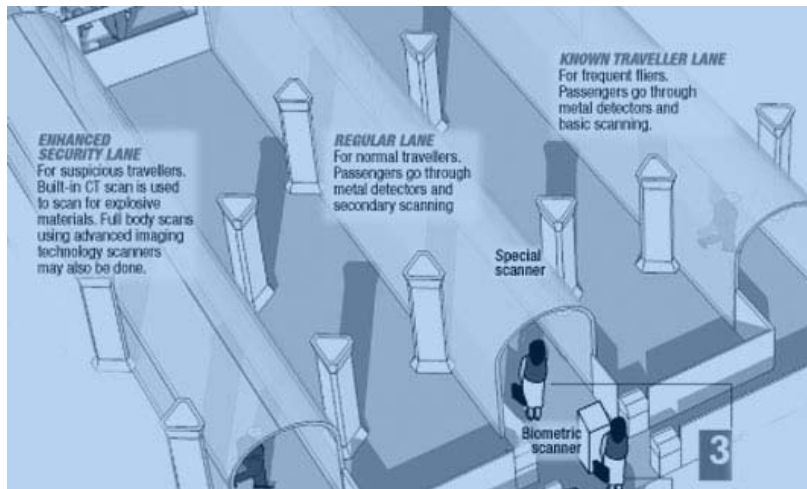


[http://www.relax.com.sg/relax/news/527546/Airport\\_checkpoint\\_of\\_the\\_future\\_.html](http://www.relax.com.sg/relax/news/527546/Airport_checkpoint_of_the_future_.html)

## Airport checkpoint of the future?

By Hedy Khoo, The New Paper | Tue, Jan 4 2011

Plans for Iata's proposed security tunnels to check airport passengers still under review here.



A NEW passenger screening system proposed by the International Air Transport Association (Iata) is under review at Changi Airport.

The Changi Airport Group, which manages the airport, told The New Paper that it will be reviewing the concepts and feasibility of implementing the proposed three-lane screening system.

On Dec 16, the Iata announced plans to replace passenger security checks with security tunnels that could shorten queues by splitting travellers into three lanes – one for known frequent travellers, one for regular travellers and an enhanced security lane for suspicious travellers.

Under the proposed system, passengers will be screened based on biometric and flight booking data. Those deemed safer will undergo lighter checks than others. Iata said screening would not be based on racial or ethnic profiling.

The Changi Airport Group spokesman said: “To implement passenger segregation for screening, information must be shared across airlines and government agencies to derive the intended intelligence, which itself is a challenge.

“Changi will work with the local authorities to study this concept further and assess its suitability for implementation.”

At present, Changi will only review the proposal. There are no plans yet to adopt the three-lane screening system.

“The three-lane system proposed is more applicable for a centralised screening set-up,” the spokesman said.

“At Changi, we conduct decentralised screening at the gates. With dedicated security screening resources at each gate, we do not often face bottlenecks. We can also sieve out persons of interests at the gate for enhanced screening if needed.”

There is no need to rush into implementing Iata’s proposed security system at the airport here, says Singapore-based terrorism expert Rohan Gunaratna.

## Appropriate

“The Americans are very keen to implement the system of security tunnels as a solution to the increasing public displeasure over the method of current security checks,” he said.

“In Singapore, the current security measures taken by the authorities here are appropriate and checks on passengers are not overly intrusive.”

He said the authorities here screen passengers to a higher degree based on intelligence indicators. Only those who are suspected to be a threat will be subject to further searches.

“Singapore counter-terrorism officials are well-trained and they strike the fine balance between security and facilitation,” said Dr Gunaratna, adding that security measures here are “very prudently designed and carried out”.

He said the threat of terrorism is medium to low in Singapore, but is escalating in South Asia, the Middle East and the West.

“Both Changi Airport and Singapore Airlines are rated among the safest in aviation. The Singapore Government will not take any risk especially when it comes to aviation and transportation, be it passengers or cargo,” he added.

Iata is discussing the proposal with governments. It estimated that an intermediate solution could be in place by 2014 if governments agree to implement the plan.

This early model would be a combination of existing hardware with key features of the envisioned checkpoint of the future, such as screening based on passenger data, behaviour analysis and the creation of new screening lanes.

*This article was first published in [The New Paper](#).*