

FOUR REASONS WHY VERY EARLY SMOKE DETECTION IS CRITICAL TO AIRPORT SAFETY AND BUSINESS CONTINUITY



Did you know that, in 2018, the world's two busiest airports – Atlanta and Beijing - handled over 100 million passengers each ? Not only that; more than 20 airports around the world now record at least 60 million passengers a year and these figures are on the rise . To ensure that all these travelers are safe and the airport services they require continue to run smoothly, disruption, including fires, must be avoided at all cost. Here are four reasons why advanced smoke detection is key to achieving this goal.

MORE LIVES AND ASSETS THAN EVER BEFORE ARE AT STAKE

1.

Strikingly, the number of people traveling through airports already exceeds the entire world's population and is set to continue growing. Airports around the world are expanding to rise to the challenge, which generally means that the number of people they employ is also increasing. And, the number of airport as well as third-party assets (aircraft, cargo, baggage, retail, consignment) is growing too. With so many lives and assets at stake, gaining the ability to detect potential fire threats well before they can cause any harm or disruption is vital.

AIRPORTS AREN'T JUST AIRPORTS ANYMORE

2.

Step into almost any international airport and you'll immediately realize that it is more than just a transport hub. From ever-expanding food courts through to shopping areas, airports are entertainment and attraction centers that aim to make the passenger experience as smooth and enjoyable as possible. Some airports are even driving the development of entire new urban areas, the so-called 'aerotropolises'. A fire-related incident - and the disruption that this may cause - can have far-reaching consequences for people and businesses well beyond an airport's boundaries.

EVACUATIONS COME AT A PRICE

3.

Ensuring the safety of passengers and staff is an airport's top priority, which is why having an effective fire prevention system in place is essential. But, unless the system can detect a potential fire threat very early on, it may be not enough to prevent costly disruption. A relatively small amount of smoke that isn't detected early enough, for example, can trigger a major evacuation affecting thousands of people. Not only can this cause distress among passengers, but also huge costs for the airport; from canceled flights through to compensation claims from passengers. Another consequence can be negative media coverage and reputational damage, particularly if the incident turns out to be a false alarm.

IF YOU DON'T DETECT SMOKE VERY EARLY, YOU'RE ALREADY TOO LATE

4.

Traditional fire detection methods do not meet the increasing demands of the airport operator. The main reason for this is that an airport's unique architectural and environmental features make early smoke detection quite tricky. Large open spaces such as terminal buildings or hangars, for example, tend to dilute and disperse smoke while stopping it from reaching the ceiling, where smoke detectors are normally installed. Adding to the challenge, some airports, especially the newest ones, feature futuristic, curved/unusually-shaped ceilings where architectural design requires no obstructions, making 'invisible' smoke detection a requirement.

In other words, the main limitation of a traditional smoke detection system is that it may not be able to detect smoke until it has reached noticeable concentrations. At that point an evacuation may become inevitable or, worse, a fire may have already started to spread. A performance-based approach that takes into consideration an airport's unique construction and environmental features is, therefore, critical. It makes it possible to design a smoke detection system that can detect smoke early enough to prevent disruption, optimizing safety and business continuity.

To find out more about how very-early-warning aspirating smoke detection can help optimize fire safety and facilitate easy maintenance and installation across airports, download [The Ultimate Guide to Advanced Fire Detection and Safety in Airports: Risks, Regulations, Detection Options here](#).