



# Insulin Pumps at Airport Security

Over 5500 people have signed a petition asking for airports to review their procedures regarding the screening of medical equipment and to ensure that screeners are informed.

The petition was launched after my family was held by airport police for two hours and denied access to an aircraft because of our son's insulin pump.

When asked what aviation security regulation has to say about insulin pumps, Mr Andrew Haines, Chief Executive of the UK Civil Aviation Authority said, *"The regulations which set down the methods available to airports for screening passengers and their cabin baggage include options for when a passenger either prefers not to submit to a particular screening process, or is simply unable to do so for safety or other reasons."* See pages 4&5.

Mr Haines confirmed that there is a process in place in the UK, whereby all passengers who opt out of being screened by a security scanner may request an alternative screening method (e.g. an enhanced hand search in private).

Correspondence with various airport authorities demonstrates that there is appropriate protocol in place. However, the comments received from insulin pump users on our petition page reveal indisputable evidence that confusion regarding insulin pumps at airport security is a prevalent and global issue, which can have swift medical consequences.

As a direct result of our campaign, Airports Council International (ACI) published a full-page article called "Best practice for screening of insulin pumps" in their December 2016 issue of World Report. The Report was sent to their 592 members operating 1,853 airports in 173 countries. See attached.

Nina Brooks, Head of Security at ACI World successfully presented our issue to the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) in May 2017 which advises on global standards and recommended practices. Nina said, "Updated guidance material will be included in the 10th edition of ICAO's Security Manual (Doc8973) due for release in September this year (2017)."

We advise that passengers show airport security personnel this document along with medical confirmation from their practitioner so that safe screening may be undertaken accordingly.

Further updates and information can be seen on the following website:

[www.change.org/p/airport-authorities-standard-policy-for-insulin-pumps-at-airport-security](http://www.change.org/p/airport-authorities-standard-policy-for-insulin-pumps-at-airport-security)

RACHEL HUMPHREY  
Head of Campaign

# Best practice for screening of insulin pumps

*By Nina Brooks, Head, Security, ACI World*

As today's security screening professionals work tirelessly to keep the travelling public safe, there is, on occasion, some confusion and variation of practices globally around the screening of insulin pumps at airport security checkpoints. In this article, we look at the issue, and suggest how airports can help.

## Brief introduction to the insulin pump

An insulin pump is a small battery-operated device that delivers precise doses of rapid-acting insulin 24 hours a day to closely match a body's needs. The insulin pump has a compartment that holds a reservoir that is filled with insulin which is then infused into the body through tubing and a cannula inserted under the skin. The insulin pump must be constantly attached as disconnection causes blood sugars to rise and hyperglycaemia or ketoacidosis can rapidly develop, which can quickly become a life-threatening emergency.

## Insulin pumps and airport security

Hospitals and insulin pump manufacturers advise that the electromagnetic radiation used by x-ray screening for carry-on or checked luggage and full-body airport scanners may interfere with the motors of insulin pumps, resulting in a potential impact on insulin delivery. As a result, these sources suggest that passen-

gers with insulin pumps should be subject to alternative security screening (for example, via pat down or explosive trace detection methods).

However, diabetes organizations, experts and affected passengers report that airport security officers are often unaware that passengers should not be asked to remove their insulin pump for screening, nor should pumps be subjected to x-ray screening or full-body scanners. This applies both to insulin pumps worn on the body or spares carried in hand baggage.

## Regulation

Some countries have provision in regulation for dealing with medical aids, which allow for alternative screening methods such as a hand search or trace detection. However, procedures are not always well understood or implemented.

The Airport Operators Association in the UK has advised passengers to notify security personnel at the screening point of any medical screening requirements and ensure that they carry medical confirmation from their practitioner so that screening may be undertaken accordingly.

## Next steps

ACI World will bring this issue to the next Aviation Security Panel in 2017, requesting that it is highlighted to regulators and included in guidance material. In the meantime, we would ask that airports review their procedures with regard to the screening of medical equipment and ensure that screeners are well informed.

For more information on ACI's work in airport security, visit [www.aci.aero/security](http://www.aci.aero/security).



**From:** Peter O'Broin  
**Sent:** 21 July 2016 15:15  
**To:** Rachel Humphrey, UFO  
**Subject:** CAA Information Note - Medical Devices

Dear Rachel,

I am pleased to inform you that an Information Note has been issued today to UK Airports following a number of queries received recently regarding alternative screening processes for passengers who do not wish to be screened by Security Scanner or a Walk Through Metal Detector. This relates in particular to those passengers with medical conditions, such as an implanted medical device (Insulin Pump, Heart Monitor, Cochlear Implant).

Whilst the Information Note itself cannot be replicated to the public, the following points address concerns that have been raised:

- Although government medical advice is that screening by security scanners pose no known health and safety risks and are safe for passengers with such medical devices, manufacturers and medical opinion can differ. This can lead to passengers believing that the security scanner may have an adverse effect on their particular device
- Airports are aware that a passenger should not be asked to remove a medical device, such as an insulin pump, for screening, and that all passengers having a hand search in private may have a travelling companion with them if they wish.
- In addition, passengers may be carrying certain spare medical devices in their cabin baggage that they do not wish to be screened by x-ray, due to concern over the effects of x-ray technology. In these circumstances, (and where medical confirmation is provided) the regulations allow for items of cabin baggage to be screened by hand search, supported by Trace Detection.

Finally I advise that passengers affected should speak to security personnel at the screening point to advise of any medical screening requirements and ensure that they carry medical confirmation from their practitioner so that screening may be undertaken accordingly.

Following the issue of today's Information Note, any negative experiences should be taken up directly with the airport operator concerned.

Kind Regards,

Peter

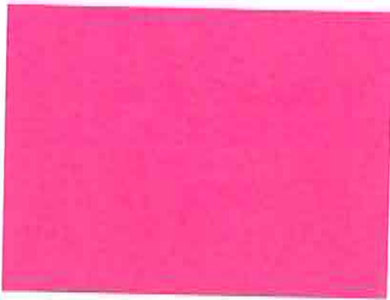
**Peter O'Broin**  
**Policy Manager**

Airport Operators Association  
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[www.aoa.org.uk](http://www.aoa.org.uk)

Chief Executive's Office



29 June 16

Dear Radel,

Thank you for your recent emails regarding the difficulties experienced by people with insulin pumps. I was sorry to hear of your experience at Dubai airport, and pleased to learn that the airport authorities there, as a result of your intervention, had amended their processes. You did not mention that you had any issues when departing from Heathrow, so I trust there were no difficulties with the insulin pump there.

You have described in your emails the aims of your campaign: for airports to recognise that insulin pumps are medical devices which should not be required to pass through x-ray machines or security scanners and that there should be alternative processes in place. It seems to me that these are these are very reasonable points. You are also seeking assistance in trying to achieve a level of international standardisation in this area, asking if we would discuss this with the Department for Transport and I hope I can reassure you on this matter.

In your most recent email to me, you ask what aviation security regulation has to say about insulin pumps. Rather than make specific reference to these pumps, or to any other particular medical device (the wide range of such devices and aids, and the regular changes and developments in them, are such that this would be neither feasible nor sensible), the regulations which set down the methods available to airports for screening passengers and their cabin baggage, include options for when a passenger either prefers not to submit to a particular screening process, or is simply unable to do so for safety or other reasons. The relevant provision is part 4.1 of the European Commission document (EC2015/1998), and in particular, paragraphs 4.1.1.2, 4.1.1.10, and 4.1.2.10. I have attached a copy of the regulation.

In line with these regulations, there is a process in place in the UK, whereby all passengers who opt out of being screened by a security scanner, may request an alternative screening method (e.g. an enhanced hand search in private). For many years passengers have been able to opt out of passing through a Walk-Through Detector, and instead undergo a hand search. In the same way, there are alternatives to the scanning of medical devices (including insulin pumps) where these are not carried on, or implanted into the body, or where spare devices are being carried. These arrangements, in respect of all types of medical devices, including insulin pumps, are captured in guidance which we have issued to UK airport.

We have recognised from the responses on your petition page, that on some occasions these alternative processes have not in practice been offered to passengers and so we will write again to all UK airports, reminding them of the position. This letter is likely to include security



sensitive information but, I will ensure that if that is so, you are advised of the burden of its message to airports. We have already been in touch with industry representative bodies about these matters, amongst them the Airport Operators' Association.

Through our website, we advise passengers with a medical condition, or a medical device, always to carry a letter or other document provided by a medical practitioner, that confirms their condition, the essential medication they must carry, and if appropriate, the nature of any medical device. This confirmation should be handed to the Security Officer before any screening is carried out and can assist them in ensuring that the passenger is screened as appropriate to their needs. This screening would need to be, as I am sure you would accept, to the required security standard. We have reviewed the information on our website in the light of your campaign and we will update it in the next few days, to make sure that all of this is entirely clear to passengers.

You are right of course to underline the need for a good understanding of these issues internationally. We are responsible for regulating aviation security within the UK, and the Department for Transport for engaging with authorities overseas, but we do of course liaise with the Department on such matters as these and following your emails, we have done so in this instance. I know that you have yourself written to the Department about the international dimension, and I am sure they will consider what action might be taken in that respect.

I hope that I have been able to explain the work that we have done in this area and what else we will now be doing in response to your campaign. Please do let me know if you believe there is any other avenue we should be addressing to resolve this issue.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Haines', written in a cursive style.

Andrew Haines  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE**