

News story: Government announces fund to revolutionise airport screening

Holidaymakers could be spared the hassle of removing laptops and tablets from hand-luggage when passing through airport security, as government seeks to revolutionise aviation screening.

The government is today (20 October 2017) announcing a £3 million fund to support innovative research to develop new ways of detecting explosive devices concealed in electrical items.

Companies and universities are invited to bid for money by submitting proposals for original research in the field of concealed explosives. And new methods of detecting whether electrical items have been tampered with or appear irregular are also of interest.

The proposals can focus on either screening electrical items within bags at an airport's central search area, or the use of more portable technology to screen items at other points in the passenger journey.

Once ready for commercial use, the new technologies will enhance our ability to prevent terrorist attacks on aviation while improving the experience of passengers.

Security Minister, Ben Wallace said:

Aviation security is a government priority and one with an ever changing threat landscape.

We need to embrace and encourage the talent from industry that will allow us to stay several steps ahead of those who wish us harm.

Lord Callanan, Minister for Aviation said:

The UK has always been at the forefront of research and development in the field of aviation security.

The safety and security of the travelling public will always be our top priority but we understand that this can sometimes be inconvenient for passengers – especially families with young children.

As technology improves we want to make the aviation experience quicker and easier for all holidaymakers.

The fund is being run as part of a wider multi-million pound initiative to deliver a step change in aviation security through Future Aviation Security

Solutions (FASS).

FASS, a joint Department for Transport and Home Office programme, is working closely with industry partners to stimulate and fund research into a broad range of potential security innovations from initial concepts through to commercial products.

The full criteria for this open fund can be found on the [Defence and Security Accelerator \(DASA\) website](#).

This is just one of the routes to funding that FASS is offering to the research and technology community. FASS also encourages applications for research funding via [DASA's Open Call for Innovation](#). This funding mechanism is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and evaluates ideas, products and services from anywhere in the UK or abroad.

FASS has already issued £1.64 million funding to projects aimed at improving the screening of passengers, their luggage and cargo.

Promising results were demonstrated at an event in September (2017), with phase 2 of this research due to commence shortly.