



**TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ADMINISTRATION
ANNOUNCES
ARMED SECURITY OFFICER (ASO) PROGRAM**

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA), in coordination with the Federal Air Marshal Service (FAMS), announces implementation of the Armed Security Officer (ASO) Program. The ASO Program will enable interested persons who meet eligibility requirements and have qualifying law enforcement experience to provide armed security aboard General Aviation (GA) aircraft authorized to operate into and out of Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (DCA), starting in October 2005.

An Interim Final Rule (IFR) published by TSA in the Federal Register on July 15, 2005, established security procedures that will allow GA operations to resume at DCA, while protecting critical national assets from possible airborne terrorist attack. These procedures include a requirement that every GA flight operating into or out of DCA have onboard an armed security officer specially trained and authorized by TSA. Persons authorized as ASOs are not employed by the Federal government, but are compensated for their services by either a Fixed Base Operator – an airport-based commercial enterprise that provides support services to aircraft operators such as maintenance, overnight parking, fueling, and de-icing – or the aircraft operator conducting the flight.

Eligibility requirements include, but are not limited to, having qualifying law enforcement experience as either an active Law Enforcement Officer (LEO) in good standing; a qualified retired LEO in good standing; or a qualified former LEO in good standing with a minimum of four (4) years law enforcement experience as defined by TSA. Applicants who meet all eligibility requirements and who pass all necessary background checks must successfully complete, at their own expense, a two-day training program conducted by the FAMS at field offices located throughout the United States. Active LEOs must provide a letter from their department authorizing their participation in the program, and indicating whether they may use their department-issued firearm.

Detailed information regarding the ASO Program, as well as application materials and instructions, can be obtained through the *Security & Law Enforcement* link on the TSA web site at <http://www.tsa.gov>. Questions that are not addressed under the *Frequently Asked Questions* may be directed to ASO-DCA@DHS.GOV.