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ACI calls for more innovation and greater flexibility in security and facilitation

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Two papers presented today at ICAO's Triennial Assembly in Montreal

Montreal, 29 September 2019 – Airports Council International (ACI) World has today presented two papers to the [40th International Civil Aviation Organization \(ICAO\) Assembly](#) on the urgency of needed innovation in aviation security and aviation facilitation.

ACI believes that, to keep up with growth in air service demand, changes in threats and risks, as well as technological evolution, the aviation sector needs an adaptable, flexible framework within which innovation can thrive. To accomplish this, partnerships between government and industry and regulatory space to foster pilots and trials are needed.

“In order to allow innovation in aviation security, ACI urges States to make regulation less prescriptive, allow for new technology trials, and simplify the way

technology is certified and approved for use,” ACI World Director General Angela Gittens said as she presented ACI’s [paper on aviation security](#).

“We request that ICAO allow for varying means of compliance with standards and recommended practices that achieve the same objective and consider the development of a separate document listing such possible means of compliance.”

ACI has proposed that States support innovations such as the use of artificial intelligence, connectivity, big data and stand-off detection which could radically transform aviation security by screening persons seamlessly at various airport touchpoints, and even before they arrive at the airport.

“ACI is working with airports, airlines and governments within the Smart Security initiative to develop a 2040 Vision for passenger screening that, we hope, will inspire change but this will depend on the actions taken by States and ICAO in the next years, and on the support of the Assembly,” Angela Gittens said.

According to ACI data, airports are set to welcome more than 20 billion passengers by 2040 and, while the exponential growth of air service demand promises more jobs, higher GDPs, and a wealth of social benefits, many airports are facing congestion without a clear way to increase capacity.

Airport leaders are faced with pressure to manage performance and growth, without constantly adding infrastructure and cost, while striving for environmental sustainability and maintaining robust security.

“Innovation in airport facilitation will be key to helping airports to make the most of existing infrastructure,” Angela Gittens said. “Our industry is already hard at work researching and testing solutions such as robotics, automation and biometrics, but making change happen will depend on the decisions taken this week.”

[ACI’s working paper on airport facilitation](#) explores the potential of automation and advanced technologies, defining a common vocabulary to facilitate data exchange, and embracing digital solutions, and suggested steps national authorities can take to help foster innovation.

“Digital identity management and data sharing are great examples of innovations that can help improve customer experience, efficiency and both aviation and border security,” Angela Gittens said. “It’s a win-win for governments and Industry.”

“What we ask the Assembly today is that ICAO brings its border and aviation security activities closer together and it focuses on innovation and facilitation, including issues related to accessibility, efficient processes and flexible regulation.

Notes for editors

1. [Airports Council International \(ACI\)](#), the trade association of the world’s airports, was founded in 1991 with the objective of fostering cooperation among its member airports and other partners in world aviation, including the International Civil Aviation Organization, the International Air Transport Association and the Civil Air Navigation Services Organization. In representing the best interests of airports during key phases of policy development, ACI makes a significant contribution toward ensuring a global air transport system that is safe, secure, efficient and environmentally sustainable. As of January 2019, ACI serves 646 members, operating 1,960 airports in 176 countries.

Media contacts

Bojana Jeremic
Manager, External Relations and Special Events
ACI World
Telephone: +1 514 373 1254
Email: mediarelations@aci.aero

Sabrina Guerrieri
Manager, Communications
ACI World
Telephone: +1 514 373 1200
Email: mediarelations@aci.aero

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