



Why This Matters

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) is responsible for securing the nation's airports and screening commercial airline passengers and baggage. As the threat to transportation security evolved, TSA began using advanced imaging technology to screen passengers for metallic and nonmetallic threats including weapons, explosives, and other concealed objects.

TSA purchased 997 advanced imaging technology (AIT) units for approximately \$150 million dollars. AIT units are deployed to airports nationwide and are essential to keeping the nation's airports and airlines secure.

DHS Response

TSA concurred with both recommendations. TSA acknowledged the recommendations will help it develop a greater focus on documenting its short- and long-term strategies and improve internal controls relative to data used to influence or inform those strategies. TSA also agreed that its system can benefit from establishing standard processes and procedures for collecting, calculating, and entering advanced imaging technology and walkthrough metal detector passenger throughput.

For Further Information:

Contact our Office of Public Affairs at (202)254-4100, or email us at DHS-OIG.OfficePublicAffairs@oig.dhs.gov

Transportation Security Administration Deployment and Use of Advanced Imaging Technology

What We Determined

We performed this audit as a result of a congressional request by Representative John Mica, Chairman, Subcommittee on Government Operations, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

We determined that TSA created and followed deployment schedules. However, it did not develop a comprehensive deployment strategy to ensure all AIT units were effectively deployed and fully used for screening passengers. Additionally, TSA did not have adequate internal controls to ensure accurate data on AIT utilization. Without a documented, approved, comprehensive plan and accurate data on the use of AIT units, TSA continued to use walkthrough metal detectors, which are unable to identify non-metallic objects, to screen the majority of passengers; therefore not taking advantage of the AIT's security benefits. Additionally, TSA may have used resources inefficiently to purchase and deploy underused AIT units.

What We Recommend

We recommend the Deputy Administrator, Transportation Security Administration:

- 1) Develop and approve a single, comprehensive deployment strategy that addresses short- and long-term goals for screening equipment.
- 2) Develop and implement a disciplined system of internal controls from data input to output to ensure Performance Measurement Information System data integrity.