WHSR / TSA SENIOR INDUSTRY FORUM SERIES:
OFFICE OF SECURITY CAPABILITIES ENGAGEMENT GROUP

IMPROVING RELIABILITY & SERVICE LIFE FOCUS GROUP
MEETING REPORT
November 20, 2013

The Washington Homeland Security Roundtable (WHSR) hosted the fourth TSA Office of Security Capabilities (OSC) Improving Reliability and Service Life Focus Group meeting on November 20, 2013. Participants attending the meeting consisted of representatives from industry, WHSR, and TSA.

The industry participants and TSA representatives agreed that a key focus of the group should be to define the term "useful life." The discussion first touched on the three focus areas of the current white paper the group is developing in their outside working groups, which includes the definitions of service life and useful life.

TSA shared that ability to upgrade to higher detection capabilities is exhausted when you can no longer update the current piece of equipment. The technology TSA has upgraded is now capable of detecting threats, but the tradeoff can be higher false alarm rates, difficult with increased throughput, etc. There is a growing percentage of the population that is in the low risk screening category and TSA wants to find ways to optimize the efficiency of screening of the low risk passengers. This could reduce

throughput, and therefore reduce false alarms while still maintaining high detection levels.

The group also discussed the need to identify planning factors for machine replacement. Decisions are being made on specific factors. Applying Risk Based Screening (RBS) to baggage algorithms creates challenges in determining the end of life for machines. TSA could consider utilizing older machines to screen lower risk passengers. However, the cost of maintaining the older systems may not make this a viable option, nor would the maintenance of multiple systems.

The group then discussed maintenance contracts on equipment. TSA asks for a fixed unit price that covers one year of maintenance, parts, and labor. The equipment age varies, but there is only one price. This is an element that may be an inhibitor of obtaining an accurate cost benefit analysis for each piece of equipment purchased. Another factor in cost benefit analyses is predicting maintenance costs and the impact of technological obsolescence.

TSA has metrics used when determining service life based on many variables. There is a need for an established and repeatable process for understanding useful life that can be shared across the program.

TSA commented that any Chief Financial Officer calculates depreciation and lifecycle cost estimates to determine how many units to buy over the life of a program. The

group discussed the process TSA could utilize to create models for each technology that takes into account economic factors, cost benefit, etc. to drive to a rational planning basis.

At the next meeting of the Deployment Focus group on December 13, 2013, TSA will share some current data points they are working with related to downtime, failure rates and useful life.