

Hundreds Of Americans File Complaints Over Naked Body Scanners

Rising wave of anger in response to virtual strip-search contradicts media spin

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Despite establishment media spin that naked body scanners are being meekly accepted by a compliant public, documents released under the Freedom of Information Act reveal that there have been more than 600 formal complaints about the devices in the last year.

Furthermore, the documents reveal anger at TSA officials for refusing to offer passengers a pat-down alternative, as well as forcing children to go through machines which provide crisp images of genitalia, a particularly outrageous scenario [in light of last week's story concerning a TSA worker who was charged with multiple child sex crimes](#) having raped an underage girl.

"Hundreds of U.S. air travelers have lodged complaints over use of full-body security scanners in the past year, charging they violate personal privacy and may be harmful to their health, documents released on Tuesday showed," [reports Reuters](#).

The Reuters piece amounts to little more than another whitewash of the issue, claiming that privacy filters blur sensitive areas of the body, [an assertion contradicted by other journalists who investigated trials of the technology, as well as readily available sample images](#) which clearly show that the penis and testicles are visible.

The Transportation Security Administration also downplayed the issue as insignificant, claiming that over 600 complaints about body scanners which are installed in just 21 airports in the U.S. was an "infinitesimally small" number.

"I was not given an option to use the whole body screening device. Neither was anyone else. It appeared that everyone was being required to go through the devices, even children," said one complaint from an unidentified traveler who flew through the Tulsa airport in May 2009.

[As we reported last month](#), airport staff have also been accused of printing out and circulating naked images of famous people, a complete abuse of the "professionalism" we were promised would be exercised by those in control of these systems.

Courts have consistently found that strip searches are only legal when performed on a person who has already been found guilty of a crime or on arrestees pending trial where a reasonable suspicion has to exist that they are carrying a weapon. Subjecting masses of people to blanket strip searches in airports reverses the very notion of innocent until proven guilty.

Barring people from flying and essentially treating them like terrorists for refusing to be humiliated by the virtual strip search is a clear breach of the basic human right of freedom of movement. [Security experts agree](#) that such scanners would not even have stopped the incident that has been exploited to justify their widespread introduction – the Christmas Day underwear bomber.

Not only have the scanners proven to be a total violation of privacy, but major international radiation safety groups are now warning of the health risks they pose.

Despite governments claiming that backscatter x-ray systems produce radiation too low to pose a threat, the Inter-Agency Committee on Radiation Safety concluded in their report that governments must justify the use of the scanners and that a more accurate assessment of the health risks is needed.

Pregnant women and children should not be subject to scanning, according to the report, adding that governments should consider “other techniques to achieve the same end without the use of ionizing radiation.”

“The Committee cited the IAEA’s 1996 Basic Safety Standards agreement, drafted over three decades, that protects people from radiation. Frequent exposure to low doses of radiation can lead to cancer and birth defects, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency,” [reported Bloomberg](#).

We are joining the hundreds of other Americans who protested naked body scanners as an affront to privacy, dignity, and a health risk, by launching our naked body scanner contest in an effort to focus public attention on how we must stop these machines now before they are installed in the streets and become another tool of control and oppression as part of the prison planet being constructed around us.

[Not only have authorities in Europe promised to roll out mobile body scanners on the streets](#) to mass scan crowds of people, but Homeland Security has even gone a step further, [developing Orwellian mind-reading devices that are set to be installed as part of unconstitutional checkpoints at public events](#).

We are offering our biggest prize fund ever of \$15,000 for the entries that most successfully highlight the true agenda behind naked body scanners and where this is all heading unless we put our foot down now and help to build momentum behind public pressure to remove the scanners from airports.

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