More background checks for aviation workers

by UPI

WASHINGTON -- U.S. transportation officials, ramping up anti-terror efforts, said background checks would be made on more than 1 million aviation workers starting in January.The move comes as the U.S. Department of Homeland Security increases security measures aimed at deterring possible attacks by aviation workers not subject to security checks at airports.The Transportation Security Administration will take over background checks of 1.2 million aviation workers from the Federal Aviation Administration starting in January, USA Today reported Wednesday.Moving the authority to TSA means licensed aviation workers will be checked against the FBI's terror watch list, as opposed to the FAA's impartial list. Licensed workers will be subject to re-examination every time the FBI updates its Terrorist Screening Center's, which occurs nearly every day."This will raise the baseline of security," TSA spokeswoman Ellen Howe told USA Today.Pilots' groups welcomed the decision but voiced concerns that cases of mistaken identity may prevent them from working, the newspaper said.

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