



MEPs back body scanners but want strict safeguards

MEPs on the Transport Committee agreed Tuesday that the use of body scanners in EU airports would enhance security but said it should be voluntary. They approved a report by Spanish Christian Democrat Luis de Grandes Pascual that backs the use of body scanners so long as they don't interfere with passenger privacy or pose health risks. The report should be voted in the plenary on 23 June.

The European Commission intends to propose new rules this summer to add body scanners to the list of EU-authorized methods for screening passenger. The EP will have a right of veto over the new rules but this report is a way of making its wishes known in advance.

Scanners are already in use in UK and Dutch airports and have been tested in Germany, Italy, France and Finland. However, there are different standards including x-ray scans, MEPs want banned because of the health risks.

MEPs called for the following conditions to be met on body scanners:

To ensure **passenger health**

- a ban on scanners using ionising radiations, like x-rays
- the use of technology the least harmful to health

"We need to be sure that the new equipment will not impact people's health. Therefore, x-ray scans should be rejected," Mr de Grandes Pascual said.

To **protect personal data, dignity and privacy**

- "only stick figures should be used (and) no body images may be produced"
- no storage of images
- passengers must be able to opt for a manual search instead of a body scan
- scans should be random and non-discriminatory

"I believe people are prepared to sacrifice a bit of their privacy if there will be more security. The technology will just produce data on the screen. There will be no images to be saved," he added.