

New Technology Promises Airport Screening of Bags with Laptops and Liquids Inside 10/2017

The day when travelers do not need to remove their laptops and bottles of shampoo from their carry-on bags has gotten a step closer this week, thanks to a new technology that has been approved for testing by the U.S. Transportation Security Administration (TSA).

Analogic Corporation's ConneCT system uses computed tomography technology and 3D imaging to give security officers at airport security checkpoints a 360-degree view of each bag, so they can more easily see through clutter and locate prohibited items.

The goal is to allow passengers to keep their personal electronic devices and bottles of liquids in their bags and speed up the screening process.

According to president and CEO of Analogic Fred Parks, the motivation behind the technology is to keep "the traveling public moving through airports faster and safer than ever before."

ConneCT's first customer, American Airlines, which came on board in June, demonstrated the system at Phoenix Sky Harbour International. It also has been in testing in the U.K. A similar system also was tested at London's Luton Airport.

Liquids were banned completely from aircraft in August 2006 over fears that terrorists would take down a plane by mixing liquids while they were on board. But small bottles of liquid, carried in a bag that can be removed from the carry-on, were small quantities were determined to be safe.

Still, the removal of liquids and laptops from carry-on bags continues to slow down the screening process, especially when passengers do it incorrectly and have to be pulled side. The TSA did improve on overall airport security satisfaction in 2017 according to a survey by Travel Leaders Group. That survey showed that overall airport security satisfaction hit 67.5% this year, up from 63.6% last year, while the percentage of travelers dissatisfied with airport screening dropped from 17% to 14.9%.

Part of the improvement may be due to both the increased number of TSA staff and airline investments in more modern screening equipment that allows faster and more efficient processing of passengers at check-in.