



# CATSA NEWS

FEBRUARY 2005

## TECHNOLOGY ADDED TO CATSA'S TRAINING PROGRAM

In support of the mandate of CATSA to provide enhanced security at pre-board screening (PBS) checkpoints, CATSA is introducing new technology for screening officers: the X-Ray Tutor training program and the Threat Image Projection System (TIPS).

X-Ray Tutor and TIPS are two programs created to enhance the training and testing of screening officers and ensure their maximum competency in the detection of explosives devices and prohibited items.

X-Ray Tutor is a scientifically based training program, specifically designed to increase the detection of prohibited objects in X-ray images. At the heart of X-Ray Tutor are results from

scientific studies on how the human brain processes visual information in order to recognize objects from different viewpoints. The scientific theories, combined with sophisticated learning algorithms, create the world's only scientifically based, individually adaptive object recognition training program.

X-Ray Tutor contains a large image library of threat items depicted in many different viewpoints. X-Ray Tutor has been specifically designed to increase the detection of threat items and Improvised Explosives Devices (IEDs). Image difficulty is increased and trainees learn to detect threat items from different viewpoints and in more complex bags as they progress through the program. As students progress the algorithm monitors students' performance and custom designs each subsequent training session.

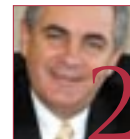
The X-Ray Tutor training program will be incorporated into CATSA's training program for screening officers.



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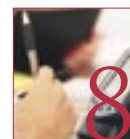
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## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT AND CEO



A recent letter to the editor by a reader who had concerns regarding air transport security in Canada, published by the *Expositor* ("Canada risks letting terrorists enter the United States" – January 10, 2005), raised serious and troubling questions about the effectiveness of Canada's air transport security regime. Regrettably, the reader's assertions about "lax" airport security are both inaccurate and unsubstantiated. On January 20, 2005, I responded to this letter published in the *Brantford Expositor*.

"Canadians have a right to know that their air transport security system is safe and secure – that they should have complete confidence whenever they board an aircraft. The Canadian Air Transport Security Authority (CATSA) has the responsibility to ensure Canadians have peace of mind when they fly.

Because of that responsibility, I believe we must correct the record when it is necessary; we must make sure your readers have the facts.

Let me begin by putting what CATSA does in context. When the final numbers are tallied, we estimate that in 2004, more than 38 million passengers will have passed through our pre-boarding screening lines. During 2004, over 738,000 objects had been intercepted, including some 580,000 sharp or pointed objects and 157,600 pepper spray containers, firearms, toy weapons, as well as other dangerous and miscellaneous items.

Yes, our screening officers are busy, and they are effective. They go about performing their vitally important work away from the public glare and without fanfare.

CATSA is still relatively young – not quite three years old – and still developing. Despite its youth, the organization's performance has achieved a level of maturity beyond its years and it has put together a track record of which Canadians can be proud.

I'm completely at ease saying this because in my travels around the world promoting CATSA, I can see how our services measure up to those offered elsewhere. We definitely do measure up. Our air security system is on par with other countries; in some cases, it's even superior.

In the short time we have been open for business, we have acquired, deployed and installed systems to detect explosives at Canada's airports. Our equipment is world-class and state of the art. Our scanners are so sensitive that we can find the equivalent of one tablespoon worth of explosives in an Olympic-sized swimming pool. While we're certainly happy to have these tools, it takes more than leading-edge technology to make Canada's airports and skies safer. It takes well-trained screening officers to run the equipment and know how to spot a security threat.

We have concluded new contracts with suppliers of screening services. The people who are on the front lines of airport security – the pre-board screening officers – are all professional, competent and motivated.

They receive comprehensive training, both in the classroom and on the job. CATSA believes that training is the key to making this critical layer of security stronger. And, only after successfully completing a rigorous training program do screening officers receive their certification – CATSA's seal of approval.

CATSA is playing an integral role in the Government of Canada's public safety and security initiative.

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## TECHNOLOGY ADDED TO CATSA'S TRAINING PROGRAM


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TIPS is designed to help screening officers identify threat images during the course of conducting live screening. TIPS will portray fictional threat image(s) on the x-ray screen. This means that baggage entering the x-ray machine will be real but the threat on the x-ray image on the screen will not be real. It will provide valuable experience in finding threat objects and help to increase the alertness of screening officers.

The purpose of TIPS is to provide screening officers with live experience in detecting threats objects and to increase their alertness when examining bag images.

"Response to XRT and TIPS from pilot testing programs has been

very positive and screening officers report that they feel these tools will help them improve their accuracy and efficiency in identifying threat objects," says CATSA's Learning Advisor and X-Ray Tutor project lead Glen Pettinger.

"It is anticipated that X-Ray Tutor will be operational in all Class 1 airports (except Toronto and Montreal) by the end of March 2005," says Glen Budgell, General Manager, Learning. "Roll-out of X-Ray Tutor at Toronto and Montreal will occur as soon as CATSA is able to secure workstations that are in close proximity to checkpoints. TIPS will be implemented in each airport after X-Ray Tutor is operational." 



## INTERCEPT SURVEY

In February and March, CATSA will be conducting a survey on the experiences and views of air travellers regarding security screening at airports. Air travellers will be questioned on their general knowledge of the provision of security at PBS checkpoints as well as security issues and the quality of service at PBS. The goal of the survey is to provide CATSA with information to benchmark air security improvements, as well as to gain an understanding of travellers' views on air security and the screening process.

Similar data were collected in February 2004 at the following airports: Halifax, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Winnipeg, Calgary, Edmonton, and Vancouver.



# THE RISE OF AL-QA'EDAH

The whereabouts of Osama bin Laden is a mystery but his terrorist network remains a very real threat to security around the world.

This article is both a history and a warning that we should never forget to be vigilant.

Bin Laden was just one of many young Muslim who flocked to Afghanistan in the early 1980's to fend off the invading Soviet Union. Just 23 when he volunteered, bin Laden generously tapped his Saudi family's huge fortune to help fund this holy war or jihad.

In addition to his personal inheritance that amounted to some \$300 million U.S., bin Laden developed a worldwide finance support network that was known as "The Golden Chain." Donations flowed in through charities and nongovernmental organizations. Meanwhile, bin Laden set up a network of agents who bought arms and supplies from around the world. Another offshoot was recruitment of volunteers from Mosques, schools and boarding houses. Additional support to rebel groups fighting the Soviets in Afghanistan

came from Saudi Arabia and the United States in the form of billions of dollars in secret funding, with the assistance of Pakistan's military intelligence service.

The 1988 withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan spawned Al-Qa'edah as the foundation for



future jihads to strike anywhere in the world. Bin Laden quickly assumed control of the new organization that consolidated its strength by opening offices around the world under the cover of various charitable organizations that supported Muslim rebels in Chechnya, Somalia and the Philippines.

Al-Qa'edah is known or suspected to be at the source of countless terrorist attacks: a bomb in a hotel in Aden, in 1992, where American

soldiers had routinely stopped on their way to Somalia; the downing of two U.S. Black Hawk helicopters in Somalia, in 1994; a car bomb outside a Saudi-U.S. joint facility in Riyadh, in 1995; an enormous truck bomb in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, killing 19 Americans in 1996 and injuring 373 people; an attack on

a building next to the American embassy in Nairobi in 1998, killing 257 people and injuring 5 000; on the same day, a similar attack in Dar es-Salaam, Tanzania, killing 10 people and injuring 74 others; an attack on the U.S.S. Cole in Yemen, killing 17 crew members and injuring 40, etc. Other terrorist attacks have been attributed to

Al-Qa'edah since 9/11.

On February 23, 1998 bin Laden issued a public fatwa to Muslims to carry out a holy war against enemies of Islam and to expel the Americans from the Gulf region. Bin Laden called on his own mesh of Islamic terrorist organizations known as Al-Qa'edah. They are inspired by god, vengeance, hate and the hope of a better future in an Islamic state – all very powerful fuels for terrorism. The attacks of September 2001 were the most

## THE RISE OF AL-QA'EDAH

daring examples to date of his call to arms.

Since then, Bin Laden has remained at large while a number of his close associates were arrested and some Al-Qa'edah international financing sources were shut down. But it is still very much a threat and should not be underestimated with thousands of volunteers operating around the world ready to act on request.

Yes, Al-Qa'edah is alive and thriving. And yes, we are all Al-Qa'edah's target.

Lest we forget. 

## *Did you know?*

**Sharp and penetrating objects are the types of prohibited items most commonly intercepted by screening officers...**

## NEWS RELEASE ON INTERCEPTED ITEMS




**O**n February 10, 2005, CATSA issued a news release on the number of prohibited items that were intercepted in 2004.

From knives to pepper spray, a total of 738,000 prohibited items were intercepted by screening officers across the country. This amount works out to well over 60,000 articles per month, a significant decline of almost 20% from 2003.

"It is a tribute to the professionalism, dedication and hard work of the screening officers employed at 89 airports across the country that these and other prohibited items never found their way onto aircraft," says Jacques Duchesneau, President and Chief Executive Officer of CATSA. "The

security of the travelling public is CATSA's top priority. Our job is to ensure the safety of the millions of people who fly in this country and to do it in an effective, efficient and professional manner."

CATSA encourages screening officers to refer the travellers to our website which contains useful information on what can and cannot be packed in carry-on baggage or to call our toll-free number.

By working together, we can help educate the travellers on what to expect going through security as well as what is not permitted on board the aircraft. By reaching out and educating them, the number of intercepted items should continue to decrease every year. 

## WEATHER NETWORK CAMPAIGN

As part of a major public awareness campaign, CATSA is developing thirty second vignettes which will air during peak travel periods, such as Spring Break, Summer and Holiday Season to be aired on the Weather Network and Météo Média.

The vignettes will focus on the most common items that are intercepted at PBS and cause delays during those peak travel periods. They will depict travellers enjoying a smooth and stress-free screening process which is a result of them following our tips.

The objective of the vignettes is to raise awareness that certain

items are not allowed in carry-on baggage and help travellers better prepare in order to help speed up the process. By taking steps to be informed, travellers play an important role in making the screening process faster and more efficient.

"We are hoping that airing these vignettes will encourage people to visit our Website and call our toll-free number in order to get information on how to pack right and enjoy their flight," says Jacqueline Bannister, CATSA's Director of Communications. 🇩🇪



*A special thanks to all of those who volunteered for the filming of the vignettes. Some screening officers were dressed as passengers and others were in their uniforms. Make sure to watch the Weather Network and Météo Média channels to see the stars in action!*

## PBS OFFICER MARGIE LEWIS

It's all about teamwork for Margie Lewis, screening officer at the Halifax International Airport. She is proud of the team work that she sees among the various partners at the Halifax Airport; from her colleagues at the PBS checkpoint to the air carriers and the airport authority. It not only takes teamwork with her colleagues on the floor at the pre-board screening (PBS) checkpoint, also amongst all the employees at Halifax Airport, air carrier and airport authority included. "It's definitely a group effort across the board," says Margie.

After deciding to take a leap and change careers three years ago, Margie fell into a challenging job in the air transport security field. Her role as a screening officer opened her eyes to the level of coordination and hard-work that is required to make the travelling public's experience smooth and enjoyable.

Margie advises that being a "people-person", as well as patient makes for the ideal screening officer. She adds that "being open to change and adaptable" are also important assets.

Often, Margie's day starts at 2:30 AM, in order to be at work for 4:00 AM. Almost always, she is greeted by pleasant and enthusiastic travellers. "Vacationers are almost always in a good mood", says Margie.

So what has changed over the last three years in terms of the public's experience through PBS? "We are noticing that the message is getting out there," comments Margie.

When asked what message she would like to relay to the travelling public, Margie asks that everyone be patient and understanding of the role of screening officers in ensuring air security. "Security is our main goal, but customer service is also essential". 🇩🇪



*PBS Officer Margie Lewis.*

## CHARLOTTETOWN PRE-BOARD SCREENERS ARE RANKED AMONGST THE BEST

In August 2004, a marketing firm, in conjunction with the Canadian Airports Council (CAC) conducted a survey of passenger satisfaction dealing with areas of airport operations. The survey included twelve Class 2 airports.

The results of the survey were very positive in regard to the speed of processing at pre-board screening checkpoints across Canada. In addition to great feedback on the processing time, the staff at the Charlottetown Airport ranked at the top of the twelve airports surveyed, for the courtesy of the security screening staff.

Congratulations to the Charlottetown pre-board screening officers for a job well done!

Keep up the good work!



## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT AND CEO

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safety and security initiative.

Historically, Canada has had one of the safest and most secure air transport systems anywhere. CATSA and its people have made that system even safer.


How many attacks have we thwarted? How many lives have we saved? We may never know.

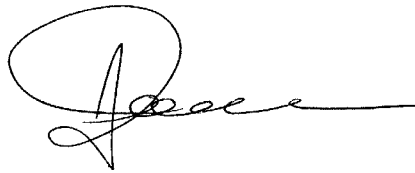
Could we improve our system? Of course. When it comes to security, we must remain vigilant. There is no margin for error.

This is a message I deliver to my team constantly and I remind them of something Winston Churchill kept repeating during the Second World

War. He said defeat was not an option. Similarly, we at CATSA do not have the option of making mistakes. We have a responsibility to get it right every time.

This is the goal we tirelessly pursue for every single day of the year.

I hope this letter will give your readers pause and reassurance the next time they check in at security before boarding their flight." 



Jacques Duchesneau, C.M.  
President and Chief Executive Officer,  
Ottawa

## Media Inquiries

If you receive an inquiry from the media about CATSA or any security-related matters, please refer them to  
**1-888-294-2202.**

## Feedback

Please provide us with your feedback on this newsletter using our "Contact Us" section on our web site at:  
**[www.catsa-acsta.gc.ca](http://www.catsa-acsta.gc.ca)**



**CATSA is dedicated to providing services to the travelling public in both official languages**

**Stay tuned as CATSA News will soon be unveiling a new look...**

