



PRESS RELEASE
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Airports Need Security Boost for Record Summer Travel Season

This Memorial Day weekend kicks off the summer travel season. [Air travel is expected to rise 4% this summer compared to last year](#), and our nation's airports will be busier than ever.

While airport police are prepared and ready for these growing crowds, forefront on our minds is the heightened threat environment overseas and remaining vigilant here at home. This week's concert bombing in Manchester, recent terror attacks near Westminster Palace in London and Paris' Orly airport, and the deadly bomb explosion at a subway station in St. Petersburg, Russia, remind us that we must remain strong in the face of evil. Attacks on transportation hubs and areas where large groups gather have increased dramatically in the past few years, and airports have been among the top targets for terrorists.

As we saw with the attack at Paris' Orly airport and previous airport incidents in Turkey and Belgium, reaching an airplane is a priority objective for those looking to disrupt our way of life. So, we must continue to be aggressive in protecting our airports. However, airports pose a unique challenge, as they provide access to airplanes, which can be used as their own weapon of mass destruction by terrorists. Given the increasingly dangerous security environment, more can and should be done to ensure the safety of the traveling public, including stationing airport police near TSA screening areas, providing airport police real-time access to all cameras at airports and screening all airport employees.

These simple, commonsense recommendations, which the AAPO has been consistent in seeking, can make the difference between life and death. Leaders and lawmakers who continue to choose to ignore these proposals are, in effect, gambling with the safety of the traveling public.

"Our condolences are with the families of those killed and injured in the Manchester attack," said Marshall McClain, president of the Los Angeles Airport Peace Officers Association and co-founder of AAPO. "While all terrorist attacks are inexcusable, targeting children and young adults makes this attack even more heinous. With summer air travel gearing up, our sole motivation is to enhance the security of our airports — we must be two steps ahead of this madness to prevent it. Airport leaders, lawmakers and those who have the ability to support calls by rank and file should step up."

"If even a single life is harmed in attacks like those in Manchester, our police officers are always motivated to improve and to do their best to make sure it never happens again," said Paul Nunziato, president of the Port Authority Police Benevolent Association and co-founder of the AAPO. "The safety of people is what drives us. We need to be proactive in stopping threats, and the solutions we propose will help airport police stay ahead of terrorists."

AAPO wishes all travelers a safe holiday weekend.

The American Alliance of Airport Police Officers (AAPO) is composed of rank-and-file airport police officers (including many dual police/aircraft rescue firefighters) who stand as the first line of defense against terrorist attacks, hijackings and other criminal activity at our nation's airports. We seek to promote security and safety for the traveling public, visitors and airport employees by highlighting best practices and identifying areas for improvement and proposed solutions for our nation's airport security deployment. AAPO focuses on regulatory issues that promote our efforts to provide the most advanced and cutting-edge service innovations and security processes in our nation and the world. Our organization represents thousands of sworn law enforcement officers across the United States beholden only to this mission. We are unencumbered by neither political nor managerial constraints that would prevent us from promoting sound public safety policy.

The founding members of the American Alliance of Airport Police Officers are composed of numerous rank-and-file airport police officers from John F. Kennedy International Airport; LaGuardia Airport; Los Angeles International Airport; Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport; LA/Ontario International Airport; Newark Liberty International Airport; Van Nuys Airport; Stewart International Airport; and Teterboro Airport.