

**BACKGROUND:** Registered Traveler (RT) is a voluntary domestic credentialing program that allows passengers who pose a reduced security risk to access designated airport security fast lanes nationwide. Launched in 2005, RT has enabled TSA to focus its screening personnel resources on passengers who should be subject to more extensive screening, while allowing lower-risk passengers whose identities have been authenticated and biometrically verified to fly with less hassle and more predictability. To become a Registered Traveler, participants voluntarily choose one of the competing TSA-approved private sector service providers, pay the fee set by that provider and submit to rigorous identity authentication procedures. Approved members receive a secure, biometric card to use in RT verification kiosks located at TSA security checkpoints.

More than 225,000 frequent travelers have enrolled in RT, and approximately 1,000 more are doing so every day. RT lanes have been used more than 1.8 million times to date. If implemented aggressively, estimates are that 30 to 50 percent of travelers moving through a large airport on a weekday morning will be RT members. Studies show that RT lanes process a higher percentage of travelers than the percentage of TSA screeners devoted to their lanes.

The RT program is now in 21 of the nation's largest airports, including Atlanta, Denver, Boston, JFK, LaGuardia, Logan, Newark, Orlando, San Francisco, San Jose, Washington Dulles and Washington Reagan – among others, BWI and LAX are expected to begin RT operations in 2009. Verified Identity Pass operates RT under the CLEAR brand name at 18 of the current airports, while FLO Corporation and Vigilant Solutions operate RT at the remaining three airports; in addition, five other companies have received preliminary approval to operate RT programs but do not yet have contracts to do so.

#### **ISSUES FOR THE NEW ADMINISTRATION**

1. **Link RT with International Trusted Traveler Programs:** Although more and more U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents enroll in international trusted traveler programs like Global Entry, NEXUS and SENTRI, DHS has to date failed to leverage this base of well-vetted individuals by cross-enrolling these travelers in domestic RT. Travelers are forced to enroll multiple times in similar programs, pay separate fees and carry multiple credentials.

#### ***Action Item:***

- International Registered Traveler enrollees and applicants who also successfully pass a rigorous CBP application process should be offered an opportunity to be cross-enrolled in all other DHS-regulated domestic trusted traveler programs as a means to ease their travel and increase DHS's screening productivity.
2. **Return RT to a True Risk Management Program:** The current TSA has refused to alter the checkpoint security procedures or equipment for RT participants and thus opted to withdraw its role in the security background check. TSA should reexamine this decision and proposals to deploy enhanced equipment to scan shoes and bags for explosives.

***Action Item:***

- To maximize the security potential of RT, TSA needs to be encouraged to work in a robust partnership with approved service providers on their proposals to conduct enhanced background checks and to introduce state-of-the-art technology at RT lanes.