

The Identity Project

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Transportation Security Administration
FOIA Branch
TSA-20, East Tower
601 South 12th Street
Arlington, VA 20598-6020

via e-mail to <foia@tsa.dhs.gov>

FOIA Request

Fee benefit requested

Fee waiver requested

Dear FOIA Officer:

This is a request pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552.

According to an announcement for the “Future Travel Experience Global 2019” conference which was held in Las Vegas, NV, on September 3-6, 2019, as posted at <<https://www.futuretravelexperience.com/fte-global/on-the-ground-conference/>>, the conference was preceded by “Tours of the TSA’s Innovation Checkpoint at McCarran International Airport.... The day before FTE Global 2019 gets underway, delegates will be able to take part in a tour of the Innovation Checkpoint at McCarran International Airport, led by the TSA Innovation Task Force (ITF) and McCarran representatives. In partnership with McCarran International Airport, the Innovation Checkpoint provides TSA with a dedicated venue to demonstrate and assess emerging technologies and associated processes in a live airport environment.... Data collected from these demonstrations will help inform requirements for future innovative capabilities that will enhance TSA’s security effectiveness and improve the passenger experience.”

According to the same Web page, FTE Global 2019 also included a “Case Study Presentation” by Austin Gould, Assistant Administrator, RCA, Transportation Security Administration (TSA); a panel titled “Air Transport 2015” for which the panelists included Jose Bonilla, Director, Innovation Task Force, TSA; and a “TSA Briefing” session which was scheduled to include contributions from Austin Gould, Assistant Administrator, RCA, TSA, Alexis Long, Chief Innovation Officer, TSA, Jose Bonilla, Director, Innovation Task Force, TSA, and Russell Roberts, Chief Information Officer and Assistant Administrator for the Office of Information Technology, TSA.

Topics planned to be considered at this last session included:

- How do you realistically achieve the vision of all “things” on an airport talking to each other to optimise turnarounds and operations?
- Can tools like AR and VR revolutionise performance levels of Airport Operations Centre’s (APOC)?
- How powerful can digital twin approaches be in the efforts to gain a competitive edge in operations?
- We are now starting to see alliances between airports groups like we do airlines, but what will these alliances be key to achieving from a transformation perspective?
- If seamless travel is achieved passengers will not arrive at the airport so early which is sure to impact commercial revenues, baggage processes and handling services – how will the industry respond to this?
- How much additional capacity can you expect to create from a fully optimized airport?
- How can you ensure these new operating models are future proof, and won’t need addressing again in 5 years?
- How do you effectively collaborate to work through process, procedure and regulation challenges?
- Can we expect a consolidated supply chain with airports stepping into provide more services than ever before?
- What kind of models can the industry adopt to ensure that any exciting new innovations or initiatives can be scaled up across the stakeholder eco-system?

We request access to and copies of any records of “FTE Global 2019” sessions in which any TSA employee and/or representative participated, including any PowerPoint or similar presentation files (including all annotations and speaking notes), slides, notes, transcripts, audio or video recordings, and any materials distributed in printed and/or digital formats by or on behalf of the TSA at the conference and/or to participants in tours of the “TSA Innovation Checkpoint”.

We request that all responsive records be provided in text-searchable electronic form, and that each responsive digital record be produced in the form of a discrete file, so that there is a one-to-one correspondence between the files produced in response to this request and the files as found in their native format as currently held by the TSA.

With respect to any records held in electronic form, we request that they be provided in the original electronic form in which they are held, as complete bitwise digital copies of the original presentation files, word processing files, or other electronic files, including any file headers, embedded metadata, and all other file content.

we request that any PDF files be produced in text-searchable form. We request that image files not be substituted for responsive digital records of e-mail messages, word processing files, spreadsheets, presentations, or other digital files containing text.

As representatives of the news media we are only required to pay for the direct cost of duplication after the first 100 pages. Since most if not all of the responsive records are electronic files, not documents, and do not consist of paper pages, we expect that actual costs of electronic duplication will be negligible. Through this request, we are gathering information on CBP plans, practices, and partnerships with other entities that is of current interest to the public as part of widespread public interest in use of facial recognition and other biometric identification in relation to air travel by common carrier.

This information is being sought on behalf of The Identity Project (“IDP”). IDP is a program of the First Amendment Project, a nonprofit organization providing legal and educational resources dedicated to protecting and promoting First Amendment rights.

This information will be made available to the public. The principal activity of IDP is publication of the informational and educational Web site at <http://www.papersPlease.org>, where we have published documents obtained in response to our previous FOIA requests and reports on TSA policies and practices.

Most recently, we reported on planned TSA participation the upcoming FTE Global 2019 conference at <https://papersplease.org/wp/2019/08/28/public-private-partnerships-for-travel-surveillance/>.

Please waive any applicable fees. Release of the information is in the public interest because it will contribute significantly to public understanding of government operations and activities. The records we are requesting clearly relate to government operations and activities. It is in the public interest for the public to know what CBP

plans to do and how the TSA is collaborating with other public and private entities.

If our request is denied in whole or part, we ask that you justify all deletions by reference to specific exemptions. We will also expect you to release all segregable portions of otherwise exempt material. We, of course, reserve the right to appeal your decision to withhold any information or to deny a waiver of fees. Please respond as soon as possible to confirm your receipt of this request. We look forward to your complete reply within 20 business days, as the FOIA statute requires.

Sincerely,

Edward Hasbrouck
Consultant on travel-related civil liberties issues
The Identity Project (PapersPlease.org)