

The Association of Independent Aviation Security Professionals

Promoting the Adoption of Meaningful Aviation Security Measures

We have several concerns over TSA's plans for AIT. Particularly when ATR is applied, the AIT's inherently poor resolution is further degraded and the system's probability of detecting the components of IEDs becomes dangerously low.

1) Millimeter wave (MMW) AIT is a low-resolution imager with inherent limits and coverage gaps. It is incapable on its own of detecting well-concealed explosives on a passenger. It cannot screen key areas of the body. Furthermore, terrorists can conceal and carry commercial grade detonators with less risk of detection than through a metal detector. Shoe & underwear bombs have failed due to faulty homemade detonators, so allowing such vulnerability increases the risk of devastating attacks.

2) Higher resolution backscatter X-ray AITs have been replaced by faster, but less detection-capable MMW. While this may be operationally & cost beneficial, security is being significantly compromised. Note that Israel uses only the backscatter X-ray systems.

3) A better strategy would be to expand risk-based screening from the TSA's PreCheck for low risk passengers, to include *high security lanes* needed for higher risk travelers selected by analysis of passenger data & by behavior detection. The high security lane, integrating AIT, metal detection, & other technologies in an inter-communicating system would cover the broad range of threats & foreseeable concealment methods. The lanes would be equipped with currently available systems, but costs & operational limitations would limit their use to the small subset of higher risk passengers, identified in advance & directed to those lanes.

Expanding risk-based screening to higher risk passengers, not widespread AIT deployment, is in our opinion the best approach to protect the traveling public from both the kinds of attempted attacks already experienced as well as future, potentially more skillful attempts to destroy passenger airliners.