

FACIAL RECOGNITION TECH AT AIRPORTS TO EASE CONGESTION

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Face pass: A woman going through facial recognition system at Dulles International Airport in Dulles on September 6. | Photo Credit: [AFP](#)

As facial recognition technology use generates intense scrutiny, a new system unveiled at Washington's Dulles airport is being touted as a "user friendly" way to help ease congestion for air travellers.

Two new face recognition systems have been installed at the airport — one to meet legal requirements for biometric entry-exit records, and a second to help speed processing of travellers arriving on international flights by matching their real-time images with stored photos.

The growing use of facial recognition has ignited debate over surveillance and privacy around the world, but officials told media this system was a way to help reducing annoying lines and wait times without compromising security.

"The technology works," U.S. Customs and Border Protection Commissioner Kevin McAleenan told reporters at an airport unveiling.

"It's fast, it's user-friendly, it's flexible and it's cost-effective. And we believe it will change the face of international travel."

Over time, officials say the biometric recognition system will allow a traveller's face to eliminate the need for a boarding pass.

"No more fumbling with your boarding pass when you have two carry-ons, maybe a kid, no more trying to find a QR code or trying to refresh your screen," Mr. McAleenan said.

In one test for the system, he said the boarding 350 passengers for an Airbus A380 aircraft was completed in 20 minutes, or half the normal time.

Officials showed how the new systems, operated with iPads mounted on poles, identified and matched the image of travellers during the boarding process.

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