

Atlanta Police Department – Standard Operating Procedure		
	APD.SOP.5140 Airport Drug Interdiction Unit Effective Date: August 13th, 2024	
Chief Darin Schierbaum	Signature by: DS	Date Signed: 8/13/2024

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES

APD Staff,

The Policy and Standards Section is dedicated to providing the department, and its employees, with accurate, understandable and transparent policies. In order to publish policies that reflect the most up-to-date standards, the Policy and Standard Section regularly reviews all policies to ensure that they are reflective of the current mission and objectives of the Atlanta Police Department.

No significant changes were found during the review and renewal of APD.SOP.5140 Airport Drug Interdiction Unit. However, we encourage you to read the policy below in its entirety to better understand how the Airport Drug Interdiction Unit:

- Intercepts the movement of drugs through the airport.
- Investigates Drug Information.
- Uses K-9s for drug detection.

Thank you and stay informed!

Policy and Standards Section
Planning, Research, and Accreditation Unit



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1. PURPOSE

The intent of this directive is to establish procedures and criteria for departmental participation in investigative drug interdiction units with which the Atlanta Police Department (APD) has concurrent or adjoining jurisdiction at Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport.

2. POLICY

The Atlanta Police Department will provide guidance and criteria for the members of the Violent Crime Interdiction Unit who are tasked with monitoring, tracking and deterring the flow of Narcotics through Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 3.1 It is the responsibility of each supervisor to ensure the procedures established in this policy are adhered to.
- 3.2 The Criminal Investigations Division (CID) Commander will establish the Atlanta Police Department's Airport Drug Interdiction Unit (ADIU) and ensure that adequate personnel and equipment resources are provided.
- 3.3 The Violent Crime Interdiction (VCI) Commander will oversee the actions of the ADIU.
- 3.4 The ADIU Commander, or their designee, will manage the operations of the members of the interdiction unit.
- 3.5 The ADIU supervisors will develop plans and direct operations designed to identify, verify, monitor, and suppress the transportation of narcotics throughout Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport.
- 3.6 ADIU Officers/Investigators will develop constructive working relationships with other police agencies and be knowledgeable of the methods for transporting drugs and monies through airports.

4. ACTION

4.1 QUALIFICATIONS

Applicants must have the following qualification for assignment to the ADIU:

- 1. A minimum of three (3) years APD law enforcement experience.
- 2. Successful completion of Field Investigation Team (FIT) training.
- 3. Satisfactory rating on most current annual performance evaluation.

4.2 TRAINING

ADIU employees will attend all training relevant to the unit as assigned by the VCI Commander.

4.3 ENFORCEMENT DUTIES

- 4.3.1 The ADIU will interdict passengers through the following methods:

1. Onsite Observation – Conduct independent investigations by use of physical observation of arriving or departing passengers for interdiction of drugs.
 2. Informant Information – Investigate drug information received from informants or reliable sources that involve arriving / departing passengers or employees.
 3. Outside Jurisdiction Information – Investigate drug information received from other police jurisdictions that involve arriving / departing passengers or employees.
 4. Debriefing of Arrestees – Interviewing all arrested subjects for more drug related information to further on-going investigations.
- 4.3.2 ADIU will gather all physical evidence related to narcotic possession, transportation or storage at Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport. This also includes information gained through interrogations, interviews, and debriefings.
- 4.3.3 ADIU will increase surveillance patrols within the secured and non-secured sides of the airport to detect drug activity and/or drug transportation.
- 4.3.4 In conjunction with the Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), ADIU will utilize drug interdiction techniques and approved APD training to monitor and deter drug activities within the Airport.
- 4.3.5 Investigators/Officers will collect data on arrested passengers that are conducting illegal activity.
- 4.3.6 Investigators/Officers will systematically share drug intelligence with other law enforcement agencies from surrounding areas and internal APD units.
- 4.3.7 Investigators/Officers will closely work with prosecutors to provide or gather additional information and evidence required for case preparation and prosecution.
- 4.3.8 The ADIU supervisors will coordinate their activities with other units within the Department and outside agencies to ensure that their respective activities do not conflict or interfere with other investigations.
- 4.3.9 The VCI Commander, or their designee, will forward appropriate reports and summaries to the commander of CID. In addition, the VCI Commander will ensure that relevant information is forwarded to Homeland Security, HIDTA, US Customs Service or outside law enforcement agencies.
- 4.3.10 ADIU will utilize APEX K-9 officers to work in the unit for narcotic detection and operate under this policy.
- 4.3.11 The ADIU will be on call and respond to after-hour call-backs that the unit commander deems appropriate.
- 4.4 ADMINISTRATIVE DUTIES**
- 4.4.1 ADIU will utilize all ADIU documentation in strict compliance with all existing criminal justice guidelines, including but not limited to the collection, receipt, storage, access, use and dissemination of all ADIU information.
- 4.4.2 The ADIU will follow APD.SOP.3133 Body Worn Camera (BWC) outlined for their Unit.
- 4.4.3 The ADIU will track their activity and seizures on the Units weekly report.

4.4.4 Regardless of the criminal activity involved, no ADIU related information may be utilized improperly or in violation of the law.

4.4.5 The Unit Commander is responsible for ensuring mobile phone extractions are documented and maintained with the unit and provided quarterly to the VCI Commander.

4.5 SECURITY

4.5.1 The Airport Section in conjunction with partnered law enforcement agencies will provide a secure area for the ADIU to work and store equipment with access limited to authorized personnel.

4.5.2 To effectively maintain the confidentiality of data, all ADIU members are responsible for safeguarding ADIU manuals, updates, and other information related to the ADIU.

4.5.3 The ADIU members will ensure that any printed copies of intelligence and investigative information are afforded security to prevent any unauthorized access or use of that data. Data that is no longer needed for investigative purposes will be shredded.

4.5.4 The ADIU supervisor will take disciplinary action against any individual found to be violating state, federal guidelines or this command memorandum.

4.6 REPORTING

4.6.1 The ADIU Commander will report the unit's activities monthly to the VCI Commander.

4.6.2 The VCI Commander will report the ADIU activities quarterly to the CID Commander.

5. DEFINITIONS

Interdiction: The action of intercepting and preventing the movement of a prohibited commodity or person

6. CANCELLATIONS

N/A

7. REFERENCES

APD.SOP.3133 Body Worn Cameras