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Project Nominations

Know of a project that should be covered in a future issue of Airport Improvement?

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Publisher's Blog

Ramping Up

The primary reason this issue is "special" is broadcast on its cover: Runway & Ramp Special Edition. The number of great story ideas continuing to pour in about airfield operations was so incredible, devoting an entire issue to the topic was simply one of those "duh" moments. [\[more\]](#)

Information & Infrastructure

Technology can help keep airfield operations from becoming traffic jams, and it's exciting to see the great strides being made. The

Security

StandardAero Adds "Invisible Escort"

By Jennifer Bradley

As published in: [Airport Improvement Magazine - October 2011](#)



factsfigures

Project: Virtual Security Escorts

Location: StandardAero, Augusta (GA) Regional Airport

Facility Size: 170,000 sq. ft.

System: eEscort

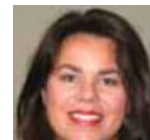
Equipment Installed: April 2010

Cameras, Video Equipment & Card Access:

Like airports, many aircraft repair centers have boosted security measures since 9/11. The StandardAero facility at Augusta Regional Airport in Georgia added a "virtual escort" program to its security network.

The system uses radio frequency identification (RFID) – technology typically used to collect highway tolls or control vehicle access – to track visitors' movements in secure areas. The system largely eliminates the need to physically escort hundreds of owners and operators who visit the facility each year to monitor maintenance being performed on their aircraft. The change keeps employees focused on their primary duties and preserves visitors' privacy, explains Melissa Maddox, vice president of legal risk management for StandardAero.

"We believe the system is as



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strategy of adapting proven technologies from other industries and integrating them into aviation is especially exciting, because it creates workable solutions that carry the legacy of proven performance... [\[more\]](#)

Wanna Play?

Just like soccer moms and dads mingling on the sidelines, airport executives and their suppliers feel a need to network. Exchanging information helps our decision-making process. Fortunately, there are an ever-growing number of tools at our disposal. [\[more\]](#)



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Industry Insider

Shovel-Ready, But Not Wallet-Ready

It's good news that the FAA reauthorization put 74,000 people back to work and will keep the FAA funded until mid-September. Even though this is a "maintenance patch" - the 20th one since the last FAA reconstruction - it's better than no program at all. [\[more\]](#)

U.S. Infrastructure Challenges

There are few issues on which Democrats and Republicans agree in these

Honeywell

Logistics: Visitors are tracked via radio frequency identification tags on ID badges instead of personally escorted.

Benefits: Saves employees' time; affords more privacy & freedom for visitors

escorting system into a reality. Rob Nix, program manager for Security 101, describes the resulting product – eEscort – as a “virtual” escort system.

Department of Homeland Security (DHS) guidelines previously required a physical escort or “line-of-sight” monitoring of visitors in many areas of the company’s 170,000-square-foot facility in Augusta.

“Each time (owners) left the operations area, they would have to wait for an escort before reentering the area where their aircraft resided,” recalls Maddox. “It was very cumbersome and unproductive for the facility as well as the customer.”

Now, customers don a photo ID badge that includes an RFID tag, and a security officer located elsewhere monitors their movement in secure areas. The badges do not open doors to restricted areas, but they permit visitors to move freely otherwise. The new system also allows them to make phone calls without a StandardAero employee standing at their side.

In-person or line-of-sight escorting can be misinterpreted as an insult – especially by new customers, notes Nix.

The Fix

Security 101 installed a trio of Honeywell systems: cameras, an IP video surveillance system and MAXPRO VMS® and card access equipment. The company also installed the antennas needed to read RFID signals.

The new RFID tags act as “locating beacons” when badged visitors walk through the facility, explains Nix.

“It’s not a simple surveillance system,” qualifies Maddox. “Only those zones activated by the tag are monitored, so the security staff attention is focused to the areas requiring escort and not distracted by all activity.”

According to Maddox, customers find the new RFID technology more welcoming than the previous escort system. “They feel their aircraft is more secure in our shop than in competitors’ shops, but they are free to move about and work productively in the facility,” she relates.

Customers are further comforted knowing that StandardAero has a response plan in place if suspicious activity is observed, she adds.

Tactically speaking, the company is using eEscort and other security measures as a competitive tool. “The customer gets the security benefit that a typical strict access controlled escorting program would provide, without the limitations of such a program,” explains Maddox.

Eliminating the need for personal escorts paves the way for aircraft owners and operators to visit StandardAero more often, she adds.

Because it is owned by Dubai Aerospace Enterprise, StandardAero is required to follow more stringent federal security mandates than U.S. companies.

The Future

Although eEscort has been an overwhelmingly welcome addition to StandardAero’s Augusta facility, initial plans to use the system at the company’s 25 other repair centers have been suspended. According to Maddox, new federal security policies prompted the change. “TSA centralized (its) security threat assessment to allow

effective as physical escorting, but is virtually invisible to the customer,” relates Maddox.



Melissa Maddox

No Off-the-Shelf Options

Finding a company to develop such a system turned out to be a daunting task. Mark Pickett of Abet Alliance introduced Maddox to



Rob Nix

Security 101, a systems integration company that agreed to turn her design for a remote

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politically charged times, but the need to improve our infrastructure seems to be one of them. Airport projects are proven job-creators that increase the safety and security of the aviation system. They also improve the efficiency of air travel and generally make it a better experience for passengers. [\[more\]](#)

Interoperable Identification & Access Control Cards Are in the Works

When it comes to identity credentials, today's airports are like islands. Each issues its own airport-specific credentials for physical access control. The credentials don't interoperate with anything else and don't support the concept of multiple use. [\[more\]](#)

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customers who present a valid U.S. airport badge unescorted access to our facilities,” she explains.

Maddox consequently established sponsorship programs with a variety of host airports to help customers complete the screenings necessary to receive such a badge.

“The airport knows the value of knowing who is on their property on a regular basis,” she relates. “We benefit because we know the person is screened properly, and we can give them our customer badge.”

Bearing in mind events such as the 9/11 attacks, Maddox understands security needs can change in a heartbeat. If the relationship with any airport changes, or rules are adjusted, the eEscort option would certainly be considered for additional locations – with the airport’s consent, specifies Maddox.

Given the security it provides and the freedom it allows customers, she considers the virtual escort system in Augusta a “win/win situation.”

[Airport Improvement Magazine - October 2011](#)

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