

SYMPOSIUM ON CONTROLLED ACCESS SCREENING FOR AIRPORT SECURITY AREAS

*John P. Battema*¹

Introduction

5 Jan. 1982 marked the ninth anniversary of the Federal Aviation Administration's passenger screening program. The highly successful program requires that all passengers boarding domestic or international airliners be subjected to a body search as well as having their carryon items hand searched. The body search may be accomplished by using either a hand held or walk through metal detector in lieu of a physical "pat down" search and the carryon items may be X-rayed instead of opening each article for a manual search.

To illustrate the success of this program, domestic airlines hijackings dropped from an average of 27 per year for the 5-year period prior to 1973 to an average of 7 per year for the past 9 years. During the past nine years, more than four billion passengers and almost five billion articles of carryon baggage were screened. More than 20 000 firearms were detected and seized and almost 10 000 arrests were made. And during this nine-year period, no passengers flying U.S. domestic airlines have been killed or seriously injured during hijacking attempts.

To commemorate this anniversary, ASTM Committee F-12 on Security Systems and Equipment sponsored a Symposium on Controlled Access Screening for Airport Security Areas. This event was held in Philadelphia on 22 April 1982 and was chaired by Mr. Theo

Tsacumis of the Federal Aviation Administration and Mr. John Battema of Scanray Corp.

This group of papers was presented at the symposium and comprises an analysis of the techniques used to accomplish this monumental task as well as a description of the methods used for dealing with the traveling public. These methods were so effective in reducing passenger inconveniences and speeding up the screening process that resistance and complaints from the public disappeared and were replaced by words of praise.

These papers describe the various facets that had to be considered such as the safety of photographic film contained in passengers' carryon luggage, television image quality capable of detecting contraband, conveyor speeds great enough to assure adequate passenger flow, and the training of security personnel in everything from the detection of weapons to the courteous treatment of passengers. Last, but not least, it was necessary to accomplish all these tasks within limited financial constraints.

It is also interesting to note the different problems encountered with passenger security screening in Europe and the approaches taken to solving these problems. This subject is covered in Mr. Keane's paper.

This compilation of papers provides an enlightening and educational view of the passenger screening program and should provide a wealth of information to the security professional as well as to the interested members of the traveling public.

¹Vice president of marketing, Scanray Corp., 1526 W. 240th St., Harbor City, CA 90710.