



News Release

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CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF AVIATION CONCLUDES SECURITY REVIEW AND TAKES ACTION TO CLARIFY ROLE OF AVIATION SECURITY OFFICERS

Following the incident aboard United Airlines Flight 3411, department's comprehensive security review calls for immediate and ongoing changes to policies and procedures to clarify the role of Aviation Security Officers

CHICAGO – Following the April 9, 2017 incident on United Airlines Flight 3411, the Chicago Department of Aviation (CDA) initiated a comprehensive review of the Aviation Security Division. Today, CDA issued a report that provides an analysis of the security division's protocols and training for Aviation Security Officers (ASOs), the workforce directly involved. Building on the immediate changes made to incident response protocols by CDA following the 3411 incident, the report outlines next steps to improve consistency in roles, training and coordinated functions of the ASOs.

All measures introduced in this report are designed to protect passengers and to ensure the most efficient security responses are provided at both Midway and O'Hare International Airports.

"The safety of our passengers has always been our top priority, and we are taking action to ensure that the policies and procedures are in place to deliver the most effective security responses," said CDA Commissioner Ginger S. Evans. "We are confident that these actions are necessary to guide our department forward, while improving clarity for the aviation security officers who play an integral role in maintaining safe and secure conditions for the traveling public at both of Chicago's airports."

To complete its comprehensive review, the CDA reviewed its current security structure, as well as the policies and procedures and enforcement thereof that apply in situations like the incident on UA Flight 3411. As a result, the CDA is instituting several immediate and ongoing changes to clarify roles and departmental policies guiding airport security going forward. Specifically, the CDA will take the following actions:

First, CDA will introduce a new directive designating Chicago Police Officers as the lead on all disturbance calls at the airports, in addition to those on aircrafts. This rescinds the current directive guiding incident dispatch, and defines coordination on responses with the Chicago Police Department (CPD). This new directive builds on the direction given by CDA leadership earlier this year to emphasize that CPD officers, the designated law enforcement agency at the airports, not ASOs, are authorized to respond to disturbance-related incidents on aircraft.

CDA will update the Aviation Security procedures manual to integrate all standard operating procedures and directives. Outdated policies, procedures, and protocols for security personnel will be rescinded. In doing so, the CDA will provide the security division a more clear and concise understanding of terminology, duties and training pertaining to ASOs, and will better distinguish the roles of security and law enforcement at the airports.

Additionally, changes will be made to ASO uniform insignia and vehicle markings to consistently reinforce and communicate the ASO role as security professionals distinct from Chicago Police. Based on the mutually agreed upon contract and the municipal code, ASOs have never been authorized as special police, nor as police officers. CDA will order the aviation security division to adopt new insignia, replacing current uniforms improperly utilizing the word police, and will take immediate action to replace the word “police” with new security decals on department vehicles.

CDA will also update its training program to more closely align modules with the scope of ASO duties at the airports, and to support ASOs in performing coordinated functions with CPD and other agencies. New training will be developed in consultation with CPD, as well as other agencies within the multilayered security network, to ensure full coverage of security regulations required to be enforced on a 24/7 basis.

Outside of the CDA’s review of its security division, the details of the communications and actions during the incident on UA 3411 were the subject of an expedited disciplinary review by the City of Chicago’s Office of the Inspector General (OIG). The Department has reviewed the OIG’s report and related evidence regarding the incident and is moving forward with the disciplinary process. Actions will be taken in response to these findings in accordance with requirements under the relevant collective bargaining agreement.

Each year, more than 100 million people travel safely through O’Hare and Midway International Airports without incident, thanks to coordination with federal and local agencies functioning within the multi-layered airport security program, as well as airline tenants. The CDA is committed to making ongoing improvements to reflect the ever-changing climate of airport security, maintain safe and secure conditions, and to best serve the needs of the traveling public.

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The Chicago Department of Aviation (CDA) is self-supporting, using no local or state tax dollars for operations or capital improvements at O’Hare and Midway International airports. Together, Chicago’s airports generate more than \$45 billion in annual economic activity and create 540,000 jobs for the region. Please visit www.flychicago.com to learn more about the Chicago Department of Aviation.



ORD – 2013
Airport with the Most New Routes
Airport with the Most New International Routes
Airport with the Most New Airlines

MDW – 2011
Fastest Growing Airport

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