



Program Overview

First Observer Plus™ is a security awareness training program managed by the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) to promote surface transportation security within the United States. Its mission is to increase security awareness of frontline transportation professionals by providing training to recognize suspicious activity that may be related to terrorism, to assess what they see, and methods for reporting their observations. Its message is simple: “**Observe, Assess, and Report** suspicious activities.” Just by being aware of their surroundings within the work environment, transportation professionals can be the eyes and ears to observe activities that “don’t look right.”

The program was originally introduced as First Observer™ in 2008 as a security awareness program for all highway modes of transportation, and was modeled after its predecessor “Highway Watch.” In its latest iteration as “First Observer Plus™”, the program includes revised and updated training content that has been expanded to include all modes of surface transportation.

Through First Observer Plus™, participants receive an understanding of what may constitute a terrorist threat within their transportation work environment. The training program explores the justifications and motives offered by terrorists; identifies various stages and processes often employed in the planning and execution of a terrorist act; and teaches the participant to recognize and report potential indicators. Participants are instructed not to intervene or engage suspicious persons or items, but to follow company reporting policies, which may include contacting local law enforcement and TSA.

First Observer Plus™ training is offered online or can be delivered in a facilitated group or classroom setting. The online modal-specific training modules are designed for individualized viewing and are available on the TSA website ([TSA.gov/firstobserver](https://www.tsa.gov/firstobserver)).

Onsite training may also be delivered by TSA personnel approved as First Observer Plus™ presenters at no cost to attendees and sponsoring organizations. TSA desires to engage and train as many transportation professionals as possible to act as a force multiplier to spread the First Observer Plus™ message. To achieve this goal, TSA offers this onsite security awareness program at industry conferences, company facilities, and other transportation venues.

Both the online and onsite training formats of First Observer Plus™ convey the importance of reporting suspicious activities in accordance with policies and procedures established by the employee’s company or agency. Following company policy and calling 911 is recommended in the event of an emergency situation when police, fire, or EMS intervention is needed. Where company policy allows, TSA provides a toll-free telephone number (1-844-TSA-FRST) for reporting non-emergency situations to TSA through our Transportation Security Operations Center (TSOC). Reports are then reviewed, analyzed, and shared with other federal, state, and local authorities, as appropriate.

Both online and group facilitated training modules are currently available for:

General Surface Transportation	Over-the-Road Bus	Mass Transit and Passenger Rail
General Trucking	Vehicle Rental	Mass Transit Law Enforcement
Hazardous Materials Trucking	General Parking	Pipelines
Food & Agriculture Trucking	Parking/Large Venues	Freight Rail (only available in a group setting)
School Bus	Highway Workers	

Whether training is received via online or facilitated onsite, viewers are encouraged to register on the TSA website ([TSA.gov/firstobserver](https://www.tsa.gov/firstobserver)) for the training they receive, complete a brief training survey, and then print their own modal-specific “Certificate of Completion.”

Participation in the program provides the necessary training as well as the encouragement and empowerment needed for millions of U.S transportation professionals to become active contributors in the spirit of the Department of Homeland Security’s “If You See Something, Say Something™” campaign. For more information about the First Observer Plus™ program or to receive training, visit <https://www.tsa.gov/firstobserver>.