

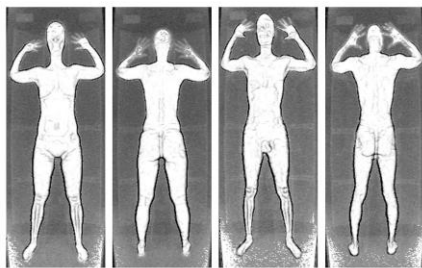
Backscatter Advanced Imaging Technology

What Is It?

Advanced imaging technology safely screens passengers for both metallic and non-metallic threats, including weapons and explosives. It detects items which may be concealed under a passenger's clothes, allows TSA to screen without physical contact, and works to keep the traveling public safe.



Backscatter imaging technology projects low level X-ray beams over the body to create a reflection of the body, which is displayed on the monitor. The image produced resembles a chalk etching. In March 2010, TSA began deploying 450 advanced imaging technology units, which were purchased with American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds.



Currently, TSA has 157 imaging technology units at 43 airports and plans to deploy a total of 450 imaging technology units in 2010. In addition, President Obama's fiscal year 2011 budget requests funding to purchase and deploy an additional 500 AIT machines.

How It Works

Advanced imaging technology is completely optional for all passengers. Those passengers who opt out of imaging technology screening will receive alternative screening, which includes a physical pat-down. One officer will ask a passenger to remove all objects from his/her pockets before entering the portal. This officer never sees the passenger's image. Another security officer in a walled-off location views the black and white image generated by the technology. Once this second officer reviews the image and resolves any anomalies, the image is immediately deleted. The entire process takes seconds.

Privacy Features

TSA has implemented strict measures to protect passenger privacy, which is ensured through the anonymity of the image. The image cannot be stored, transmitted or printed, and is deleted immediately once viewed. Additionally, there is a privacy algorithm applied to the image.

Safety Features

Backscatter technology meets national health and safety standards, including applicable American National Standard for radiation safety. This technology was evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) Center for Devices and Radiological Health (CDRH), the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), and the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory (APL), and results confirmed that radiation doses are well below those specified by the American National Standards Institute. The amount of radiation from a backscatter scan is equivalent to two minutes of flight on an airplane.



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