



50 F St. NW, Suite 750
Washington, D.C. 20001

T. 202-737-7950
F. 202-273-7951

www.aopa.org

February 22, 2017

The Honorable John F. Kelly
Secretary of Homeland Security
United States Department of Homeland Security
245 Murray Lane, SW
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Mr. Secretary:

On behalf of the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA), I respectfully request the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) establish security screening capability and gateway operations at Palm Beach County Park Airport, known locally as Lantana Airport, when a Presidential Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR) is active.

As you are aware, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) issues a POTUS TFR over Mar-A-Lago, the estate owned by President Donald Trump, when he visits his residence in Palm Beach, Florida. A standard POTUS TFR consists of a 10 NM no-fly inner core and a 30 NM restricted outer core; the U.S. Secret Service (USSS) requires all aircraft and passengers to be screened by the TSA to operate within the 10 NM inner core. Lantana Airport shuts down unless gateway operations are implemented because the airport falls within the 10 NM no-fly inner ring.

Located just 5 NM south of Mar-A-Lago, Lantana Airport is a designated reliever for the Palm Beach International Airport and serves the general aviation interests of central and southern Palm Beach County, including the cities of Lantana, Wellington, Deerfield Beach, and areas north of Boca Raton. The Airport covers an area of 304 acres and has three runways laid out in a triangle. There is no control tower at Lantana Airport and no aircraft weighing more than 12,500 pounds is permitted to operate. Approximately 270 aircraft are based at Lantana Airport and it has annual aircraft operations exceeding 120,000 of which 75 percent are from locally generated aircraft owners and operators. During a typical weekend, aircraft operations average 200 per day. Neither TSA screening nor a TSA approved security program is required by regulations because Lantana Airport is a general aviation airport and has no scheduled passenger or public charter service with more than 30 passengers.

During the first three POTUS TFRs in Palm Beach, no TSA gateway operations were established at Lantana Airport; therefore, no aircraft were able to depart from the airport. AOPA asked the FAA to create a cutout to exclude Lantana Airport from the 10 NM inner core to allow egress and ingress and eliminate the need for TSA screening. However, if the USSS does not permit a cutout option, a TSA security screening capability becomes necessary to allow limited operations at Lantana Airport. A fixed-base operator (FBO), Stellar Aviation at Lantana Airport, has a 300-square foot office that is available for passenger and luggage screening and is ready to work with the TSA to implement gateway operations.

The airport employs 250 people full-time, has a direct economic impact of almost \$15 million, and accounts for a total community impact of over \$27 million annually. In addition to the airport's FBO, there are approximately 25 aviation businesses located on the airport property, including a pilot shop and aircraft maintenance facility. According to a report, one three-day weekend visit from the President costs the airport operators approximately \$30,000. If President Trump continues to visit Palm Beach regularly without the changes AOPA is pursuing, the economic consequences of the TFR will likely eclipse that of past restrictions associated with Presidential travel.

AOPA believes it is important to allow ingress and egress to Lantana Airport when the TFR is active, especially should the President visit the estate frequently and stay there for an extended period. This will limit the financial impact of the TFR on general aviation and the community. The TSA has a long history of working with industry and government partners to establish gateway airport operations when it is feasible and the case warrants. As an example, for the POTUS TFR in Palm Beach, the agency established three additional northern gateway airports to accommodate general aviation traffic in collaboration with the industry.

AOPA respects the need to provide increased security for our President. The TSA plays a critical role in minimizing the economic and operational impact to the surrounding community. In support of any operational relief provided, AOPA is committed to creating and disseminating a hand out of the special procedures, including simple step-by-step instructions for arrivals, departures, and requirements, to local pilots, FBOs, and companies based at Lantana Airport. AOPA stands ready to work with the TSA, FAA and USSS to develop the special procedures, conduct outreach and education, and to ensure the operation is safe for all involved.

We appreciate the TSA, FAA and USSS working with general aviation to minimize the economic and operational impacts of TFRs and for protecting our freedom to fly.

Sincerely yours,



Mark R. Baker
President and CEO

The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) is a not-for-profit individual membership organization of General Aviation Pilots and Aircraft Owners. AOPA's mission is to effectively serve the interests of its members and establish, maintain and articulate positions of leadership to promote the economy, safety, utility, and popularity of flight in general aviation aircraft. Representing two thirds of all pilots in the United States, AOPA is the largest civil aviation organization in the world.

Cc:

The Honorable Elaine Chao, Secretary of Transportation
The Honorable Michael Huerta, Administrator, FAA
The Honorable Marco Rubio, United States Senate
The Honorable Bill Nelson, United States Senate
The Honorable Lois Frankel, U.S. House of Representatives
Mr. Joseph Clancy, Director, USSS
Mr. Eddie Mayenschein, Assistant Administrator, OSPIE, TSA

AIRCRAFT OWNERS AND PILOTS ASSOCIATION