

Economic of a security system



Economics of Airport Security: Additional Costs or Safety Concerns

The security measures undertaken in airports have been in much scrutiny after the September 11 attacks that led terrorism, fears among most passengers.

In the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 terrorist actions, the Federal Aviation Authority took steps to federalize the pre-board screening process at US airports and they now oversee responsibility for managing the contracts with private security companies.

Congressional action on November 16, 2001 led to the passage of the Aviation and Transportation Security Act. The law federalized aviation security and centralized responsibility under the newly created Transportation Security Administration (TSA). Currently, the TSA oversees U. S. airline and airport security. It provides trained federal employees for passenger and baggage screening and it supplies sky marshals (air marshals) for unnamed commercial flights (Salant, 2002). With all the increased taxes because of additional airport security undertaken by our government, is it still viable for airports to further add their own measures in security Will these measures not affect passenger's willingness to travel by air, given an additional \$ 5 to their tickets and more minutes waiting in line The federalization of commercial aviation resulted in the removal of contract private security personnel from passenger- and baggage-screening points. They were replaced with twice as many federal TSA employees, who earn almost two times the salary of their private-sector counterparts. The impact of this transition has yet to be measured. Some have argued that federalized passenger screening has not delivered a noticeable improvement in air passenger safety (Dalton, 2003). Also, wages of airport security personnel have been increased and are now comparable to police and fire protection

jobs. Entry-level pay starts at around \$20 an hour plus U. S. federal employee benefits (GAO, 13 June 2003).

As airline security is now a national concern, it is the standard operating procedure for personnel and US Customs agents to have dogs or computerized equipments that seek out passengers, luggage, and cargo that possess or contain drugs and explosives at major airports. Additionally, some airlines initiated extensive security training programs for their employees. Positive identification of passengers, baggage/passenger matching, and random baggage searches became part of the pre-boarding passenger screening procedure.

The economic of increased security are likely to be particularly high in the United States, where an open society is the foundation of economic success and a high-tech military. The United States is already paying enormous taxes of this kind. Billions more dollars are going to the FBI, the CIA, the Pentagon, the National Security Agency, and a new bureaucracy for the director of homeland security. Billions are going to bail out the airlines, to increase the number and quality of airport security personnel, to pay the National Guard stationed at airports. The costs to business activity are perhaps even greater. Long lines at airport security and fear of air travel cut business travel and holiday travel. Hotel bookings are down, urban restaurant business is down, all kinds of tourist businesses are down (Mccauley, 2002, p. 16-17).

With all the widespread terrorism fears and security demands that need to be met, it is therefore better to be safe than sorry. Even if security systems add \$5 to the typical airplane fare and require 10 minutes of extra time for each passenger, their safety in our airports supersede all these minimal

costs. This is the reason why that undertaking these developments in our security system is a matter that should be considered in utmost importance.

References

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