



U.S. Department of
Transportation
Office of the Secretary
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F A X C O V E R S H E E T

DATE: 3/16/1999

TO: Mary Smith

FROM: Carrie Hyman

*Alphabet
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MESSAGE (IF ANY):

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Recognizing that effectively combating terrorism is a vital national security goal, the federal government has funded the purchase and deployment of the most advanced equipment in the world to safeguard civil aviation. Our partners in this effort, the airlines, have taken responsibility for the operation and maintenance of the equipment. This Administration, together with the Congress, has provided \$157 million for this advanced security equipment for the Nation's airports in fiscal years 1997 and 1998 and in fiscal year 1999, has provided an additional \$100 million to continue this deployment, which, in quantity and quality, is unique in the world. In order to continue with this effort, this Administration has requested a third installment of \$100 million in fiscal year 2000.

The White House Commission of Aviation Safety and Security recommended the government purchase "computed tomography detection systems, upgraded x-rays, and other innovative systems" to help ensure the safety of the flying public. Following this recommendation, with the funding just mentioned we have already installed such security equipment at scores of major airports, which account for over 80 % of passenger traffic. The equipment includes the tomography systems and x-rays as well as chemical "sniffers," known as trace detectors. Over 80 tomography and x-ray systems have been installed at airports around the country and over 50 more will be installed this year. Over 300 trace detectors have been installed since 1996, and 260 more will be deployed this year.

The Federal Aviation Administration is working with airports and airlines to continue with these installations beyond fiscal year 1999. It plans to buy and deploy more equipment over the next few years to provide even more complete coverage, not only at our larger airports, but also at our smaller ones. Our goal is for all airports with a security program (well over 400) to have advanced explosives detection equipment to screen baggage.

We have also deployed other security equipment and are expanding other security capabilities since 1996.

- Our Explosives Detection Canine Program has grown from 87 teams at 30 airports in 1996 to 154 teams at 39 airports today. We intend to continue this expansion to install a canine presence at our 80 largest airports by 2002.
- In 1998, 11 joint FBI/FAA threat and vulnerability assessments were conducted. Twenty-one more are scheduled in 1999.
- Advanced "screener-assist" x-rays are being field-tested by the National Safe Skies Alliance at McGhee-Tyson Airport in Knoxville, TN. These will provide a greatly added capability in explosives detection by screeners at checkpoints. In FY 1999, \$25 million will be spent to purchase over 400 screener-assist capable x-rays for deployment across the Nation.
- In addition, these same x-rays will be equipped with "Threat Image Projection," a software system that presents fictitious threat images to each screener and measures

performance. The results can be used to evaluate checkpoint operation and will also feed back vital information to air carriers and the FAA on how to improve screener performance.