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INTRODUCTION

On the date of September 11th, 2001, the US suffered one of the biggest blows to its national security in the wake of al Qaeda orchestrated plane hijackings, one of which hit the Pentagon, a second which landed in a field in Shanksville, Pennsylvania, and two of which unleashed the most devastation upon hitting the twin towers of New York’s World Trade Center. Afterwards, the US government took several actions in order to assure American citizens that national security was not at risk. One of the areas of concern was flight and surveillance surrounding it specifically due to the involvement of unsupervised aircraft on US soil. As a result, one of the laws created was the Aviation and Transportation Security Act, which was signed into existence on November 19, 2001, officially establishing the TSA in airports across the nation. By creating a timeline and reviewing policies implemented at the time with those which have been put in place recently, we will be able to study what led up to the exact creation of the TSA as well as its influence on modern day airport security and policies. In this way we will investigate the many aspects of the US in a post-9/11 era.

OBJECTIVE

To examine the actions the U.S. took after 9/11 to protect Americans future from terrorist attacks, ensure safety and promote travel to America.

METHODOLOGY

In order to develop a timeline that highlights major turning points and policies within the TSA’s history, we read through 2 scholarly articles. These articles detail the surveillance and security measures put into place as a way of reinstating confidence in air travel after 9/11. Furthermore, we looked into popular articles that delve deeper into the creation of the TSA, pinpointing events of importance in chronological order and exploring the correlation between the occurrence of 9/11 and the TSA on behalf of the US government as a desperate measure to provide national security.

RESULTS/FINDINGS

11/2001
The Aviation and Transportation Security Act, signed into law by President George W. Bush, created the Transportation Security Administration (TSA). This law also required all bags to be screened, more Air Marshals to be present on flights, and reinforced cockpit doors to prevent hijackers.

9/11/2001
19 of al-Qa’ida-affiliated terrorists hijack & crash 4 planes. 2 of these planes crashed into the Twin Towers. Around 3,000 people were killed.

12/22/2001
A terrorist attempted to bomb a plane using explosives hidden in his shoes.

11/2002
The Arming Pilots Against Terrorism Act, signed by President George W. Bush, allowed pilots to carry handguns on flights.

8-9/2006
The TSA banned all liquids, gels and aerosols from carry-on luggage. Shoes must be removed during screening. However, the TSA amended the ban to allow liquids, gels and aerosols under 3.4 oz or in a clear, plastic bag.

12/2009
The TSA deployed canine units to detect explosive materials.

3/2010
12/2011
TSA begins PreCheck, allowing travelers to pay for a membership that expedites screening and security lines.

3/2017
“The laptop ban affected travelers from 10 airports in eight countries with majority Muslim populations” (Scherer).

Positive Results:
• An increase in the security and safety of Americans.
• Apprehension of potential bombers, such as the Shoe and Underwear bombers.

Negative Results:
• In June 2015, the TSA’s inspector general reported that 93% of the time, TSA officers failed to detect weapons, explosives and other prohibited items that undercover agents smuggled through various airport security checkpoints” (Scherer).
• A rise in discrimination toward the Muslim community.

SIGNIFICANCE/CONCLUSIONS

9/11 drastically changed society in NY and America as a whole.
• The creation of the TSA helped to increase American security and promote travel to America.
• Different presidential administrations, specifically George W. Bush and Trump’s, have banned or amended laws depending on their definition of national security.
• The perspective of the TSA has changed over the years, depending on political and cultural views.
• The effectiveness of the TSA has increased throughout the years as technology has improved.

REFERENCES


