



Fact Sheet on
The Federal Flight Deck Officer Program
A Model of Effectiveness and Efficiency in a Government/Industry Partnership
April 2013

- Q The Federal Flight Deck Officer (FFDO) program was authorized by Title XIV, Arming Pilots Against Terrorism, of the Homeland Security Act, November 2002. The first class of 44 FFDOs was trained April 2003 at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) in Glynco, Ga.
- Q Thousands more FFDOs, all airline pilots who volunteer their time and financial resources to participate in the program, have been vetted and trained by the TSA since 2003. There is strong support for this program; a recent call for pilots to volunteer for a few training slots this June produced more than 1,000 responses from ALPA pilots in just a few days.
- Q TSA's Aviation Operations branch initially provided training and oversight; responsibility shifted to the Federal Air Marshal Service in December 2005 where it has been since that time.
- Q The FFDO program budget began at \$10 million in 2003, and has been funded at approximately **\$25 million per year** since 2004. FFDOs protect thousands of flights each day and over 100,000 flights each month. The Federal Air Marshal Service provides a needed, complementary layer of security, but it does so with a budget of nearly **\$1 billion per year** and protects just a small percentage of the number of flights protected by FFDOs.
- Q The federal cost to have a deputized FFDO on board is approximately **\$17**; the cost incurred for each FAM onboard is approximately **\$3,000**.
- Q The TSA has for several years touted the FFDO program as an important layer of security that is "capable of stopping a terrorist attack" (reference <http://www.tsa.gov/about-tsa/layers-security>).
- Q TSA recently celebrated the 10th anniversary of the FFDO program with the Air Line Pilots Association, Int'l and other industry stakeholders, even as the DHS announced that the program is proposed to be defunded in the administration's 2014 budget.
- Q ALPA is adamantly opposed to the administration's proposal to eliminate FFDO funding in its proposed FY14 federal budget. ALPA successfully defended FFDO funding in 2012 when the administration proposed slashing the program's budget by more than 50 percent as part of its FY13 budget. In fact, the U.S. House of Representatives properly voted to increase the FFDO budget by \$10 million to \$35 million. (Note: The FY13 Homeland Security appropriations bill was not enacted.)
- Q DHS has testified that in lieu of federal funding, the airlines should be responsible for funding the FFDO program on a voluntary basis. However, Subsection 44921(c)(1), of the Homeland Security Act states "The Under Secretary shall only be obligated to provide the training, supervision, and equipment necessary for a pilot to be a Federal Flight Deck Officer under this section at no expense to the pilot or the air carrier employing the pilot."
- Q ALPA urges Congress to act again by rejecting the administration's misguided proposals and to fully and appropriately fund this critical security program.
- Q More details about this program can be found in ALPA's [white paper](#) "Recommendations to Improve the Federal Flight Deck Officer Program."