

## The Wire...from AirPlus

### February 2010: Beyond Airport Security

**AIRPLUS.** WHAT TRAVEL PAYMENT IS ALL ABOUT.



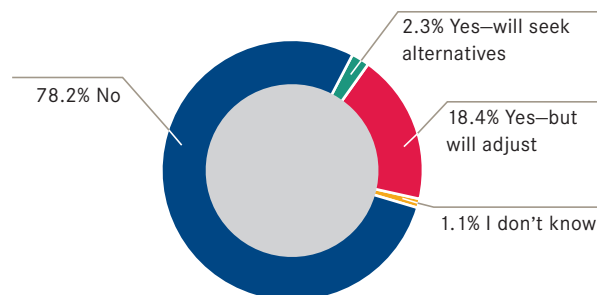
#### Business travelers respond to recent terrorist activity with perspective that focuses on fundamental intelligence weakness, not lapses at the airport.

Airlines have proven a target for terrorists, but are they an easy target? The consensus, after a Nigerian passenger attempted on December 25 to mix and detonate explosives on a Northwest Airlines flight en route from Amsterdam to Detroit, is quite possibly yes. There is controversy, however, about what aspects of international airport security need to be addressed and how best to do it.

Immediately after the Christmas Day incident, in-bound travelers to the United States were subject to additional security measures and baggage restrictions that included random searches, physical pat downs and additional screening at departure gates. Some governments were advising travelers to the U.S. to arrive at the airport three hours in advance to allow extra time for security screening.

At the request of the Obama Administration, Schiphol Airport in Amsterdam—the originating airport for the Northwest flight—implemented full body scan technology within two weeks of the incident to screen travelers bound for the U.S. In early February, full

#### Will the global implementation of full body scan technology hurt in-bound corporate travel to the United States?



body scans became mandatory at Heathrow and Manchester airports in the United Kingdom. Indeed, the U.S. approached several governments about the necessity of implementing such technology at their airports and announced that the U.S. has ordered 150 full body scanners to roll out to key airports domestically.

The news set off a firestorm of concerns about public safety versus personal privacy, due to the detailed nature of the images that full body scan technologies are able to produce (see additional resources for more information). For the corporate travel community, however, a recent survey from AirPlus International showed that even when exposed to more invasive security measures, travelers will likely consider it business as usual.

**On which activities do you think the U.S. and other cooperating countries should concentrate attention and resources in addressing the problem of terrorist activity as it relates to travel? (check all that apply)**

Gathering better intelligence for watch lists	57.5%
Ensuring the communication of watch lists to international security organizations	62.1%
Ensuring increased and standardized screening procedures in airports around the globe	65.5%
Organizing domestic and international security organizations to concentrate on the "next threat" rather than the "recent attempt"	67.8%

Asked whether a global implementation of full body scan technology would hurt in-bound corporate travel to the U.S., more than 78 percent of respondents said that business travelers would not have the option to forego trips based on privacy concerns. About 18 percent forecasted an immediate decrease due to the implementation of body scan technology, but they also believed that it would rebound as travelers adjusted to the practice. Just over 2 percent believed that corporations might allow business travelers to seek alternatives if they objected to the security measures.

New security technologies, however, were not the only point of contention regarding the international response to this recent terrorist attempt. Accused Christmas Day bomber Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab was neither listed on government no-fly lists nor identified as an individual who should undergo additional screening. And despite suspicious behaviors, such as buying a same-day international ticket in cash and not carrying luggage, he was not selected for additional screening by airport personnel.

These types of security lapses are not only a failure of United States intelligence organizations, they are also the result of an international intelligence community that has been unable to standardize security measures and coordinate data sharing and communication. Survey respondents keyed into this issue. More than 57 percent wanted to see intelligence organizations gather better information for watch lists, while more than 62 percent wanted to see that information shared with international security organizations. Upward of 65 percent saw the value in creating international security standards for airports around the globe. Most important to survey respondents, however, was the reactionary position

**The U.S. has targeted 14 nations from which incoming travelers (with the exception of U.S. citizens) are required to undergo additional security screening when entering the country. Is this the right strategy?**

No... It is tantamount to racial profiling	3.4%
No... It will significantly reduce in-bound travel to the U.S., including business travel	0%
No... It will cause security to focus on those regions and miss other threats	25.3%
Yes... It is an unfortunate reality but the U.S. must protect its borders	32.2%
Yes... The U.S. has every right to identify and screen individuals from countries with which it has political tensions	32.2%
I don't know	6.9%

the government seemed to take when addressing terrorist threats. Rather than protecting against the most recent threat, survey respondents would like to see international intelligence agencies and their governments to work together to protect against the next threat – whether targeted at airlines or other vulnerable entities.

**Additional Resources:**

**U.S., Europe Reach Aviation Security ‘Consensus’**  
<http://www.management.travel/news.php?cid=aviation-security-consensus-US-Europe.Jan-10.28>

**Travelers Face New Aviation Security Rules**  
<http://www.management.travel/news.php?cid=aviation-security-rules-full-body-scanning-screening.Jan-10.14>

**Debate Over Full-Body Scans vs. Invasion of Privacy Flares Anew After Incident**  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/12/30/us/30privacy.html>

Survey Methodology: For this issue of *The Wire*, AirPlus International in cooperation with ProMedia.travel surveyed 88 travel management professionals in North American and Europe from January 13-February 10, 2010.

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