

MARY V. LEFRIDGE BYRD

Professional Biography

In April 2009, Mary V. Leftridge Byrd, began service as the Federal Security Director (FSD), State of Georgia, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Transportation Security Administration, Office of Security Operations, Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport Atlanta, GA, *the world's busiest airport*. In addition, she is the senior executive with responsibility for all federalized airports across the state of Georgia, including: Albany, Augusta, Brunswick, Columbus, Macon, Savannah and Valdosta personnel, operations and administration. She is a strong advocate for a balanced approach in leading a workforce of over 1,700 staff, emphasizing commitment, professionalism, continuous improvement and building sustainable opportunities for the workforce development.

Recognized for her transformative leadership over years of public service, FSD Leftridge Byrd has met challenges with commitment and competence. Most recently she led her 1700-member team through an unprecedented federal government shutdown. Over 35 days she ensured all passenger and baggage security screening operations, compliance, canine and covert operations and administrative obligations, objectives and standards were met with no degradation of mission. This during a period where her most important leadership skill and abilities were evident by even casual observation.

While she rallied staff to remain focused on the mission, she recognized staff were faced with personal challenges resultant of receiving no compensation whatsoever. Staff continued to serve the mission, buoyed by the Director's constant presence in the operation where she invested time to ensure not just the words of leadership were heard but that the evidence of leadership was apparent, across all shifts and by adopting a seven-day work week throughout the shutdown.

Leading through this difficult time was exacerbated by the impending date of Super Bowl 53 which, as it happened, occurred just seven days after the government shutdown ended. Within those seven days, through the combined force of sheer energy, character, and deliberateness, the Director rallied her team to meet, with success, Super Bowl Monday record-setting volume of 104,000 passengers and 68,000 checked bags - this with not a single security related incident across an extended operation spanning 20 hours. The Director attributes this unparalleled achievement to her frontline workforce and leadership team members. While there have been 52 previous Super Bowl SEAR-1 events, no agency leader has been charged with leading a team to success in such a heightened personally and professionally challenging, aggravated circumstances .

With a career spanning over 30 years' experience as a corrections, public safety and

aviation security executive, Director Leftridge Byrd is a proven leader of large, complicated organizations. She has established a reputation and track record of accomplishment in objectives achievement, workforce development, organizational success, with demonstrated expertise in constituency building and meaningful stake holding, and has earned a reputation as a highly skilled meta-leader.

Director Leftridge Byrd has been instrumental in orchestrating significant improvement in administrative requirements, risk mitigation, threat detection, passenger, baggage and cargo security operations, regulatory compliance, and critical partnerships. Under her leadership, TSA Atlanta has been honored by receiving the coveted national Airport of the Year award.

Ms. Leftridge Byrd has created sustainable partnerships with aviation industry leaders with an emphasis on public safety, insider threat and risk mitigation, security protocols, and counterterrorism particularly with the U.S. Departments of State; Customs and Border Protection; Immigration and Customs Enforcement ;Federal Bureau of Investigation; Federal Air Marshal's Service; Atlanta, College Park, DeKalb, Fulton and Clayton Police Departments and Sheriff's Departments; local Corrections departments and related law enforcement agencies. Being consistently engaged, working collaboratively with public and private colleagues has been a hallmark of her career while serving on the local, state and federal levels. Director Leftridge Byrd has been a champion in leading partners in the Atlanta metropolitan area into a team coalition.

In her current position as the senior field executive, she has led the TSA-ATL team in establishing federal security requirements as a major program in support of making operational the \$1.5 billion Maynard Holbrook Jackson International Terminal which opened in May 2012. On behalf of the Department, she has overseen the design, construction and opening of two additional passenger screening checkpoints and an inline checked baggage screening system. This resulted in increased daily screening of over 48,000 pieces of checked baggage and 70,000 originating passengers through 55 security screening lanes on six security checkpoints and baggage operations. She was instrumental in operationalizing the first United States based innovation screening technology which was a tour de force bringing together public and private partnership in less than four months.

Ms. Leftridge Byrd has served as Regional Director, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of Security Operations, Region 5 headquartered in Seattle, Washington. She was responsible for leadership of 11 Federal Security Directors serving in 81 airports across the states of Alaska, Colorado, Oregon Washington, Idaho, Montana and Wyoming.

Director Leftridge Byrd has convened national and regional Federal Security Director Conferences in Atlanta and Washington State and led the local planning group for a highly successful, law enforcement organization's annual conference and training symposium. Director Leftridge Byrd has also directed national, regional and statewide conferences and symposia on behalf of the National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice, Women Working in Corrections and Juvenile Justice, Association of Women Executives in Corrections, Association of Programs for Female Offenders, and related professional organizations and associations.

Director Leftridge Byrd began her career in criminal justice and law enforcement in her home, central Pennsylvania, and has served in field and headquarters appointments. Before coming to the U. S. Department of Homeland Security she served as Deputy Secretary, Washington State Department of Corrections. In her position there, she had the responsibility of investment and implementation of 26 million dollars to fund evidence-based community and institution based programs and the strategic direction of the priorities and mission of 1,100 community corrections staff responsible for community-based supervision of 27,000 criminal offenders.

Prior to that appointment, she served with the Pennsylvania, Department of Corrections as Deputy Secretary. Her Commonwealth-wide responsibilities included directing the Bureaus of Corrections Education, Community Corrections, Victim Services, Reentry and Inmate Programs. She was also responsible for the state's two diagnostic and reception institutions for all newly convicted inmates being committed to the Commonwealth correctional system. Director Leftridge Byrd has also served as Superintendent of maximum security prisons housing male and female inmates. As Superintendent, Director Leftridge Byrd was responsible for staff safety and training, institution security protocol, community partnerships, incident command and critical incident planning and inmate reentry programs.

In February 2016 she was selected by the Atlanta Tribune as one of the *Atlanta Metropolitan Area "Superwomen" of 2016*. Director Leftridge Byrd has been recognized as *Criminal Justice Professional of the Year* by the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives. She has also been honored by the Women in Federal Law Enforcement Foundation, when she received the organization's highest honor, the *President's Award*. She is also the recipient of the American Correctional Association's annual award as the *Best in the Business* and received the *Woman of Achievement* award by the Delaware County Commission for Women. She was the recipient of the Department of Homeland Security, *TSA People First Award*, recognizing a strong commitment to people with an emphasis on career pathways, professional development, and communication. She has also served on the National Minority AIDS Council.

Director Leftridge Byrd enjoys writing, training and public speaking with a purpose. Over her public service career, Director Leftridge Byrd has focused on leadership development, diversity, creating effective teams in large, dynamic organizations and the obligation of leaders in shaping organizational culture and creating sustainable legacy.