

Heathrow trials temperature screening in arrivals hall

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Heathrow is trialling thermal screening equipment in Terminal 2's immigration hall

The equipment detects elevated temperatures of arriving passengers using camera systems capable of monitoring the temperatures of multiple people moving through the airport.



Heathrow says that passengers will be alerted to the trials through signage placed at the immigration hall, but will otherwise see “no visible change to their arrivals journey as no other screening methods will be needed”. It also says that no personal data will be stored or shared through these trials.

Heathrow says that if the trial is successful, the equipment may be rolled out across the airport into departures, connections and colleague search areas to further stress-test its capabilities.

Similar technologies have been used at other airports for several months, though some are aimed at departing passengers, and some on arriving passengers.



Heathrow is promoting the idea of a common international standard across all airports and countries to avoid confusion among the travelling public. Speaking on BBC radio's Today program this morning, Heathrow's CEO John Holland-Kaye said

“When we went into this crisis every country had its own set of measures and Public Health England does have screens for when people arrive into this country, but this mismatch of methods really confuses the travelling public. They are worried they have been screened in one country and not in another because they can't see all the screens, and that's exactly why we need a common standard a common international standard.”

Defending the late introduction of the technology, Holland-Kaye said that

“We have followed Public Health England's advice. They have their own set of measures. Now we are working with them to introduce this thermal screening. It's not yet government policy, but we are a global hub airport.. and so we need to adopt a common international standard, not just a UK standard.”



It is hoped learnings from this trial will help governments introduce the policy framework leading to a global Common International Standard for health screening.

Holland-Kaye said:

“We welcome the Secretary of State for Transport’s ‘air bridge’ proposals to allow trade to continue between destinations with low COVID-19 risks.