

OCT 24 2006



**Transportation  
Security  
Administration**

Mr. John M. Conley  
International Representative, Transport  
Workers Union  
1791 Hurstview Drive  
Hurst, TX 76054

Dear Mr. Conley:

Thank you for your e-mail of August 22, 2006, to Assistant Secretary Hawley about screening procedures for airport employees. Your organization plays a critical role in ensuring the safety and security of the U.S. aviation system, and we consider your membership to be our partners in securing the Nation's skies.

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) recently established an airport employee screening program that can be instituted by Federal Security Directors (FSDs) in response to threats or increased threat levels. Since the inception of this program, FSDs have reported routine discovery of prohibited items at airport employee screening checkpoints, to include explosives, knives, and firearms. The individuals who attempted to bring these items into the airport sterile area were badged airport employees who had undergone background checks. This data suggests that airport employee screening checkpoints serve an important role in our layered security. While these checkpoints are designed to prevent the purposeful carriage of prohibited items into secured/sterile areas, they also serve to intercept dangerous items that an employee might unintentionally carry on his or her person.

TSA's regulations specifically permit airport employees to carry items that are otherwise prohibited into sterile/secured areas if such items are needed in the performance of the employee's assigned duties at the airport. With the recent change in rules regarding the carriage of liquids and gels, airport and airline employees are now allowed to carry liquids and gels into the sterile area through specific locations.

TSA values the security contributions provided by the Transport Workers Union. We believe the recent changes to our security policies closely align screening procedures for airport/airline employees with those for uniformed crewmembers. Thank you for your letter and your continued support of TSA's mission in these challenging times.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael J. Restovich".

Michael J. Restovich  
Assistant Administrator  
for Security Operations

OCT 30 2006