



# National Safe Skies Alliance

## Program for Applied Research in Airport Security

### Project Statement

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PARAS 0027

#### Guidance for Root Cause Analysis in Aviation Security

**Funds:** Up to \$200,000  
**Staff Responsibility:** Jessica Grizzle  
**Fiscal Year:** 2019

*The Project Statement below has been selected by the Safe Skies Oversight Committee and will be the starting point for a panel of experts to develop a Request for Proposals (RFP). The RFP is expected to be available in early 2019.*

The TSA recently implemented an approach to compliance and civil enforcement called Outcome-Focused Compliance (OFC). The three main activities of OFC are: (1) identifying vulnerabilities (e.g., through self-audit, industry reviews, testing, etc.), (2) developing solutions to mitigate vulnerabilities using Root Cause Analysis (RCA), and (3) deploying effective measures/mitigations. To that end, TSA is training its Transportation Security Inspectors in RCA. Unfortunately, most aviation security managers are not receiving similar training and often do not come into their positions as experts in RCA.

There are numerous ways to conduct RCA—different tools, processes, and philosophies—but it is unclear which, if any, are best suited for aviation security incidents/failures. Aviation security managers would benefit from guidance on how to conduct RCA and utilize available tools in the process, so that they can be proactive in the new OFC environment when incidents/failures occur.

The objective of this research is to produce guidance specific to the aviation industry to assist security managers (and others) in conducting RCA and interpreting the results.