

Pennsylvania Aviation Advisory Committee
REAL ID Subcommittee
FINAL Report

Purpose:

The Pennsylvania Aviation Advisory Committee (AAC) was established by Act 58 of 1999 to provide guidance to the Governor, the General Assembly, the Secretary of Transportation, and the State Transportation Commission on aviation matters.

At a regularly scheduled meeting of the AAC on November 14, 2019, and approved by a majority of the members, the AAC established a REAL ID Subcommittee to address concerns related to the Commonwealth's implementation and preparedness of the federal REAL ID law. The REAL ID Subcommittee was tasked with evaluating the Commonwealth's marketing plan for REAL ID, and developing recommendations to enhance the awareness and education of the REAL ID requirements.

The REAL ID Subcommittee consisted of Keith Brune, Chief Operating Officer of the Philadelphia International Airport; Gabriel Monzo, Executive Director of the Arnold Palmer Regional Airport; and, Nolan Ritchie, Executive Director of the Senate Transportation Committee in the Office of Senator Kim Ward.

Background:

Passed by Congress in 2005, the REAL ID Act enacted the 9/11 Commission's recommendation that the federal government set standards for the issuance of sources of identification, such as driver's licenses. The Act and implementing regulations established minimum security standards for state-issued driver's licenses and identification cards. Federal agencies will be prohibited from accepting licenses and identification cards from states that do not meet these standards for official purposes, such as getting through the airport security checkpoint to board a plane. [Source: [U.S. Transportation Security Administration \(TSA\)](#)]

Beginning October 1, 2020, Pennsylvanians (18 years of age and older) will need a REAL ID compliant driver's license, photo ID card, or another form of federally-acceptable identification (such as a valid passport or military ID) to board a domestic commercial flight or enter a federal building or military installation that requires identification. (Source: [PennDOT](#))

The General Assembly initially passed Act 38 of 2012 to address several concerns related to REAL ID at the time, which prohibited Pennsylvania from adopting and instituting the federal REAL ID requirements. Due to mounting pressure that the federal government would begin enforcing the federal REAL ID requirements on October 1, 2020, the General Assembly passed [Act 3 of 2017](#) allowing Pennsylvania to become REAL ID compliant by providing Pennsylvanians with the ability to opt-in for a REAL ID following a petition to PennDOT.

To process a REAL ID petition, Pennsylvanians must provide PennDOT with the following documentation, accompanied by a one-time fee of \$30 plus applicable license renewal fees: 1) One document proving an individual's identity and lawful status in the United States, 2) A Social Security card, and 3) Two documents proving an individual's residency in Pennsylvania. The acceptable documents to meet these requirements are included on PennDOT's "REAL ID Document Checklist Fact Sheet", which is available on [PennDOT's REAL ID website](#) and the [Aviation Council of Pennsylvania's \(ACP\) REAL ID website](#).

PennDOT is the exclusive Commonwealth agency charged with the deployment and issuance of REAL IDs, which only started in March of 2019. Once Act 3 became effective, PennDOT started making the necessary investments for IT system upgrades, building-out new

facilities (i.e. [REAL ID only centers](#)), retrofitting existing facilities, hiring and training PennDOT personnel, and communicating the approved opt-in REAL ID implementation plan. The 2019-20 enacted budget dedicated \$29.59 million to PennDOT for REAL ID purposes, but the proposed 2020-21 budget reduces the amount to \$25.9 million.

There are currently over 33 million passenger flights in Pennsylvania per year. It is estimated by American Airlines that over 87 percent of their passengers only fly once a year for life events such as weddings, funerals, graduations, etc. (Source: ACP)

Since March 1, 2019, PennDOT issued more than 826,000 REAL IDs, and 1.8 million individuals opted-out from getting a REAL ID. PennDOT's goal is to issue a total of 1.3 million REAL IDs prior to October 1, 2020. (Source: PennDOT) As a result, PennDOT has less than 7 months to issue another 474,000 REAL IDs to meet their goal. Even though TSA is notifying individuals now at checkpoints, individuals who are unable to verify their identity will not be permitted through the security checkpoint on or after October 1, 2020. (Source: TSA)

In conclusion, it is abundantly clear to the AAC that the Commonwealth and its aviation partners should undertake more measures to improve the awareness and education of REAL IDs with the limited timeframe left prior to the federal REAL ID enforcement date. The remainder of this report provides a list of recommendations for the Commonwealth and aviation partners to mitigate the "No REAL ID, No Passport, No Fly" occurrences.

Recommendations for Commonwealth:

- Increase funding for marketing and communication purposes (website, social media, press releases, public service announcements, printed mailings, billboards, etc.).
- Continue training PennDOT personnel to thoroughly explain the REAL ID process and to answer REAL ID questions consistently over the phone or at PennDOT facilities.
- Create press events with the Governor and the Secretary of Transportation, and/or create effective media events with business partners to bring awareness to REAL IDs.
- Coordinate with Members of the General Assembly, senior citizen centers, civic groups, etc. to make PennDOT personnel available at events to answer questions.
- Share monthly reports on the REAL ID performance metrics with the aviation industry.

Recommendations for Aviation Partners:

- Increase awareness to past passengers via email, if available.
- Dedicate space in airports for an informational booth on REAL ID.
- Encourage airlines and third-party websites to create a reminder (after an individual purchases a ticket online) of the October 1, 2020, enforcement date.
- Make PennDOT's REAL ID brochure (and other pertinent documents) available at airports.
- Include REAL ID information on announcements before every pre-board call and on advertising screens at terminals.

Contact Information:

If you have any questions for the AAC's REAL ID Subcommittee, please direct your inquiries to Nolan Ritchie, Executive Director, Senate Transportation Committee, Office of Senator Kim L. Ward, at (717) 787-6063.

Updated: 3/3/2020

Adopted at the regular meeting of the Aviation Advisory Committee on March 12, 2020.