The use of **advanced imaging technology** (security scanners) at Gatwick Airport

As part of our drive towards providing the best passenger experience, Gatwick uses the latest advanced imaging technology (security scanners).

Security scanners provide an additional layer of security. They are a completely safe and extremely capable method of screening passengers.

How do security scanners work?

The security scanning system uses millimetre-wave imaging to locate objects on a person that are concealed under clothing. Millimetre-wave imaging offers a superior approach for screening people compared to existing methods such as metal detectors with hand search. It works by bouncing millimetre waves off an individual's skin to produce an outline image of the person's body, showing any concealed, potentially dangerous objects.

The image is not reviewed by an operator reviewing an image, as the system provides an Automatic Threat Recognition and Detection functionality. The Scanner displays an indication of possible threat areas on a `gingerbread man' image. The security officer uses this information to determine if a physical search is required.

This functionality does away with the need for any person to view any images which eliminates any concerns people may have about privacy issues. The images are analysed within the equipment, so the millimetre wave image of the passenger is never seen, stored, printed or transmitted. The scanner is deliberately programmed so that no image can be retained, printed or transmitted.

Selected passengers are asked to stand in a particular position by the machine

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What happens when I am scanned?

Security scanners are a much less intrusive process than a hand search. Selected passengers are asked to stand in a particular position in the equipment. There may be a requirement to rotate to a secondary position. The whole process only takes a matter of seconds.

Who has to go through the security scanners?

Passengers are not selected on ethnicity, origin, gender or destination of travel. However, for security reasons, we cannot provide specific detail on the selection criteria.

How will my privacy be protected?

Privacy is of paramount concern. Extensive safeguards have been built into the security scanner machines and the processes themselves. No images can be saved or retrieved at a later date. A code of practice has been produced by the Department for Transport to ensure that the implementation and application of security scanners will be proportionate to individuals' privacy rights.

Are security scanners safe?

Yes. A number of different security scanner technologies have been assessed by government health and safety regulators and the tests have concluded that the dose received is much less than using a mobile phone or being in the sun. It is completely safe for pregnant women, children and anyone with medical implants.

Are children exempt?

No. The Government directive authorising the use of security scanners by airports does not exempt children because this would undermine the effectiveness of these new security measures.

Can I opt out of going through the security scanners?

If you do not wish to be screened by a security scanner, you will need to have an enhanced hand search conducted in a private search room. This will involve the removal of outer clothing and the loosening and/or removal of other garments. Please be aware that this alternative screening method will take significantly longer than going through a security scanner due to additional staff resources that need to be made available.

For more information please visit
www.gatwickairport.com and
www.sds.l-3com.com/products/checkpoint.htm