



Europe's airports issue stark warning, calling for urgent EU leadership and action on testing and certification of aviation security equipment

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Brussels, 25 July 2025: ACI EUROPE welcomed today the long-awaited and overdue decision by the EU to lift the 100ml restriction to the carriage of Liquids, Aerosols and Gels (LAGs) in cabin bags for all flights departing from EU airports equipped with advanced security screening equipment developed by Smiths Detection — thus allowing the secure carriage of LAGs of up to 2 litres. This restriction was reinstated last year, as a result of concerns over the performance of this technology which have now been fully addressed — making it possible for the Smiths Detection equipment to be recertified by the EU.

Lifting this restriction will improve passenger convenience and experience, as it will allow airports that have invested in this specific equipment to speed up passenger processing at security check points. Crucially, this screening technology comes with security gains as it delivers improved automated detection capabilities — allowing security screeners to focus on more value-adding security tasks.

However, ACI EUROPE raised serious concerns and denounced structural shortcomings in the current EU testing and certification regime — thus reiterating its call for an urgent and complete reset of this regime and associated processes:

- While the recertification by the EU of the Smiths Detection equipment is very good news, it does come very late — mid-way through the busy Summer season at European airports. The UK already recertified this equipment last April. The fact that it took the EU an additional 3 months to proceed with this recertification points to inefficiencies in the way security equipment testing is coordinated and results assessed by the EU.
- Other security equipment manufacturers have also developed similar technology with advanced screening capabilities for cabin bags and are keenly waiting for the EU to test and recertify their equipment. Yet, there is absolutely no visibility as to when such testing and recertification will be done.

As a result, airports that have invested and deployed these other security equipment are compelled to maintain the 100ml limit on the carriage of LAGs — and thus unable to improve passenger experience along with security outcomes.

Olivier Jankovec, Director General of ACI EUROPE warned: “*We now live in a very different world in which the convergence of geopolitics, cyber and physical security threats is plain to see. In that context, it is very clear that our decades-old testing and certification regime for aviation security equipment is no longer fit for purpose. We*

just can't keep relying on a system essentially based on a good-will cooperation between EU states, where even aligned testing methodologies are not guaranteed — and validating test results takes forever. We absolutely need to be able to benefit from innovation in security technologies much faster. Beyond operational efficiencies, this is primarily and crucially about better protecting European citizens — and ultimately about the EU's own strategic autonomy agenda."

ACI EUROPE has for the past 2 years called for the development of a fully integrated EU testing and certification system for aviation security equipment — in full cooperation and alignment with the UK and the US. This has been one of its key asks for the new European cycle — as per the ACI EUROPE Policy Manifesto¹ published in January 2024.

This can only be delivered with the European Commission taking full ownership and responsibility for overseeing such reformed system and ensuring a unified, transparent approach — as per the proposals submitted to the EU Aviation Security Committee by ACI EUROPE last December and reiterated last Spring². Without an appropriately funded and integrated testing and certification system at EU level, the EU will be unable to progress its Aviation Security Strategy in an effective and timely manner.

Jankovec added: *"This is both frustrating and worrying — as we are getting nowhere for now with our proposals. What we are asking for is nothing else than EU leadership and action on a highly sensitive issue — which should be a clear priority for the European Commission and Member States. Once again, it is about better securing our skies and protecting our societies."*

¹ [ACI EUROPE Airport Industry Manifesto](#)

² 'High Level Principles for the New EU Testing and Certification System for Aviation Security Screening Equipment' (March 2025) – Accessible [here](#).

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