



Written by [Becky Akers](#) on October 26, 2011

The TSA's Gingerbread Man

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) has long turned a deaf ear to criticism and complaints. Whenever its groping of toddlers sets the country howling, the TSA responds that employees “followed proper ... procedure.” Ditto when they inspect a 95-year-old invalid's diaper or drench a survivor of bladder-cancer in his own urine — twice. Last week they even searched trucks and busses in Tennessee to huge outcry nationwide and a sharp rebuke from the heroic Ron Paul. But you can bet such opposition will only increase the number of these internal checkpoints.

Likewise, the more passengers protested the agency's computerized strip-searches at airports, the more it insisted that its “whole-body imagers” didn't violate anyone's modesty. It even changed the porno-scanners' name to convince us: “AIT [advanced imaging technology] machines ... have built-in safeguards to protect passenger privacy,” [administrator John Pistole repeatedly asserted](#). Indeed, he called those safeguards “[rigorous](#)” in an editorial for *USAToday*.



Yet now [the agency's adding software to protect privacy](#) it swears didn't need protecting. The software supposedly substitutes a generic figure that resembles a genderless gingerbread-man for the picture of our naked bodies the scanners produced — pictures the TSA's “area director” in Denver, Colorado, admitted “[were graphic, no doubt about it.](#)” Mr. Gingerbread appears on the monitor as a stand-in for all passengers, or so claims the [TSA, which lies about everything, all the time](#); yellow boxes highlight any contraband. If you leave your cell-phone in your hip pocket, Mr. G blushes yellow there.

About half the contraptions with which the TSA peers beneath our clothes accept this software, and the TSA is retro-fitting those; the other half will continue revealing us “graphic[ally], no doubt about it.” The agency says it's investigating a similar fix for the latter. Meanwhile, it's installing porno-scanners that Mr. Gingerbread allegedly sanitizes at an additional 29 airports, [all of them regional](#). If you have so far managed to avoid Our Rulers' ogling by patronizing small airports, you may want to quit flying entirely now.

Nonetheless, Pistole crows that this accommodation “[addresses the privacy issues that have been raised](#)” — even if it does squat to address [the risks to our health scientists have raised](#). But Deborah Jacobs, executive director of New Jersey's ACLU, points out that “[the system remains an intrusive](#)



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[search](#) underneath people's clothing."

The system also remains under the Feds' administration — the same sociopaths who controlled security at airports before 9/11, indeed, the ones whose failures that tragic morning resulted in 3,000 deaths.

"Wait a minute!" Sean and Sharon Sheeple snort. "Airports had *private* screeners then, that was the whole point of the TSA, to federalize security so we'd be safer."

It's true that private companies hired screeners and issued their paychecks prior to the TSA; a few airports such as San Francisco's still do. But these firms merely supplied personnel for checkpoints, the way a temporary agency does. When Jane at Worldwide Widgets' front desk calls in sick, Acme Temps sends a substitute who identifies with his host that day: He answers the phone, "Worldwide Widgets," not "Acme Temps." Technically, Acme Temps employs him, but he's carrying out Worldwide Widgets' orders.

Ditto for screeners prior to 9/11. Private companies employed them, yes, but every move those screeners made, every item they confiscated or allowed onboard, every question they asked, came straight from the FAA's playbook. And the FAA punished airlines and airports for any deviation from its regulations, however absurd the rules. Remember the silly inquisition 10 years ago about whether you'd packed your own bags? Yep, the agency mandated that waste of time.

Nor did the FAA shy from admitting its monopoly on pestering — sorry, protecting passengers. [The "Introduction" to its "Strategig \[sic\] Plan" of January 2001](#) announced that its "nearly 50,000 people [are] dedicated to improving the **safety, security, and efficiency** of aviation and commercial space transportation in a way that protects the environment and national security." [Emphasis in original.] And its "Mission-Driven Goals" that year included "Improv[ing] explosive device and weapons detection" and "Improv[ing] airport security" by "Certification of Screening Companies, Deploy[ing] Advanced Security Technology [and] Automat[ing] Passenger Screening..."

All the TSA did was reveal this stranglehold to the public's view. It also exponentially increased the cost: "Private" screening consumed about \$700 million annually. The TSA's [budget this year was a whopping \\$8.2 billion](#).

That money buys us "security theater" every bit as ineffective as the FAA's on September 11, 2001. The TSA's checkpoints may boast more whiz-bang gizmos than the FAA's did, and it outfits its deviants in [uniforms meant to intimidate us](#), as it [frankly admitted](#) when introducing its blue shirts and gimcrack badges. But these [flunkies continue to fail every test of their abilities](#) to find hidden "weapons" on undercover investigators. And surveillance tapes show that from [2004-2008, they allowed 16 suspects](#) later implicated in terrorism to waltz onto planes 23 different times.

They also sexually assault passengers with a boldness that would stun Joe Stalin. No regime anywhere at any time, no matter how brutal or totalitarian, has ever routinely molested so many citizens.

Thanks to the Feds' fake, very dangerous "security," 3,000 of our friends and relatives perished on 9/11 while countless more suffer sexual abuse all from an unconstitutional, indecent, and brutal agency.

Not even Superman could legitimize this barbaric bureaucracy; Mr. Gingerbread certainly can't. *Abolish the TSA.*



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