

## **Flight Attendant Participation in Known Crewmember**

Following the enhanced security screening procedures put in place following the 9/11 attacks The Association of Flight Attendants – CWA has been advocating for improving crew member screening at security check points.

In early 2007, the House of Representatives began work on a bill, based upon recommendations from the 9/11 security commission, to provide an alternate screening procedures for crew members. The initial legislative drafts required development of a screening procedure for pilots. AFA worked with the Chairman to ensure that the flight attendant were included in the final version of the bill.

Shortly after the May 2007 introduction of the bill, the Airline Pilots Association (ALPA) issued a report calling for the creation of an alternative screening system based upon the Cockpit Access Security System (CASS). CASS was designed to verify, in real time, the employment status of pilots, allowing them to occupy the cockpit jumpseat. The ALPA report supported AFA's position; since Flight Attendants are required cockpit access and required to clear employment checks to determine trustworthiness.

Using the CASS database, TSA began to test the feasibility of an alternative screening process at three airport locations; Baltimore, Columbia S.C. and Pittsburgh. In 2009, the addition of a biometric component, to enhance security, began. As the benefits of the test phase became apparent, the TSA moved to require biometric compliance for all participants. The target date for the biometric component was January 2011.

As the test program for pilots was underway, AFA began to work with our member carriers to ensure that once the system was expanded the congressional requirement for crew member inclusion would be followed. In 2009 the AFA board of director's passed a resolution urging member airlines to work with their companies to implement an alternative screening procedure. While the majority of AFA carriers entered into discussion with the carriers on the benefits of alternative screening, two carriers Alaska and Air Wisconsin started to have programs ready to launch.

As new screening technologies, AIT scanning machines, were deployed in over 68 airport locations, the TSA implemented new enhanced screening procedures at security check points. Any person who did not want to utilize the new AIT machines, and alarmed at a walk-through metal detector, would be subjected to an "enhance" pat-down. This Thanksgiving weekend roll-out was done without consultation of industry, labor groups and the traveling public.

When a Memphis pilot refused to submit to the new screening procedures and was subsequently denied access to his aircraft; TSA, faced with a public outcry announced that Pilots would be exempt from the new screening procedures and that the TSA would expand the CASS expedited screening system – for pilots only.

On November 19, 2010 AFA-CWA held a meeting with TSA Administrator John Pistole to discuss the concerns of our members about these procedures and to reiterate our call for TSA to implement CrewPASS that would provide flight attendants with a non-invasive method of screening. At this meeting TSA said that Pilots and Flight Attendants would be subjected to the exact same screening procedures and the Administrator agreed to work with the AFA on a range of security related issues; include screening procedures.

The TSA was still hesitant to formally commit to alternative screening for flight attendants. As a result AFA participated in several subsequent follow-up conversations and meeting with TSA. AFA also reached out to Congressional Leadership and ask for their support; AFA maintained that any alternative screening procedures must be applied equally to all crew members and Congress agreed.

On July 23, 2012 AFA achieved TSA inclusion of Flight Attendants in the Known Crewmember Program. AFA members at USAirways were the first in the industry to transit KCM checkpoints. We continue to press all airlines to take part in the program.