



Department for Transport

Air passenger experience of security screening: 2014

About this release

This statistical release summarises results from a set of four questions about passengers' attitudes to security screening, which were included in the Civil Aviation Authority Passenger Survey in 2014.

Nearly 21,000 passengers were asked about their experience of security screening at five airports: Heathrow, Gatwick, Stansted, Luton and Manchester. The results are presented here, together with results from similar surveys in 2008 to 2013. Detailed results for earlier years are available on the Department's website.

Next Update: June 2016

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In 2014 the majority (93%) of air passengers surveyed said they were very or fairly satisfied with their **experiences at security screening**, with 67% saying they were very satisfied. Only 3% said were very or fairly dissatisfied.



The **aspects of security screening** with which passengers were least satisfied were:

- queuing (cited by 6%)
- slow speed of processing (5%)
- removal of shoes (3%)
- restriction of liquids (3%)

The majority of passengers (75%) said there was no aspect with which they were least satisfied.



The average time passengers reported that they spent **queuing for security screening** was 7.1 minutes, ranging from 4.8 minutes at Gatwick to 10.1 minutes at Stansted.



The majority of passengers (91%) agreed that any **inconvenience caused by the security screening was acceptable**.

Satisfaction at the five airports combined was similar in 2014 to 2013. The average queue time, as estimated by passengers, was also similar in 2014 (7.1 minutes) and 2013 (7.0 minutes) although this masks changes at individual airports; average perceived queuing time increased at Stansted and Manchester in 2014 but fell at Heathrow and Luton.

Note on the data coverage

These questions were first included in the CAA Passenger Survey in 2008, with the exception of the second question ("What aspect of security screening were you least satisfied with?"), which was added in 2011. Passengers at Heathrow, Stansted and Manchester have been surveyed in each year since 2008 while passengers at Gatwick and Luton were surveyed in 2009 and 2011-2014.

RESPONSIBLE STATISTICIAN: Behnom Havaei-Ahary 020 7944 2168

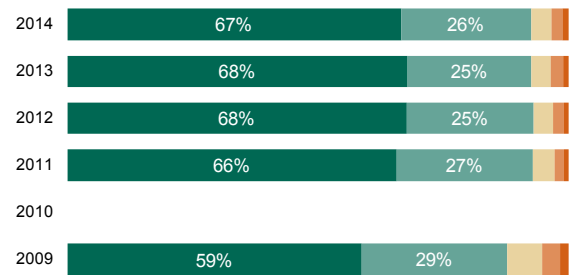
FURTHER INFORMATION: Media: 020 7944 3088 Public: aviation.stats@dft.gsi.gov.uk



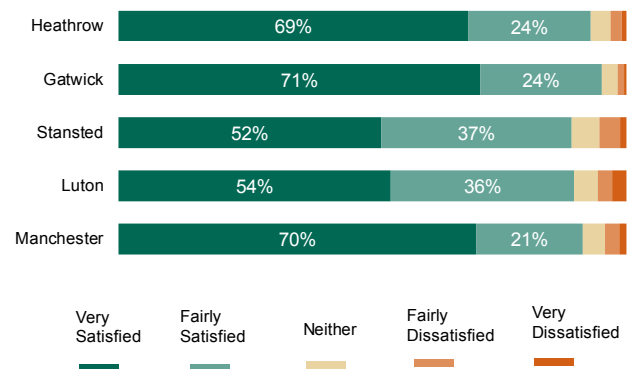
How satisfied are you with your experience of the security screening used at the airport today?

- A large majority (93%) of respondents surveyed in 2014 at the five airports combined (Heathrow, Gatwick, Stansted, Luton & Manchester) said they were very or fairly satisfied with their experience at security screening, with over two thirds (67%) saying they were very satisfied.
- These results have been fairly stable in the last three years but show an improvement in satisfaction since 2009, when 88% said they were satisfied and 59% were very satisfied.
- There is some variation between airports. In 2014, the proportion of passengers who were very or fairly satisfied ranged from 89% at Stansted to 95% at Gatwick. Just over half of passengers at Stansted and Luton said they were very satisfied compared to around 70% at Heathrow, Gatwick and Manchester.

Satisfaction with security screening:
Five airports combined, 2009 - 2014



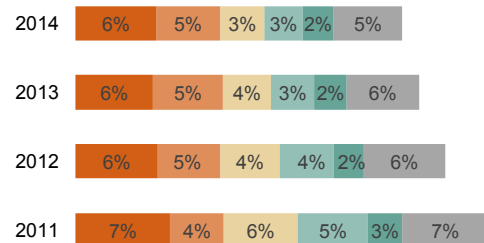
Individual survey airports, 2014



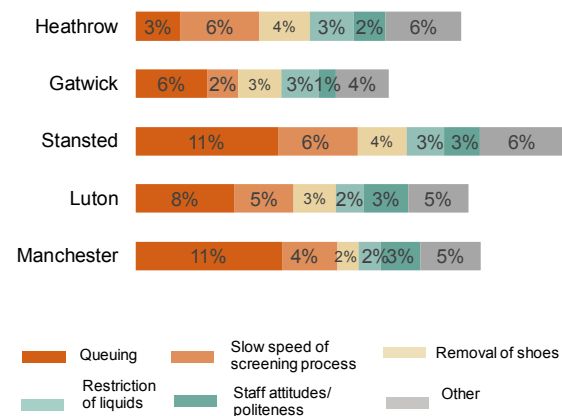
What aspect of the security screening were you least satisfied with?

- When asked which aspect of security screening they were least satisfied with, three quarters (75%) of respondents said 'None'. This proportion has increased since this question was first asked in 2011 (68%), suggesting a slight fall in concern about specific aspects of the screening process.
- In 2014, passengers were least satisfied with queuing (6%) and slow speed of security processing (5%). Removal of shoes and restriction of liquids were both mentioned by 3% of passengers surveyed.
- The proportion of passengers who identified a particular aspect with which they were least satisfied ranged from 19% at Gatwick to 33% at Stansted. Queueing was the least satisfactory aspect according to 11% of passengers at both Stansted and Manchester, which had the highest perceived queueing times in 2014.

Least satisfactory aspects of security screening:
Five airports combined, 2009 - 2014



Individual survey airports, 2014



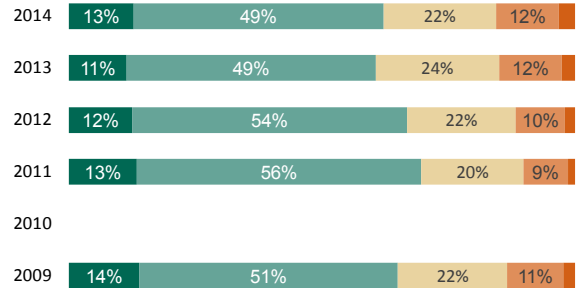


For how long, in minutes, did you queue when waiting to be screened?

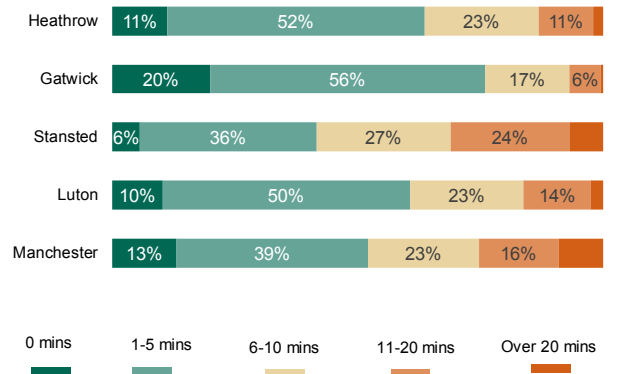
- The average queue time in 2014, based on passengers' estimates of how long they queued, was 7.1 minutes. Overall 62% of passengers surveyed said they queued for 5 minutes or less and 16% queued for more than 10 minutes.
- These results for the five airports combined are similar to 2013, when the average perceived queue time was 7.0 minutes.
- The average perceived queueing time in 2014 ranged from 4.8 minutes at Gatwick, where 76% said they queued for 5 minutes or less, to 10.1 minutes at Stansted, where only 42% said they queued for 5 minutes or less.
- Conversely, the proportion who said they queued for over 10 minutes ranged from 7% at Gatwick to 31% at Stansted.

Perceived security screening queuing time (banded) based on passenger estimates:

Five airports combined, 2009 - 2014



Individual survey airports, 2014



It is worth noting that passengers tend to overestimate their queuing time so these figures are likely to be higher than actual times at these airports. However, they should give some indication of relative queuing times between airports and the extent to which these have changed over time.

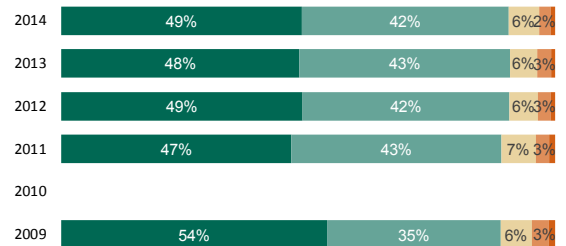


How strongly do you agree with the following statement: "Any inconvenience caused by the security screening was acceptable?"

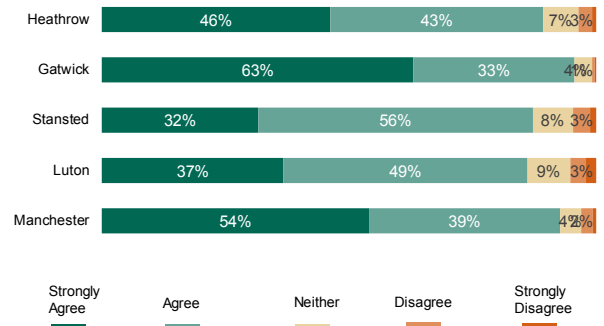
- Overall, a large majority (91%) of passengers agreed or strongly agreed that any inconvenience caused by security screening was acceptable. These results are similar to the last two surveys.
- Acceptance was highest at Gatwick (96% agreed or strongly agreed), where satisfaction with security screening was also highest. Conversely, acceptance was lowest at Luton (86%) and Stansted (87%), where satisfaction was also relatively low.

Agreement with acceptability of any inconvenience caused by security screening:

Five airports combined, 2009 - 2014



Individual survey airports, 2014



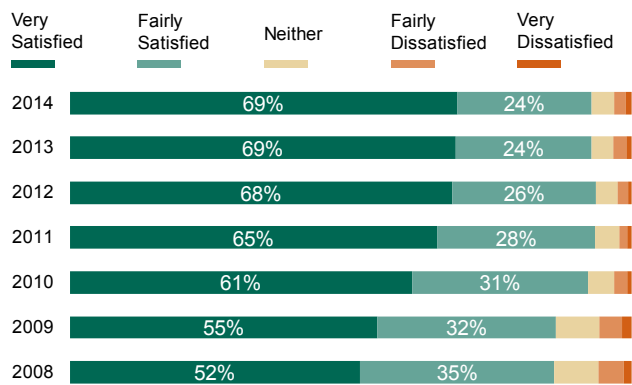
Results for individual airports

Heathrow

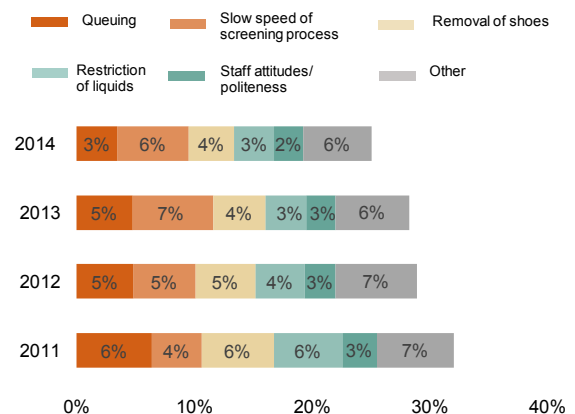
- Satisfaction at Heathrow has increased since this airport was first surveyed in 2008. The proportion who were very or fairly satisfied has increased from 86% in 2008 to 93% in 2014 with an increase in the proportion who said they were very satisfied from 52% to 69%.
- The aspect with which passengers were least satisfied in 2014 was slow speed for processing (cited by 6%). The proportion saying there is no aspect with which they are least satisfied increased from 68% in 2011 to 75% in 2014.
- Average queueing time, based on passenger estimates, have fluctuated since 2008. In 2014 it fell to 6.6 minutes from 7.3 in 2013. Estimated actual queueing times, published on Heathrow's website as part of the Service Quality Rebate, also suggest an improvement in 2014 compared to 2013.



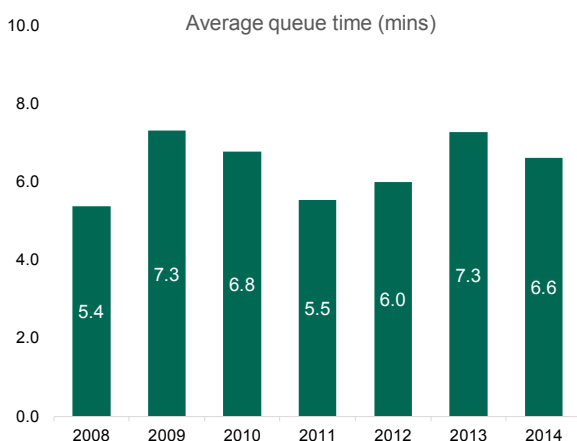
Satisfaction with security screening, 2008 - 2014



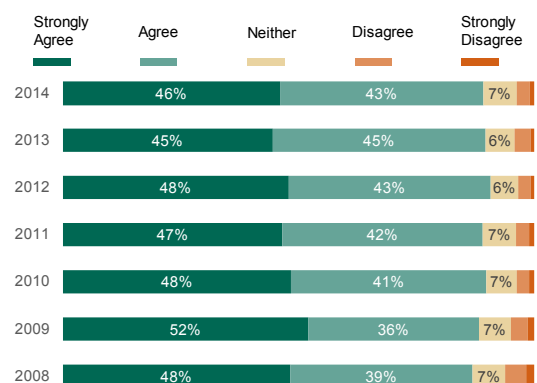
Aspect with which passengers were least satisfied, 2011 - 2014



Perceived queueing time, 2008 - 2014



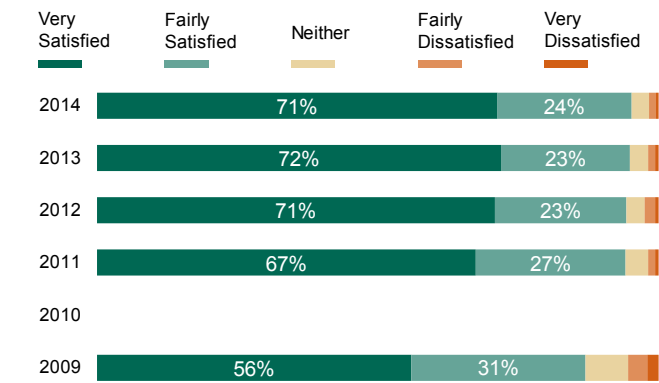
Agreement that "Any inconvenience caused by the security screening was acceptable", 2008 - 2014



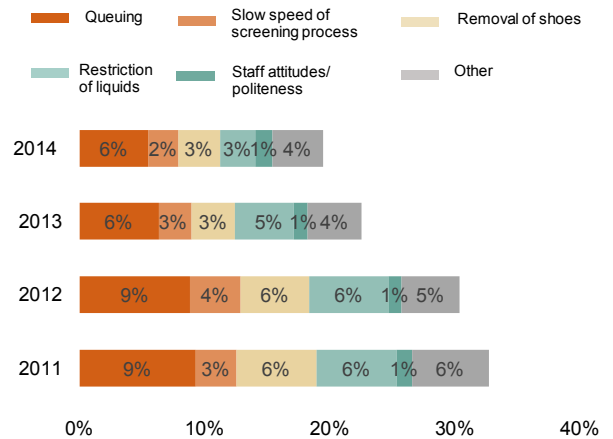
- Satisfaction at Gatwick has increased since it was first surveyed in 2009, from 87% in 2009 to 95% in 2014, with the proportion saying they were very satisfied increasing from 56% to 71%. Over the same period, the proportion of passengers who strongly agree that “Any inconvenience caused by the security screening was acceptable” has increased from 47% to 63%.
- The proportion saying there is no aspect with which they are least satisfied has increased from 67% in 2011 to 81% in 2014.
- Average perceived queueing time has fallen since Gatwick was first surveyed, from 6.6 minutes in 2009 to 4.8 minutes in 2014. Results from the survey and from the Service Quality Rebate, published on the airport’s website, both suggest queueing times were fairly similar in 2013 and 2014.



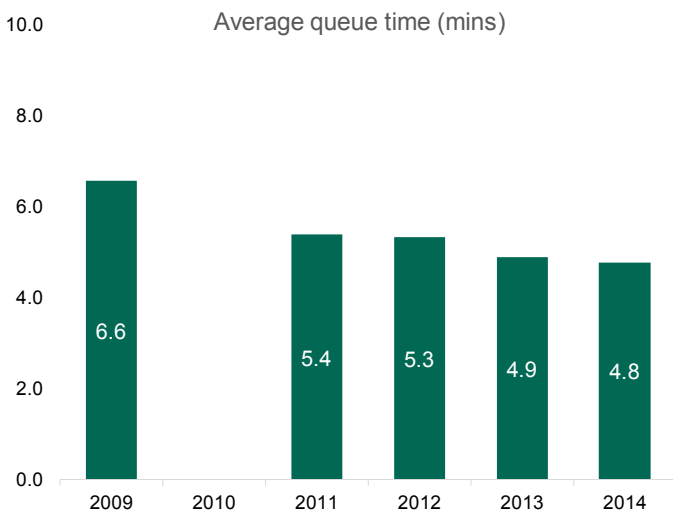
Satisfaction with security screening, 2009, 2011 - 2014



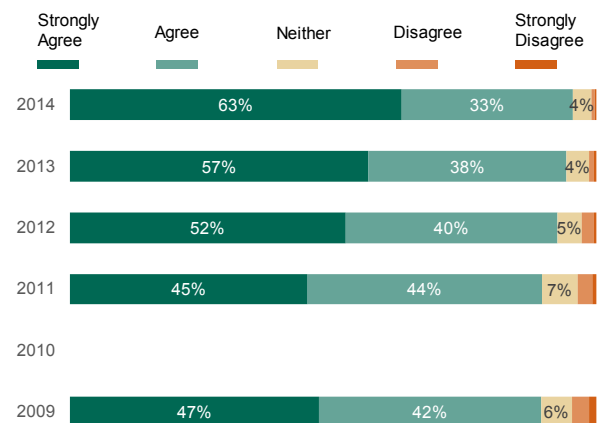
Aspect with which passengers were least satisfied, 2011 - 2014



Perceived queueing time, 2009, 2011 - 2014



Agreement that “Any inconvenience caused by the security screening was acceptable”, 2009, 2011 - 2014

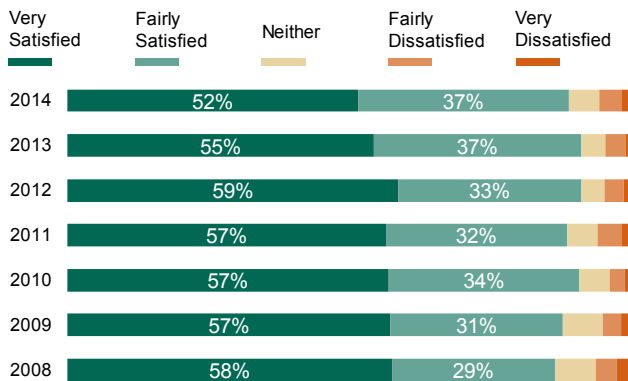


Stansted

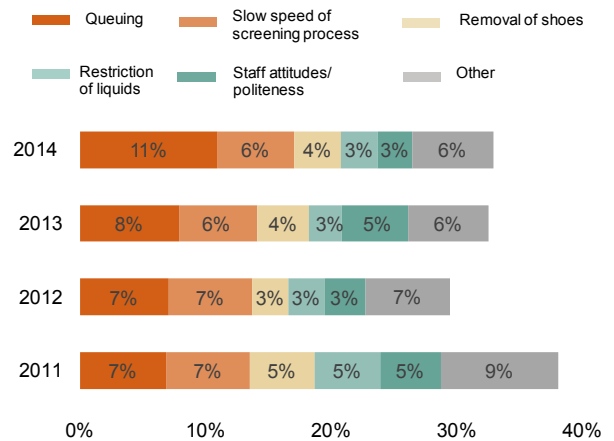
- Improvement in satisfaction at Stansted since it was first surveyed in 2008 has been less pronounced than at Heathrow and Gatwick and is mainly due to an increase in the proportion who were fairly rather than very satisfied.
- Since 2011 the proportion of passengers who cited queuing as the aspect of security screening with which they were least satisfied has increased from 7% to 11%. Since 2008 the average perceived queuing time has increased from 7.0 minutes to 10.1 minutes.
- Estimates of actual queuing times, published as part of the Service Quality Rebate (SQR) scheme, also suggest that average queuing times increased at Stansted between 2013 and 2014.



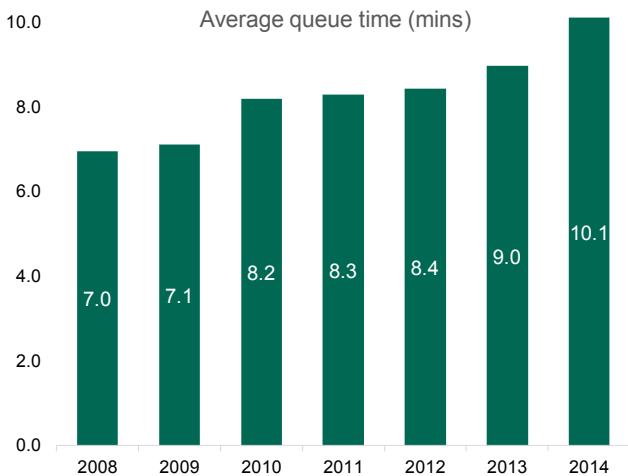
Satisfaction with security screening, 2008 - 2014



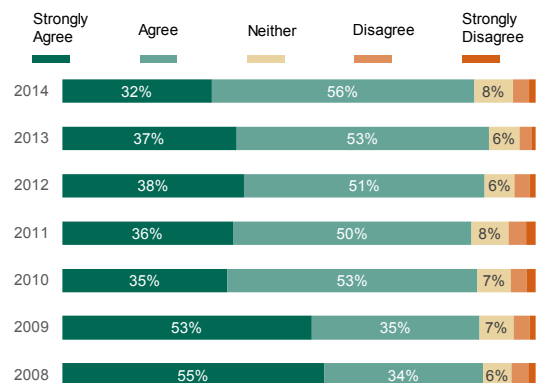
Aspect with which passengers were least satisfied, 2011 - 2014



Perceived queuing time, 2008 - 2014



Agreement that "Any inconvenience caused by the security screening was acceptable", 2008 - 2014*

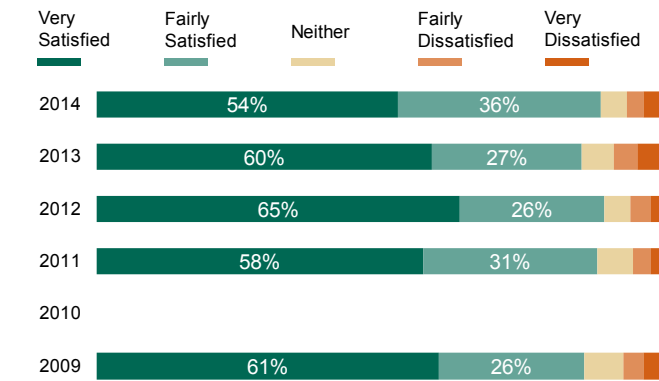


* There is a discontinuity in the series between 2008/2009 and 2010. Prior to 2010 the interviewers did not ask all respondents this question, particularly at Stansted and Manchester. This is likely to explain the step change in the proportions who 'agree' and 'strongly agree' at these airports in 2010.

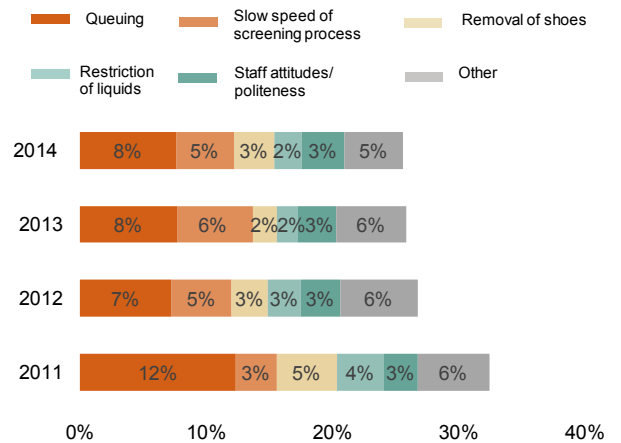
- At Luton satisfaction increased from 86% in 2013 to 91% in 2014, although the proportion who were very satisfied fell from 60% to 54%.
- Passengers said they were least satisfied with queuing (cited by 8%) although the average perceived queue time fell to 7.2 minutes in 2014, having increased to 8.4 minutes in 2013.



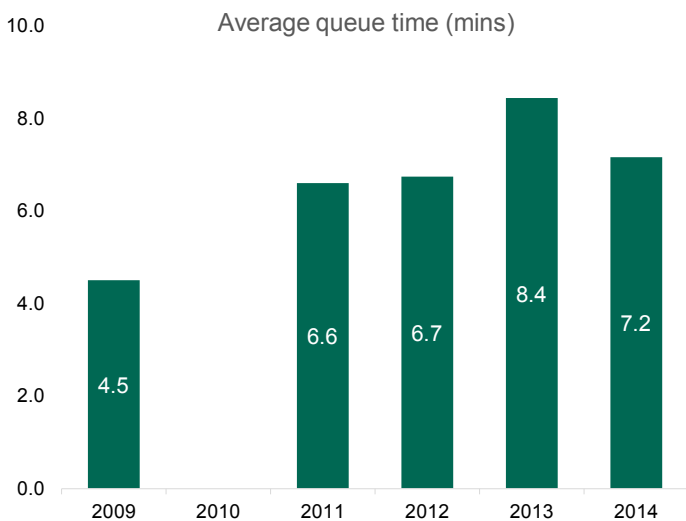
Satisfaction with security screening, 2009, 2011 - 2014



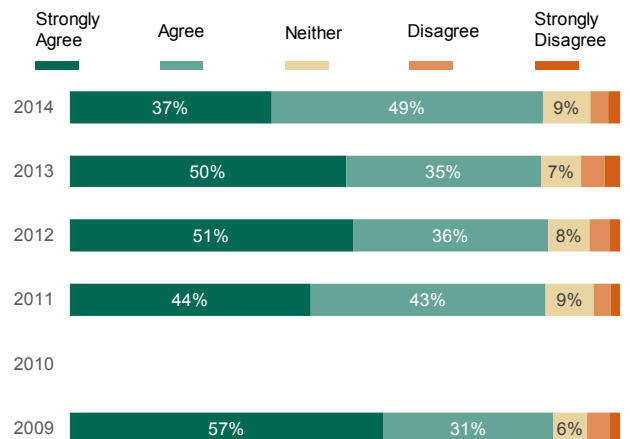
Aspect with which passengers were least satisfied, 2011 - 2014



Perceived queueing time, 2009, 2011 - 2014



Agreement that "Any inconvenience caused by the security screening was acceptable", 2009, 2011 - 2014

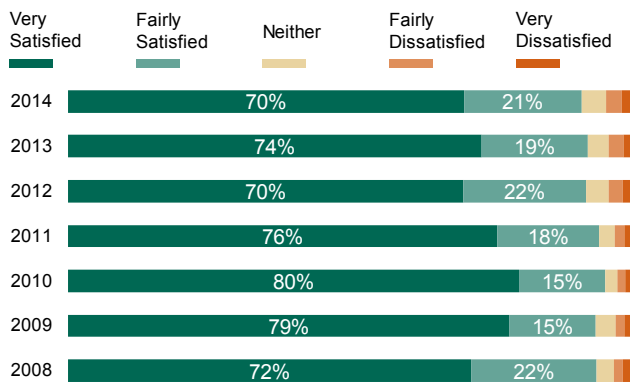


Manchester

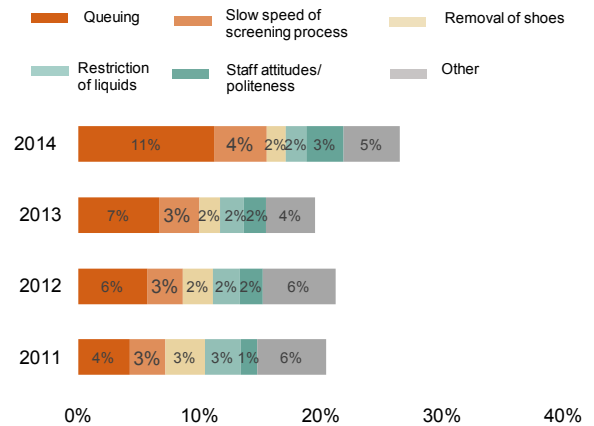
- At Manchester satisfaction peaked in 2010 when 96% were very or fairly satisfied but has fallen slightly since, to 91% in 2014.
- In 2014, 11% of passengers said queuing was the aspect with which they were least satisfied with compared to 7% in 2013 and 4% in 2011. Average perceived queuing time has increased from 3.8 minutes in 2008 to 7.4 minutes in 2013 and 9.8 minutes in 2014.



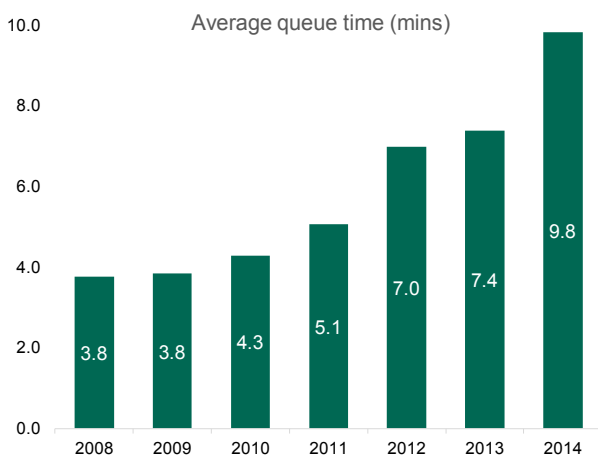
Satisfaction with security screening, 2008 - 2014



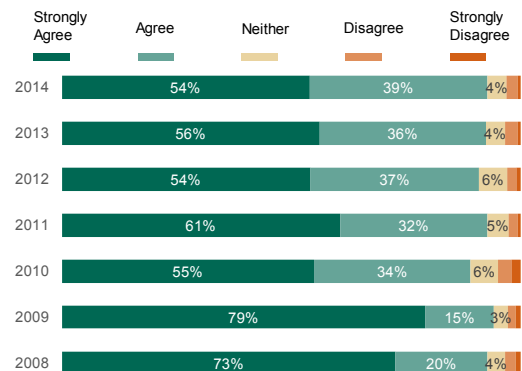
Aspect with which passengers were least satisfied, 2011 - 2014



Perceived queuing time, 2008 - 2014



Agreement that "Any inconvenience caused by the security screening was acceptable", 2008 - 2014*



* There is a discontinuity in the series between 2008/2009 and 2010. Prior to 2010 the interviewers did not ask all respondents this question, particularly at Stansted and Manchester. This is likely to explain the step change in the proportions who 'agree' and 'strongly agree' at these airports in 2010.

Survey details

- The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) Passenger Survey is undertaken to obtain information about air travellers that cannot be collected on a routine basis from the air transport industry. The survey includes questions on journey purpose, final and intermediate origins/destinations, means of transport to and from airports, route flown, country of residence and income.
- The CAA uses its own interviewers to conduct the survey and it runs continuously throughout the year at selected UK airports. Only departing passengers are interviewed. Additional information about the survey can be found at: www.caa.co.uk/surveys.
- In 2014, a set of four questions (see Annex A) relating to security screening was sponsored by the Department for Transport (DfT) in order to monitor passengers' experiences at UK airports. These questions were asked of a sub-sample of the passengers responding to the main CAA survey at Heathrow, Gatwick, Stansted, Luton and Manchester. The same set of questions was asked at Heathrow, Stansted, Manchester and Leeds Bradford in 2010 and at Heathrow, Gatwick, Stansted, Luton and Manchester in 2011 to 2013. In 2008 and 2009 a longer set of questions on passenger experience was asked at a selection of airports including Heathrow, Stansted and Manchester; this included 3 of the 4 questions asked in 2010 to 2013.
- The questions relate to the security screening used when the passenger enters the departure lounge. This covers the bag x-ray machine, the metal detector, and the body and bag searches.
- In 2008 passengers using Heathrow Terminal 4 were not asked the questions on security screening as interviews were conducted prior to screening. In 2010 to 2013 Heathrow Terminal 2 was not in operation. It reopened in June so 2014 results for Terminal 2 only cover part of the year.

Analysis

- The responses have been weighted to reflect the actual distribution of passengers by airport terminal and flight destination (domestic, short-haul and long-haul).
- Passengers who did not answer a particular question (either because they refused or said they didn't know) have been excluded from the analysis of that question.
- Where sample sizes are sufficient, changes over time are identified for the years when all five airports were included in the survey (2009 and 2011-14).

- Figures quoted in the text, tables and charts have been rounded to the nearest final digit so, in some cases, there may be an apparent discrepancy between the sum of the constituent items and the totals shown.
- Differences between airports, in terms of passenger profile, should be taken into account when interpreting the results and making comparisons between airports. A summary of key characteristics for each survey airport in 2014 is given in Annex B.
- Passengers' experiences of security screening may be affected by changes to screening procedures, such as the introduction of security scanners at Heathrow, Manchester, Gatwick and Stansted on a risk-assessed rollout which began in 2010.
- Security procedures may also be affected by passenger numbers, which increased at all five airports in 2014. Gatwick and Stansted handled over two million more passengers in 2014 compared to 2013 and Heathrow and Manchester handled over one million more.

Quality

- These official statistics are not designated National Statistics. However, they are produced to high professional standards set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews and are produced free from any political interference.
- Details of ministers and officials who receive pre-release access to these statistics up to 24 hours before release can be found in the Pre-release access list.

Annex A: CAA Suvery module on security screening for 2014

I would now like to ask you a few questions about your experience of the security screening used when you entered the departure lounge. That is the bag x-ray machine, the metal detector, and the body and bag searches.

1. How satisfied are you with your experience of the security screening used at the airport today?

[SHOWCARD 1]

.....

2. What aspect of the security screening were you least satisfied with?

(Ask all passengers)

[PROMPT CARD 1]

.....

3. For how long, in minutes, did you queue when waiting to be security screened? **[If say did not queue then put 0 minutes]**

.....

4. And how strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement

“Any inconvenience caused by the security screening was acceptable”

[SHOWCARD 2]

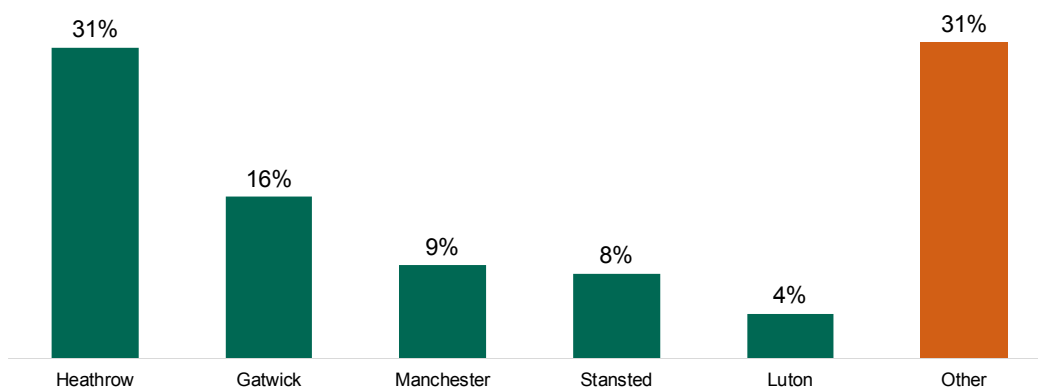
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End of questionnaire

Annex B: Characteristics of passengers at the surveyed airports

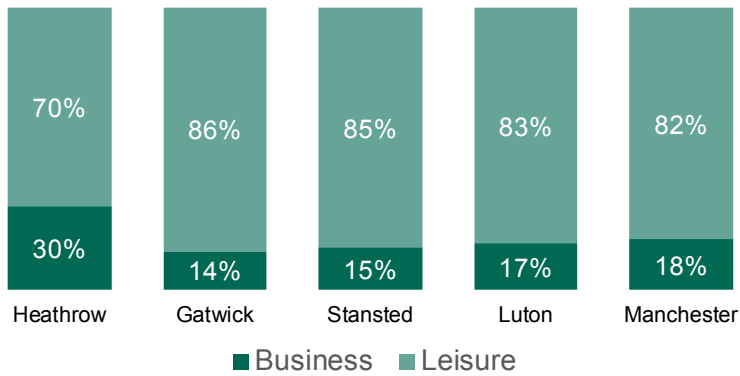
- In 2014, the five airports surveyed were the five largest UK airports in terms of the number of terminal passengers. They accounted for 164 million passengers, over two thirds (69%) of the 238 million passengers at all UK airports in 2014.
- Heathrow was the largest airport, accounting for nearly a third (31%) of all terminal passengers, followed by Gatwick (16%). Manchester and Stansted accounted for a similar proportion (8-9%) while Luton accounted for roughly half this amount (4%)

Terminal passengers at the airports surveyed as a percentage of the total at all UK airports, 2014

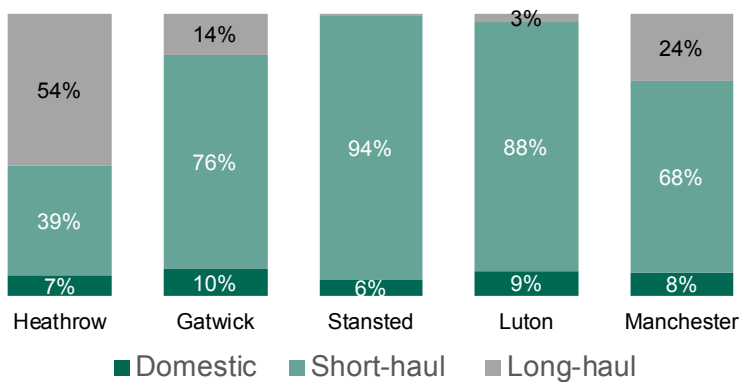


- The five airports surveyed differ not only in terms of size but also in terms of the type of passengers that use them (see Table C1). For example:
- In 2014, Heathrow had a much higher proportion of long-haul passengers (54%) and passengers who were foreign residents (60%) than the other airports. Relative to the other airports surveyed, Heathrow also had a higher proportion travelling on business (30%).
- Gatwick had some long-haul flights, accounting for 14% of their passengers, and a higher proportion of passengers on charter flights than the other London airports (12%).
- Manchester had the highest proportion of passengers on charter flights (17%) and, after Heathrow, this airport had the highest proportion of long-haul passengers in the sample (24%).
- Stansted had a high proportion of passengers on short-haul flights (94%) and a relatively high proportion of foreign residents (41%). The age profile of passengers using Stansted is relatively young, with 50% of adult passengers aged between 16 and 34 years.
- Luton had a relatively high proportion of passengers on short-haul flights (88%). It mainly handled UK residents (76%), passengers travelling for leisure (83%) and passengers on scheduled flights (96%).

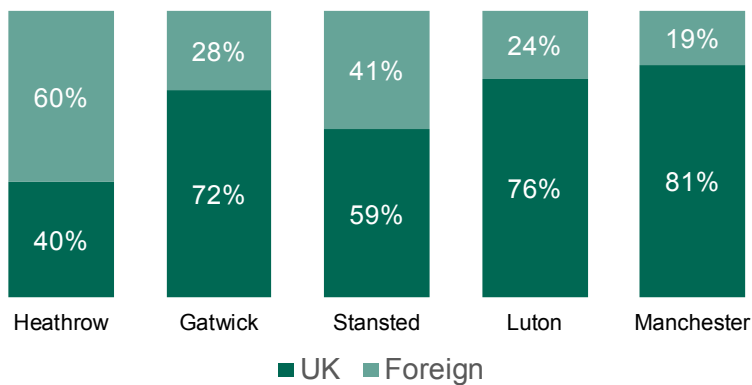
Terminal passengers by airport and purpose, 2014



Terminal passengers by airport and destination, 2014



Terminal passengers by airport and country of residence, 2014



Source: CAA Passenger Survey 2014