

TSA Conducting an Expedited Screening Pilot

Source: TSA.gov

TSA is looking at ways to expedite select travelers who voluntarily provide additional information, allowing the agency to integrate more identity-based screening into its security measures, which could reduce the need for some of the current physical screening that occurs at airports.

The goal of the pilot program is to test expedited security screening for some passengers traveling within the U.S. Participants in the pilot may experience modifications to the current security process and this may include being allowed to leave their shoes on or keep laptops in their carry-on bags when going through security.

At Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International and Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County airports, certain frequent fliers from Delta Air Lines and certain members of U.S. Custom and Borders Protection (CBP's) Trusted Traveler programs, including members of [Global Entry](#), [SENTRI](#), and [NEXUS](#), who are U.S. citizens and who are also flying on Delta will be eligible to participate in the pilot. At Miami International and Dallas Fort Worth International airports, certain frequent fliers from American Airlines and certain members of CBP's Trusted Traveler programs who are U.S. citizens and who are also flying on American will be eligible. TSA plans to expand this pilot to include United Airlines, Southwest, JetBlue, US Airways, Alaska Airlines, and Hawaiian Airlines, as well as additional airports, once operationally ready.

The pilot program will begin in October.

How do you Opt-In?

Members of CBP's Global Entry program are assigned a participant ID. To participate in TSA's pilot program, these passengers must place their CBP participant ID in the 'Known Traveler Number' field while booking their reservations. That number is then passed to TSA's Secure Flight system and taken into consideration during the pre-screening processing.

Selected frequent fliers will 'opt-in' through their airline's system to participate in TSA's program. Under this process the passenger will not need to input a Known Traveler number during the reservation process. Once the passenger opts-in, the airline identifies the individual as a participant when submitting the passenger reservation information to TSA's Secure Flight system.

Please note that TSA will determine eligibility for inclusion in the pilot on a per-flight-segment basis and does not guarantee that you would receive expedited screening during future travel. Passengers are always subject to random, unpredictable screening measures.

If participating passengers are cleared through the pre-screening process, they may be directed to a designated lane at the airport after they present their ID and boarding pass to the TSA Officers at the checkpoint. The layout of the lanes providing expedited screening may vary among airports.

TSA is testing this pre-screening system for a limited time with a limited, pre-determined passenger population. Only those passengers who initially agree to "opt in" and are in this population will have the opportunity to participate at this time.

For additional details and the latest information, visit www.tsa.gov.

Southwest Airlines and AirTran Airways Update

Source: lowfaresfarther.com and AJC

Southwest Airlines will start service to Atlanta next February, at first with 15 daily flights from Atlanta to five cities.

The announcement follows Southwest's purchase of AirTran Airways in May. The Dallas-based carrier now operates AirTran as a subsidiary but does not fly its own planes to Atlanta.

That will change Feb. 12, 2012, when Southwest jets will begin flying between Atlanta and Austin,

Baltimore/Washington, Denver, Houston Hobby and Chicago Midway. AirTran already flies to all of those cities except Austin, which Southwest is adding as a new route.

Over a period of months after that, Southwest and AirTran will blend operations and eventually AirTran jets will be repainted in Southwest colors.

Blending Frequent Flyer Programs

In a first step towards blending frequent flyer programs, top-tier members of both carriers' frequent flyer loyalty programs- A-List Members of Southwest's All New Rapid Rewards and elite A+ Members of AirTran's A+ Rewards-will enjoy some, limited reciprocal benefits when flying on either carrier already in effect.

A-List benefits include extra Rapid Reward points, Priority Boarding, access to priority security lanes, and more. On the flip side, Southwest A-List and A-List Preferred Members booking on AirTran will get Free Business Class upgrades, no baggage fees, and all other benefits that AirTran's elite Members enjoy.

What remains the same for now?

- Southwest charges no fee for checked baggage and no change fees. It also has all coach-class and open seating.
- Until operations are integrated, AirTran will continue to operate its own service -- including baggage fees and a business class section.

What changes are on the horizon?

- AirTran's baggage fees will be eliminated as Southwest replaces AirTran service with its own, to align with its own free checked bags policy for the Southwest-operated flights. It will also eliminate AirTran's business class on those flights.
- AirTran's nonstop flights to Dallas/Fort Worth discontinue in November to comply with a Dallas-specific federal restriction on Southwest flying. Southwest won't add its own service -- connecting flights to Dallas Love Field through Austin and Houston -- until February, leaving a gap of several months in the airline's service to Dallas.

Southwest doesn't expect to gain the rights to operate the two carriers as one until the first quarter of next year, when it expects to get a single operating certificate from the Federal Aviation Administration.

For more Up-to-date information on the acquisition of AirTran visit lowfaresfarther.com.

Delta SkyMiles Update

Source: Delta Airlines

Over the past year, more than 1,000,000 Award Tickets were reissued or canceled within 72 hours of departure. As a result, a significant number of these Award Seats departed unused as other members did not have time to rebook them. Effective for Award Tickets issued on or after August 15, 2011, SkyMiles members must now request Award Ticket and mileage upgrade redeposits at least 72 hours before their original flight departure. This change will make unused seats available to other members and ultimately increase Award Ticket availability. Miles for Award Travel are nonrefundable for flights canceled or changed within 72 hours of the original flight departure time. For cancellations made at least 72 hours prior to departure, Diamond and Platinum Medallion® members will continue to receive reissue and redeposit fee waivers, and [fees](#) will continue to apply for other members. Changes and reissues made to Award tickets must be made at least 72 hours prior to the scheduled flight departure time. This applies to both outbound and return flights. Award Tickets booked within 72 hours of departure are nonrefundable and cannot be redeposited or changed. See [Award Travel Fees](#) for full terms and conditions.

INDUSTRY SNIPPETS

App for the Road

Try [greenMeter](#) (\$5.99), an app for the iPhone and iPod Touch. It uses your gadget's built-in accelerometer to detect how fast your car is accelerating and braking, and gives you visual feedback about how to improve your driving.

Delta First to Add Wi-Fi to Regional Jets

Delta Air Lines has begun [adding Wi-Fi to its fleet of regional jets](#), a move [it says](#) makes it "the first airline in the world to provide in-flight internet service onboard its regional aircraft."

Travel Trivia: What do travelers do--or want to do-- when stuck at the Airport?

According to a recent survey of 1,010 travelers

- 57% dwell at a restaurant or bar (post-checkpoint)
- 39% jump on the internet
- 32% shop

Beyond that, surveyors showed interest in the following:

44% cultural, science or history exhibit
16% massage or spa treatment
12% playground for kids

Additionally, direct marketing at the airport - in the form of discount coupons for meals, spa treatments and other services delivered to travelers' mobile devices - appealed to 60 percent of the survey respondents and 23 percent of respondents do not explore an airport's offerings because of concerns about getting lost or missing a flight.

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