

AIRPORT SECURITY

IS IT TOO SECURE?

Reasons For Airport Security

Shortly after the plane had taken off from Portland, Oregon to Seattle, Washington, a dark haired man handed a note to the stewardess. He demanded \$200,000 or he said he'd blow up the plane. He exchanged the passengers for the loot. The man who purchased his airline ticket under the name Dan Cooper then lowered the aft door at the back of the plane and jumped out into the dark, stormy night.

Shortly following the skyjacking of D.B. Cooper, the aircraft makers had no choice but to alter the current design. They installed the "Cooper Vane" making it impossible to lower the aft door in mid-flight.

This is only one of many changes the Federal Aviation Administration has had to mandate over recent decades. Just a year prior to Cooper's stunt, Palestinians threatened to blow up four planes. In response, Nixon placed air marshals on random flights. This obviously wasn't a perfect solution due to the fact that not every flight could have a marshal onboard.

1988, on Pan Am flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, a bomb was brought onboard and detonated in the air killing all 259 people on the plane. Large bits of the plane fell over

Lockerbie, landing on buildings and houses killing eleven others bringing the total number of fatalities to 270.

Then there's the unforgettable event of 9/11 where 2,976 innocent lives were taken (2,995 lives lost including terrorists).

These are only some of the many historic events that have resulted in reorganized airport security measures. It's no wonder the FAA has been continuously reevaluating and redesigning airport security.

The current methods of airport security are sufficient, but with a little help from our good friend named technology we have been able to make security procedures flow more smoothly.



Airport Metal Detectors
Metal Detectors were partially introduced into airports in the 1970s. The idea came from the metal detectors used in log saw mills. In airports, they started out as five-foot tunnels with a ramp inside on which people often tripped and fell. Standardized in the 1980s, they were assisted by handheld detectors and reduced to the rectangular-shaped doorway seen today.

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Current Airport Security Methods

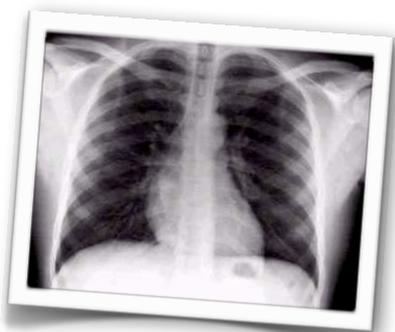
The current airport security methods are as follows: the subject goes through several security checkpoints which are operated by TSA Officers, subjects remove jackets, some jewelry, loose change, shoes, belt buckles, etc., if any metal is detected, the officer must locate it. If the metal can't be located the subject must submit to a pat down. If the pat down is unsuccessful, the subject must submit to a partial strip search. If unsuccessful, then a full strip search.



If unsuccessful, then a cavity search, or the more often used diagnostic—or medical—imaging which reveals the internal makeup of the body and

any foreign objects that may be contained within.

The harder time airport security has locating the problem, the more uncomfortable the subject is going to become and the more likely they will be to cooperate.



Diagnostic Imaging



The Provision "Body Scan"

Technology and Airport Security

Passengers are subject to a large amount of physical discomfort in modern airport security procedures. With technology on our side we have been able to give passengers an alternative to the discomfort. The metal detector can be used before a detailed pat down is necessary. The hand-held metal detectors make it easier to locate the problem. And now today we are implementing the new "Body-Scan" machine to hopefully completely replace the pat down. A recent addition of diagnostic imaging has also mostly replaced the cavity-search procedure.



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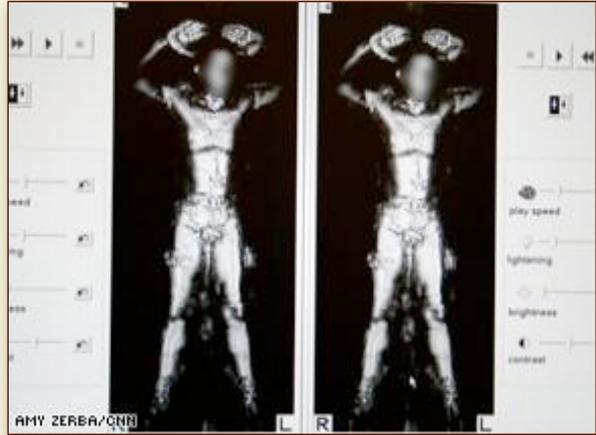
The Full-body X-ray Scan

The full-body x-ray scan is being highly considered by the FAA and the TSA (Transportation Security Administration) to be fully implemented into the standard airport security process. The machines "detect both metallic and nonmetallic threat items to keep passengers safe," said Kristin Lee, spokeswoman for TSA, in a written statement. "It is proven technology, and we are highly confident in its detection capability." As further protection, a passenger's face is blurred and the image as a whole "resembles a fuzzy negative," said TSA's Lee. The officers monitoring images aren't allowed to bring cameras, cell phones or any recording device into the room, and the computers have been programmed so they have "zero storage capability" and images are "automatically deleted," she added. These scanners replace the pat down as they are a "virtual strip search." Sounds fair, right?

So What's The Big Deal?

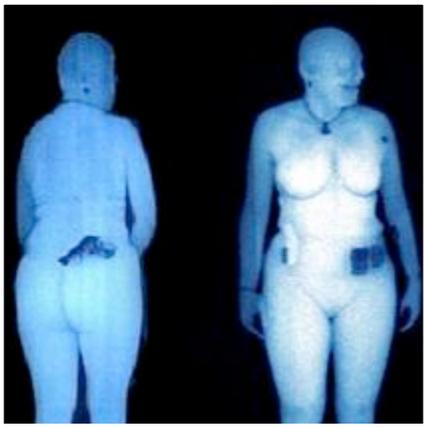
Well is it safe from radiation? The answer to that is yes. the TSA says it "emits 10,000 times less radio frequency than a cell phone."

But that should be the least of our concerns. The image it creates, reveals body form and the size of breasts and genitals. Only one person will have access to these images, the face and privates will be blurred by scramblers, and the file will never be saved. So long as it is the passenger's option, who cares? If one chooses to go through a scan, then so be it.



Full Body Imaging

It reveals the entire body of the person in a nude fashion. Would you enjoy others seeing your body in this fashion? Can you imagine if Angelina Jolie was put through one of these scanners? That image would find its way onto the internet within the hour! The TSA says that the face of the person is automatically blurred providing a little privacy. And after it's inspected by the agent, it's permanently deleted. Is that good enough? Most people don't think so saying that it is a violation of their rights.



Newer models appear even more revealing, but certainly do the job.

Is the Scanner the Future of Airport Security?

It's not likely. People aren't likely to forfeit their privacy for security. Thus far, the scanners are used as an alternative option for the pat down. People who have had hip replacements aren't permitted through metal detectors, so they require a pat down. The pat down can be very uncomfortable and can sometimes last up to four minutes. They can choose the x-ray scan as an alternative and be done within a short thirty seconds. If someone is going through the security measures and fails many of the security tests, perhaps they should be forced to an x-ray scan before they're submitted to a strip search or the even more dreaded cavity search. People possess the right to privacy so long as they choose it. If they submit to expose their bodies to a security officer, that's their choice. X-ray scanners should be implemented into airport security, but should remain a personal option.