



~~SENSITIVE SECURITY INFORMATION~~



**Date:** July 19, 2011  
**To:** Federal Security Directors  
**From:** Scott T. Johnson, General Manager, Field Operations, Security Operations  
**Subject:** 400.5 – ROUTINE – Use of Recording Devices

**Primary POC:** [TSAScreeningSOPs@dhs.gov](mailto:TSAScreeningSOPs@dhs.gov)

**Secondary POC:** Jonella Culmer, 571-227-(b)(6)

**References:** None

**Attachments:**

- a)  Recording Devices  
Memo 7 1 2011final.
- b)  Private Screening  
Advisory.pdf

Attached for your immediate dissemination and implementation is the policy memorandum regarding interruptions of screening procedures, particularly by use of recording devices.

Please ensure all personnel are briefed on this policy and the required signage is posted as described in the memo. Because of its length, this memo may have to be briefed in sections over several days.

The next revision of the Screening Management SOP will reflect this change.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the POC listed in this message.

~~WARNING: This record contains Sensitive Security Information that is controlled under 49 CFR parts 15 and 1520. No part of this record may be disclosed to persons without a "need to know", as defined in 49 CFR parts 15 and 1520, except with the written permission of the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration or the Secretary of Transportation. Unauthorized release may result in civil penalty or other action. For U.S. government agencies, public disclosure is governed by 5 U.S.C. 552 and 49 CFR parts 15 and 1520.~~





Transportation  
Security  
Administration

ACTION

MEMORANDUM FOR: Federal Security Directors (FSD)

FROM: Lee R. Kair  
Assistant Administrator  
Security Operations

SUBJECT: Interruptions of Screening Procedures, Particularly by Use of Recording Devices

A. General Guidance

1. TSA personnel should assume that they generally operate within an open environment and may be recorded at any time by members of the public, including passengers. Recording devices, however, may not be used if they interfere with efficient and effective screening operations or result in the unauthorized disclosure of Sensitive Security Information (SSI).
2. The public, passengers, and the press are permitted to photograph, videotape, film, or audiotape at screening checkpoints unless the activity: (i) interferes with a Transportation Security Officer's (TSO) ability to perform the efficient and effective screening of persons and property at the screening location; or (ii) involves the unauthorized disclosure of SSI including the photographing of a Resolution Pat-down (RPD) or the images displayed by screening equipment.
3. Requests by commercial entities to use recording devices at an airport screening location to record screening operations must be forwarded to TSA's Office of Strategic Communications and Public Affairs and comply with airport authority and other local requirements.
4. Absent a possible regulatory or law enforcement violation, TSA does not seize or destroy photographic or recording equipment or film or require the deletion of electronic images on such equipment at any time. No TSA personnel will seize or destroy photographic or recording equipment or film or require the deletion of electronic images without the express direction of their FSD.
5. In addition to this policy, local laws or state statutes may prohibit the use of recording devices at screening locations. TSA management must ensure that TSOs are familiar with these state or local laws. However, only state and local authorities may enforce such laws. Supervisory TSOs (STSO) must alert a law enforcement officer (LEO) to individuals who may be violating these state or local laws, but must not confront these individuals.

B. Definitions

1. Photographing – the use of visual recording devices including cameras and videotape equipment.
2. Recording device – any electronic device used to record images or sounds, to include, for example, cameras, videotape recorders, or audiotape recorders.

C. Photographing Security Monitor Screens

1. The emitted images of any screening equipment, including X-ray, Explosive Detection System (EDS), or Explosive Trace Detection (ETD) are generally SSI. Accordingly, each airport must review the configuration of monitor screens or emitted images of any screening equipment, including X-ray, EDS, or ETD and, to the greatest extent possible without negatively affecting image quality or TSO access to screens, protect the images from the general public or the press.
2. Photography is not permitted of monitor screens or emitted images that have been shielded from public view. If an individual is observed attempting to photograph these monitor screens or emitted images, notify the STSO. The STSO must request the individual to stop photographing and notify local law enforcement if the individual refuses or other law enforcement follow-up is warranted.

D. Security Procedures When Recording Devices are Used at the Checkpoint

If an individual is using a recording device within the screening checkpoint and interferes with the screening process such that the TSO is unable to efficiently and effectively perform his or her screening duties, the TSO does not have to talk to or attempt to continue screening the individual. Instead, the TSO should stop screening the individual, notify the STSO, and maintain positive control of the person and his or her accessible property in a calm and professional manner until the STSO is available to assist. If the interference appears to be preventing other TSOs from effectively and efficiently screening other individuals at the screening location, the STSO may cease screening operations until the situation is resolved.

E. Use of Recording Devices to Record at a Private Screening Location

1. The RPD process may not be photographed due to security concerns. Disclosure of the RPD may result in a breakdown of a layer of security which would be contrary to TSA's mission to protect the traveling public.
2. All private screening locations must prominently post the sign in Attachment 1.
3. If an individual attempts to photograph RPD screening in a private screening location, the TSO/STSO must stop RPD screening, and request the individual stop photographing the RPD. If the individual does not comply, the STSO must notify local law enforcement.
4. Use of an audio device in the private screening area is not prohibited. Photographing screening procedures in the private screening area that is not an RPD procedure is permitted, as long as the photographing does not otherwise interfere with the effective and efficient screening of the individual being screened.

F. Other Interruptions of Security Operations

1. If an individual's conduct at a screening location is such that efficient and effective screening cannot be conducted at that screening location, the STSO must, as a security measure:
2. Cease screening operations. The extent of the cessation of screening is at the discretion of the STSO, based on a STSO's judgment, under all the facts of circumstances, of the degree of interference. Thus, for example, some interference may only require the shutting down of one lane of a multi-lane checkpoint. Particularly disruptive conduct could require shutting down multiple lanes or an entire checkpoint.
3. Verify the screening location is secure and under control.
4. Notify local law enforcement. Operations should remain shut down until an LEO arrives on scene to resolve the situation, and the FSD or FSD designee has authorized reopening the screening location.
5. When an LEO is notified, an individual and/or property should not be allowed into the sterile area or onboard an aircraft until the FSD or his or her designee has reviewed the LEO's actions and authorized the individual to continue the screening process or proceed into the sterile area.
6. Through the FSD, immediately notify the Area Director, who in turn will immediately notify the General Manager, Office of Security Operations at TSA Headquarters.

Attachment 1: Sign for Private Screening Location

# Private Screening Advisory

For security reasons, some screening procedures conducted in this area cannot be videotaped or photographed. Please cease any recording or photography if directed by a TSA officer.



You have the option to have someone accompany you during private screening.

## Your safety is our priority



Transportation  
Security  
Administration

[www.tsa.gov](http://www.tsa.gov)