have signed up as members of the Air Cargo Security Alliance and helped make our first year a success.

But much, much more needs to be done - both by us at ACSA and by you as members of the air cargo industry.

Over the next several months, ACSA will continue to meet with as many folks in Congress as we can in order to "ring the bell" about the upcoming deadline. We will work with the Obama Administration in order to push them into establishing a federal screening option at the Category X and Category I airports where they are not currently providing screening services. We will continue to travel the country and spread the message about the small and mid-size forwarders that make up the backbone of the air cargo industry - and the fact that they need a federal program that will allow them to continue serving their customers after next August.

We need you - as ACSA Members - to reach out directly to your Congressional Representatives and Senators and get them involved. We also need to you reach out to other members in the air cargo industry, let them know about the 100% mandate and get them involved. And finally, we need you to continue your support for ACSA and our campaign - without you, we won't get to celebrate our second birthday next August.