

IS THIS PRODUCT THE ANSWER TO LANDSIDE AIRPORT SECURITY CHALLENGES?

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Crowded places are often at a security risk. Places like airports and stadiums, where thousands of people gather, are perfect targets for terrorism and other crime forms. Unfortunately, landside airport security and security in other similar crowded places continues to remain a challenge despite recent



advancements in technology. However, a Swedish investor-backed company has now come up with a mass screening solution that could complement the current efforts.

The Human Security Radar (HSR) from Apstec Systems is a high throughput security screening system that protects crowded places from terrorism. The system is designed to accommodate high footfall scenarios and has been deployed operationally at up to 6,000 people per hour. There is no requirement to remove coats or bags or empty pockets of metallic items. HSR screens while allowing people to flow through it freely. It is automatic and alerts in real-time, sending a photographic image of the person of interest and the approximate location of the possible threat item to a responder, who directs the person to secondary screening.

Speaking to asmag.com, Stephen Cooper, COO of Apstec Systems, explained that HSR uses several complementary technologies to detect pure explosive materials, Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), firearms, and bladed weapons. The solution analyzes the data captured from the reflected radio waves and screens people for explosive materials, weapons, and fragmentation.

"By analyzing this data, HSR can determine the nature of a material to assess whether or not it may pose a threat," Cooper said. "Finally, HSR uses metal detection to identify metallic weapons and bomb components carried on the body or in bags. HSR uses sophisticated algorithms and machine learning to deliver a cutting-edge technology that meets a significant and well-known capability gap."

HSR's advantages over traditional solutions

Traditional security at airports and other crowded areas is incredibly slow. It is disruptive, a poor experience, high contact, high density, and high cost. Large numbers of security staff are required to deliver traditional security, making it an exorbitant affair. Perhaps worst of

all, it generates queues of people waiting for screening, and these people are vulnerable targets for an attacker.

"Designed specifically with crowded places in mind, HSR has a uniquely high throughput, removes the need to queue and to divest, allows the free flow of people, and offers a good security experience," Cooper added. "It is very cost-effective in high throughput scenarios and can replace traditional security. For example, if the throughput is 5,000 people per hour, one HSR system and a handful of security staff can respond to and resolve the alerts."

In contrast, an equivalent traditional security response would require somewhere in the order of 15 conventional search lanes with at least 35 security staff to deliver a similar effect.

Benefit during COVID-19

One of the most significant benefits of HSR in the light of the Coronavirus pandemic is that it is low contact and allows people to socially distance as they pass through the inspection zone. In contrast to traditional security checkpoints, which some of the highest risk locations for the cross-infection of diseases like Covid-19, HSR requires the minimum of contact and enables venues to get back to business securely and safely.

"I think that the health risk reduction benefit of high throughput security screening equipment will be a game-changer for businesses and fully expect the security industry to turn increasingly to these systems," explained Cooper.

What are the limitations of this solution?

No security technology is perfect and this goes for high footfall screening technology as much as any other. The design intent of HSR is to deliver security for crowded places in a practical, effective, and affordable way. To screen thousands of people an hour, automatically and in real-time, means that there may be compromises to make.

"Consequently, HSR does not detect to the levels mandated for aviation security, but then it does not need to," Cooper noted. "It needs to detect threats to crowded places, and it does that very effectively. I've established that HSR is used in a wide range of applications, that it is easily integrated into operational concepts, and that it is complemented by existing security measures, such as behavioral detection; this constitutes a very potent and robust capability."

HSR does fill a long-standing capability gap that traditional security has failed to address satisfactorily. That it does so in a way that reduces security vulnerability while improving the experience, reducing costs, and increasing commercial opportunities is impressive. To do all of this while significantly reducing health risks is essential for any solution that aims to

play a critical role in business continuity plans in the face of ongoing and future pandemic crises.

How can customers get the best out of this solution?

What are the steps that customers need to take to get the best out of this solution, especially since there may be some compromises that they have to make?

The company says customers employ HSR in different ways in different operational concepts and scenarios. Some deploy it widely and permanently, while others deploy it in response to an increase in threat levels or in response to increased risks associated with specific events. It can be used in a 'pop up' mode and deployed in various locations as part of an overall deterrence strategy.

"We work very closely with customers to make sure that HSR is effectively integrated into a coherent security concept," Cooper said. "One of its great advantages is its operational simplicity. Having switched on the system, the rest is automatic with alerts being generated in real-time, enabling the responder to stop the person and direct them to the screening point to resolve the alert; this is quick, local, and involves just a few people. The training liability is low, as alerts are specific and clear, and because working with HSR is instinctive."

Within a short period, responders become used to the way people move through the system, enabling them to readily identify suspicious behavior amongst the flow passing through the inspection zone. Given that systems such as HSR can be a good trigger of suspicious behavior amongst potential attackers, behavioral detection is an incredibly useful complementary technique. Cooper adds that it has tremendous synergy with HSR, making them a highly potent combination.

Security can add to the business's bottom line by saving staffing costs and getting the money spending public into the venue quickly, rather than being held up in queues. But perhaps the most strategic benefit in the current pandemic climate is facilitating business and infrastructure operations safely and securely for the public and staff. This enables businesses to satisfy the authorities to open safely and reassure the public that authorities consider the health risks. To be able to open and stay open for business in the face of the pandemic, whether it's this year, next year, or at some time in the future, is critically important for CEOs and shareholders alike.

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