

Airport security screening and changing passenger satisfaction: An exploratory assessment

By Konstantina Gkritzaa, Debbie Niemeierb, Fred Manneringa.

Since September 11, 2001, airport screening procedures in the US have been continuously evolving. For example, the passenger screening process is now trying to strike a balance between security and customer service (i.e. minimizing wait times). This balancing act has important implications not only for passenger safety, but also for the financial stability of an airline industry that is faced with volatile energy prices and sometimes burdensome labor agreements. Using data from 2002 and 2003, we tried to uncover factors that determine passenger satisfaction at security screening points. Our findings show that, while wait times at security screening points are significant determinants of passenger satisfaction, many other factors come into play. Moreover, the results show that the determinants of customer satisfaction are not stable over time. This suggests that further refinements in airport screening procedures should give careful consideration to the factors underlying passenger satisfaction, and how these might change over time, rather than focusing exclusively on minimizing wait times at passenger screening points.