



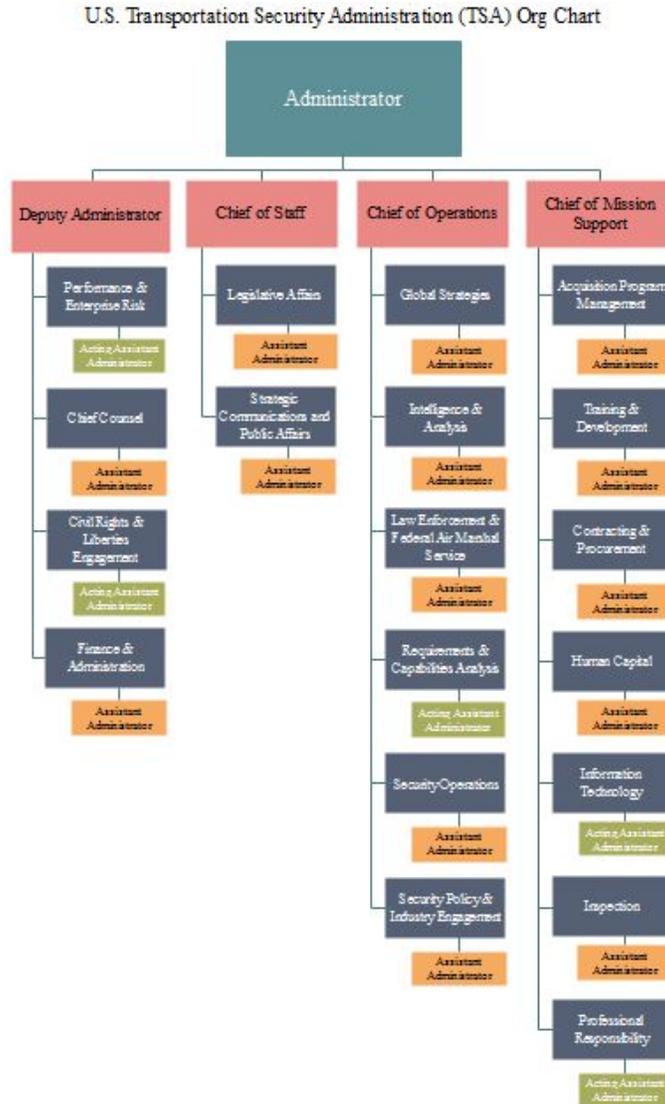
“A TSA agent waits for passengers to use the TSA PreCheck lane being implemented by the Transportation Security Administration at Miami International Airport on October 4, 2011 in Miami, Florida” (Alter, 2014).

Everyday Public Administration:  
Transportation Security Administration

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There exist many jobs within the American government. Ranging from small community groups to the Senate, the umbrella under which a job can be considered public administration is large. This essay concerns the Transportation Security Administration, otherwise known as TSA. In writing this essay, we hope to reveal what the TSA is, how its functions serve the people, and then how it pertains to ourselves.

TSA stands for Transportation Security Administration. This federal cabinet department that was created in 2002 was put in place for the public and national security following the September 11th attacks. It is run by the Department of Homeland Security, a cabinet office run by the federal executive branch, i.e. the President. The chart below describes the organizational structure within the TSA (N., 2016). The current Administrator is David Pekoske.



For the fiscal year of 2012, the TSA had a budget of roughly \$7.6 billion. The allotment of this budget is given in the table below (United States Congress, 2011).

Budget	\$ Million	Share
Aviation Security	5,254	70
Transportation Security Support & Intelligence	1,032	14
Federal Air Marshalls	966	13

Transportation Threat Assessment & Credentialing	165	2
Surface Transportation Security	135	2
Total	7,552	100

Part of the TSA budget comes from a \$2.50 per-passenger tax. The Obama administration had proposed tripling this fee by 2019, with most of the increase going to reduce the national debt (“TSA”). According to John Hicks in his article “Travelers leave \$500,000 per year at TSA checkpoints,” Travelers left about half a million dollars behind at airport checkpoints in 2012 and 2013 (Hicks, 2013). TSA keeps this money for security operations (“At TSA”, 2015).

So, how does this apply to citizens? Why spend \$7.6 billion annually on this organization? The answer is simple. The government runs the Transportation Security Administration because it is a service for the public's safety. It is in the country's best interest to have this department of the government involved in our daily lives because their goal is to protect citizens and prevent future attacks. Everyone has access to this service, and there are special lines created for the disabled, for guests over the age of 60, and for unaccompanied minors. While one might think that they would have to be in an airport to benefit from this service, TSA -- especially in internationally connected airports -- provide some of the first protections under the Homeland Security umbrella utilizing security checkpoints and cameras to stop harm from getting on the plane and to your destination. And how can you help? How can you, the citizen, get involved? Well for starters, keep paying your taxes and be kind to TSA workers. During the government shutdown, they are working unpaid. In certain airports, there

exist stands with buttons symbolizing level of happiness in regards to how happy fliers are with the services provided there. On the TSA website, [www.tsa.gov/contact](http://www.tsa.gov/contact), there exist many options for citizen involvement from customer service to contacting public affairs to passenger support.

Finally, the individual. How does this pertain to me? Originally from South Florida, I recently saw firsthand the importance of TSA during an active shooter attack at the Ft. Lauderdale-Hollywood Airport. This service protects all citizens of any age. Their work is largely unnoticed, simply people in uniform working day after day leading lines of confused passengers to their correct gates and scanning the airport for anything out of the blue. TSA makes accommodations for the elderly, disabled, and children, creating the necessary help for everyone in the community. Personally, I expect public administrators managing this activity to recognize the importance of this service and do what is best to promote the best in terms of wellness and security for these workers.

The umbrella of public administration covers many disciplines. While all are important, keeping government moving and protecting all aspects of what makes the United States the United States, the TSA exists on the frontlines of our constant battles with terrorism and domestic safety. TSA serves the people.

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