Heinrich highlights new security enhancement measure at Sunport

Written by Staff Reports
Friday, 02 September 2016 03:23





ALBUQUERQUE – On Aug. 26, U.S. Senator Martin Heinrich, D-New Mexico, joined Director Roderick Allison of the Transportation Security Administration's Office of Law Enforcement/Federal Air Marshal Service, a component of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, at the Albuquerque International Sunport to highlight a legislative measure the senator led to enhance U.S. airport and mass transit security.

The measure was included in the bipartisan, bicameral Federal Aviation Administration extension.

In the wake of the terror attacks over the last year in Paris, Brussels, and Istanbul, Heinrich led the effort to expand the number of Visible Intermodal Prevention and Response teams from the current 31 to as many as 60, to enhance the security presence in pre-screening airport areas and other transportation facilities, especially in non-secure "soft" target areas at airports like check-in and baggage claim areas.

The measure also updates federal security programs to provide active shooter training for law enforcement and increase the presence of federal security teams with bomb-sniffing canines at

these non-secure areas.

“I’d like to thank Director Allison for his leadership to strengthen security at our nation’s airports. While we relentlessly target terrorists overseas, it’s critical that we make every effort to secure our airports, train stations, and bus depots--the places Americans rely on to go about their daily lives,” Heinrich said.

The senator also said, “That’s why I worked with leaders in both parties to create these additional safeguards. By employing these commonsense safety measures, we will intelligently respond to threats. And by preserving our freedom to go about our daily lives, we will ensure that the terrorists have failed to change who we are and how we live.”

“TSAs Visible Intermodal Prevention and Response Program Teams in conjunction with our federal, state and local partners, play a significant role in safeguarding the traveling public,” Allison said. “The VIPR Teams provide a critical law enforcement presence to protect travelers in all modes of transportation. I would like to thank Congress and Senator Heinrich for their continued support of TSA and the VIPR Program.”

Heinrich and Allison observed a scheduled VIPR operation at the Albuquerque International Sunport, and discussed how airport, and overall transportation security, has been enhanced as result of Senator Heinrich’s measure.

TSA’s VIPR teams provide a full range of law enforcement and security capabilities. The exact make-up of each VIPR team is determined jointly with local law enforcement in collaboration with Federal Air Marshals, explosive detection canines, TSA officers, and other TSA security personnel. These teams work in conjunction with local transportation security and local law enforcement partners.