



**Transportation
Security
Administration**

MEMORANDUM FOR: Nathan Lesser
OMB DHS Desk Officer

THROUGH: Scott Charbo
DHS Chief Information Officer

FROM: Peter Pietra *JAP*
Director of Privacy Policy and Compliance

SUBJECT: Request for Emergency Clearance for the OLE/FAMS Mental
Health Questionnaire

In accordance with new Transportation Security Administration (TSA) Office of Law Enforcement/Federal Air Marshal Service hiring requirements, TSA requests immediate approval to collect this information via a Mental Health Certification from Federal Air Marshal applicants. The mission of the Federal Air Marshal Service is to detect, deter, and defeat hostile acts targeting U.S. air carriers, airports, passengers, and crews. In order to adequately protect the flying public, TSA must determine an applicant's medical eligibility and conclude that there is no established medical history or diagnosis of personality disorders that clearly demonstrate a potential hazard to the performance of the Federal Air Marshal duties or the safety of self or others.

Federal Air Marshal Service applicants have always been subjected to a psychological examination as part of assessing an applicant's medical eligibility¹. After further evaluation, TSA determined that this process could be made more efficient for both applicants and TSA personnel assessing the applicants by collecting the information earlier in the process so as to reduce the burden by eliminating applicants who clearly are unqualified for this psychologically stressful position. Thus, TSA developed the Mental Health Certification to streamline the process and to be used by psychologists to assess an applicant's medical eligibility.

TSA cannot reasonably comply with the normal clearance procedures under 5 CFR 1320. TSA has suspended the hiring process pending approval of the collection of information. Standard clearance procedures will prevent the immediate collection of necessary medical information, which will adversely affect the hiring of new Federal Air Marshals and encumber their operational deployment. Pertinent agencies and subject matter specialists have been consulted in order to minimize the burden of information collection.

Your expedited action on this request is appreciated.

¹ In accordance with 5 CFR 1320.5(h)(7), "examinations designed to test the aptitude, abilities, and knowledge of the person tested and the collection of information for identification or classification in connection with such examinations," are exempt from the Paperwork Reduction Act.