

The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey
Committee on Security Meeting Transcripts
February 25, 2010

Comm. A. Sartor: Today's meeting of the Security Committee is being held in Public Session in its entirety. In addition this meeting is being broadcast live on the Port Authority's web site for those interested in viewing today's proceedings via the Internet. For discussion purposes we have an update on security. Ernesto?

E. Butcher: Thank you. Good morning, Commissioners. [no sound] As part of that update we remind you of the process that we have followed in developing and implementing the program, present you with some accomplishments to date and finally will bring you up to date on some recent incidents that have been highly publicized and advise you on how we have managed them thus far. First we will begin with an overview of the challenges we face as we seek to implement agency security programs. It goes without saying that our facilities are truly unique in the vital role they play as major gateways to the nation and in their contribution to the economic vitality of this region, a region that is among the greatest in the world and one that has come to symbolize the best of American values, culture, and economic strength. Perhaps no other public agency faces a similar range of security challenges across such a diverse set of businesses. Our facilities are critical to the vitality of the metropolitan area, and are situated within densely populated urban communities. The George Washington Bridge, John F. Kennedy International Airport, and the Lincoln Tunnel are not only heavily traveled public infrastructure, but are also internationally known and have great symbolic value. And of course Port and Transit facilities have also proven to be lucrative targets for terrorists. These facilities rank among the very top of the Nation's critical infrastructure target list. Our challenge is great since it is our mission to facilitate the free flow of people and goods. Therefore, it is essential that we continue to seek a balance between the often competing demands of security and mobility. And of course this complex security challenge comes at a considerable cost. Providing security for this complex array of facilities has not been easy or, as I said earlier, inexpensive. Through the end of 2010, the Port Authority would have spent upwards of \$5 billion since 2001 to provide for security needs. A significant portion of the Agency's resources has been reprogrammed to meet this important need. The costs include operating as well as capital efforts. As we have identified capital projects which would serve to reduce risk associated with our facilities, we have moved to put them in place at an accelerating rate. Expenditures have increased each year since 2003. In 2009, security capital expenditures totaled \$280 million and we are continuing our commitment in 2010 with planned capital expenditures in excess of \$300 million. The greatest single operating investment in security that this Agency has made thus far has been in significantly expanded police operations. Police costs have increased by well over \$100 million a year from base year of 2001. This chart depicts the efforts the agency has taken over the years since 2001 to right-size the Port Authority Police Department. We have been careful to ensure that the deployment of the additional police staffing reflects our awareness of the risk associated with some of our facilities. As you can see, the increases in staffing focus on those areas which we have found to be of greatest risk potential. Increased staffing levels which represent the right-sizing of the force have been followed with addition to the specialized units such as the valuable canine units, which is one of the largest in the Country. Our Public Safety Department, anchored by the Police Division, is the cornerstone of our security posture. Our Police officers

are now better equipped and trained to deal with the new realities of policing and transportation facilities. In addition to Police activities, there have been other operational changes that we've had to make to ensure the safety of the facilities and the customers who use them. For example, at the George Washington Bridge we have had to restrict trucks from the lower level to remove the likelihood of an incident on that level, which would be far more damaging than one occurring on the completely open upper level. While this operational change has created some inconveniences, we believe that it is necessary and essential as part of our security process. Changes in the security environment post-9/11 and the lessons learned in the months thereafter led us to create the Office of Emergency Management in January of 2002 which, along with the Police Division, formed the Public Safety Department. Since its creation the Office of Emergency Management has managed a comprehensive program of security audits, developed and employed a national model for vulnerability and risk assessment, guided development of our 5-Year Security Plan, conceived and implemented ground-breaking test bed programs in partnership with the Department of Homeland Security, and is the Agency's primary point of contact with local, State, and Federal Homeland Security agencies. The Office of Emergency Management has spearheaded efforts to improve our preparedness to respond to crisis events. It has managed the implementation and now staffs the Agency's new emergency operations center, prepares response plans, administers emergency management training programs, and directs corporate level and interagency drills and exercises. The office is also responsible for the continuity of operations planning and programs, as well as a weapons of mass destruction detection, response and recovery program in cooperation with local, state, and Federal agencies. On the capital side of our investment, we have over the past several years completed a significant number of projects in the areas of facility hardening, access control, and perimeter protection. This slide is a representation of some of those efforts which range from the protection of the tower bases, both land side and water side, of the George Washington Bridge, installation of crafts rated ballards at terminals of airports and at the Port Authority Bus Terminal in Mid Town Manhattan, secure gate controls at access points to air side operating areas, improved perimeter control fencing, securing the cables at the George Washington Bridge with innovating housings which protect them without compromising the bridge's appearance or design structure, did installation of state-of-the-art laser intrusion detection systems at PATH tunnel entrances. Securing the perimeter of our facilities is among the most critical things that we have undertaken. Next slide please. Controlling access to the air side operating areas of the airports remains one of the priorities in the agency's overall security plan. The Perimeter Intrusion Detection System, or PIDS, is a fully-integrated security system, the purpose of which is to seek, to detect, any intrusion by unauthorized personnel or vehicles into the airport operating areas. Using a network system of sensors on fences, cameras, and radar, this system, when fully deployed, will alert security personnel of intrusion, establish the location of the intrusion, visually display the location, as well as track the movement of the intruder or intruders in order that Police personnel can be dispatched and guided to the precise location of the intrusion. The infrastructure and most sensors to be utilized in PIDS are fully installed at all airports and testing is now being conducted. There remains, however, some concerns about quality and performance of certain elements within the integrated system which are important in providing indepth coverage required by the contract. We have been closely working with Raytheon, the contractor, to ensure that all elements perform according to the specification. Raytheon has committed to providing the system as designed. They have recently introduced a new team to the project, who are experienced in resolving technical problems. We remain

confident that we can add this project into our airport protection arsenal within the coming months. Commissioners, in this section of the updates we will brief you on separate incidents which received significant public attention, understandably, given the sensitivities that always accompany air travel and airport security. Airport security has received significantly more attention than any other transportation venue or infrastructure security areas. We address separately the events cited here at a Newark Airport and at JFK Airport breaches that occurred in the month of January. However, before doing so, I think it's important to place these incidents in proper perspective. It is important to note that airport security is a series of shared responsibilities that has been established through regulation and agreements. These agreements are all Federally-sanctioned with each party fully aware of their roles. The parties in this instance are the Federal government in the form of a Transportation Security Administration, the airlines, and the Port Authority as Airport Operator. The Federal security role at airports is carried out by the Transportation Security Administration, or TSA. The primary responsibilities of the TSA include the screening of passengers and cargo. The screening of passengers and their luggage is the most notable of these responsibilities. They are also responsible for monitoring all activities in the screening areas, including the monitoring of lanes entering and leaving the screening areas. The TSA also works with the airport operators to ensure that overall Federal security directives are met. Because the Port Authority does not, with limited exception such as essential terminal building at LaGuardia, Terminal B at Newark Airport, and the terminal at Stewart Airport, operate any of our terminals, the responsibility for operating the terminals, including security, is the responsibility of the airline that owns the terminal. The security responsibility is established by security plans that airlines develop, and are approved by the Federal government, and must contain very specific provisions. These agreements are referred to as Exclusive Area Agreements. Among the requirements that are contained in the airline agreements are the important need to ensure that all areas within the secure area that are within the airline operating area, are secure. Most importantly are the access points that go from public operating space to employee or other non-public space. Included in this responsibility is the securing of points of access to the air side sectors of the terminal which lead to aircraft and baggage loading areas. The Port Authority, as airport operator, also has defined operating responsibilities that range from providing all credentials and performing background checks for all employees and tenants of the airports; the law enforcement in all areas of the airport. The Port Authority Police Department is required to respond to incidents in secure areas and screening areas within 5 minutes of a call, and Port Authority personnel are deployed in a manner that ensures that that response is available. In addition to fire and rescue operations, the Port Authority Police Department also performs explosive protection support to TSA, as part of luggage and cargo checks. Patrolling terminals, terminal frontages, and airport perimeter are also among the duties performed by the Port Authority Police Department. Monitoring access to the air side operating areas for vehicles and personnel are added responsibilities of Port Authority personnel. As to the incidents themselves, on January 3 an individual who had accompanied a friend to the airport breached the secure area beyond passenger screening at Terminal C, operated by Continental. This breach resulted in an extended evacuation of the terminal. Following the incident, at the direction of Chairman Coscia, the Agency undertook a comprehensive audit of our airport security procedures and conducted meetings with the TSA and our airline partners to jointly review their procedures as well. This review led to agreements to sharpen attention to certain procedures, including immediate notification of Port Authority Police at the time of an incident. The Port Authority will also begin the installation of alarms

and cameras that will send immediate notification to Port Authority maintenance personnel that a unit requires maintenance. There are approximately 37 cameras at each of 3 screening locations at the 3 terminals at Newark airport. The current schedule for installation of the cameras indicates that by the end of March most of the monitoring equipment will be in place. Once completed, all alarms will be sent to the Airport Operations Desk which is staffed around the clock. All other airports also commenced a review of their security plans and procedures in the aftermath of the Newark breach. These reviews included Port Authority Police Department and operations staff as well as the appropriate regulatory agencies including the TSA, Customs, the Air Marshall Service, and others. We are paying particular attention to security check points and doors in restricted areas. We have also scheduled additional drills to enhance preparedness in these areas. At Kennedy Airport, on January 16, an arriving passenger at Terminal 8, the American Airlines terminal, entered a secure area restricted to American Airlines personnel, resulting ultimately in evacuation of the terminal. The door that was entered by the passenger was clearly marked, "Do Not Enter, Restricted Area, Authorized Airline Personnel Only." "Violators Subject to Fine or Prosecution." It also indicated that an alarm will sound. In reviewing the incident with the airline, the airline agreed to further upgrade the messages on that door and other doors as required, using pictograms or multi-lingual messages to make the messages clearer. They also agreed to install locks on non-fire access doors to further prevent unauthorized access. The airline has also agreed to add, where possible, additional cameras to ensure wider coverage of the area within the secure areas. We continue to work with our airline partners to develop similar improvements for other airport locations. We continue to conduct formal monthly security and operations meetings with all terminal operators, and recommend the use of the improved signage for all similar airport locations. It should be clear also that staff communicates on a daily basis with all of our terminal operators concerning various operational and security matters to ensure the airport is functioning in a safe, secure, and efficient manner. Commissioners, I hope that today's update has provided you with the assurance that the Port Authority continues to make security a top priority to ensure the safety and security of the Agency's facilities so that the public and commerce may be assured of dependable, trustworthy, and safe passage throughout the region. Comm. A. Sartor: Thank you, Ernesto. Any questions or comments? Comm. H.S. Holmes: I have a couple of questions. I don't know if I missed it, but did we cover the tunnels in the presentation? E. Butcher: Some of the tunnels, we did mention the fact that we've got increased surveillance in the tunnels, additional cameras, and that sort of thing. Comm. H.S. Holmes: And, do we have a backup plan for the PIDS Program should a vendor or contractor not be successful? E. Butcher: So far as the PIDS Program is concerned, the piece of that currently of concern is just one piece of the entire effort, and potentially if that piece turns out not to be functional, we believe that all the parts of the system will provide us with a much more robust protection of the perimeter than we've had heretofore. It would not be the full effort that we were considering, but we believe that it would provide significant support for the perimeters. Comm. A. Sartor: Yes? Comm. S. Grayson: Ernesto, do our partners share our sense of urgency and need for enhanced security? E. Butcher: It is my sense that they do, but we're talking about human nature, and there are times when individuals do things that are not according to procedure but I think that we can say without any concern that in all of our interactions with all of our partners, they have expressed as much a sense of urgency on these issues as we have. Comm. S. Grayson: You mentioned the 37 cameras at Newark-- most will be operational the end of March. When will that process be complete? E. Butcher: The cameras themselves are operational. What we are concerned about

are the recording devices that were attached to the cameras. And what we are trying to do there is to ensure that in the event that a device is not working that it will send an alarm. For all intents and purposes the cameras and the recorders are working. What we are doing is putting an alarm on them in the event that one was about to fail then we will be notified in advance. Comm. A. Sartor: Anything else? No response from Committee. Comm. A. Sartor: Very informative and much-appreciated. Anybody else have any comments? No response from Committee. Comm. A. Sartor: If not, the meeting is adjourned.