

## **'Spot'<sup>1</sup> teams to spy on<sup>2</sup> passengers**

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**ELITE teams<sup>3</sup> of security officers<sup>4</sup> are to<sup>5</sup> be trained to monitor passenger behaviour<sup>6</sup> at airports in a new attempt<sup>7</sup> to combat terrorism.**

The “behaviour detection squads” will patrol terminals to monitor the gestures<sup>8</sup>, conversations and facial expressions of passengers. One of their aims<sup>9</sup> will be to spot<sup>10</sup> those who may be concealing<sup>11</sup> fear or anxiety. People deemed<sup>12</sup> to be acting suspiciously<sup>13</sup> will be taken for questioning<sup>14</sup> and prevented from<sup>15</sup> flying if they fail<sup>16</sup> to explain their actions.

UK<sup>17</sup> trainers<sup>18</sup> have studied the techniques in America, where behaviour detection squads are already deployed<sup>19</sup> at airports. The plan is part of an overhaul<sup>20</sup> of passenger screening<sup>21</sup>. Instead of<sup>22</sup> solely relying on<sup>23</sup> searches<sup>24</sup> to uncover<sup>25</sup> weapons and bombs, airport authorities are increasingly seeking<sup>26</sup> to pinpoint<sup>27</sup> the terrorists themselves.

In the long run<sup>28</sup>, passengers flying from international hubs<sup>29</sup> such as Heathrow and Gatwick could even face<sup>30</sup> a lie-detector<sup>31</sup> test before they board<sup>32</sup>.

In America behaviour detection officers are working at a dozen<sup>33</sup> airports, including Washington Dulles and Boston Logan. The programme, called Screening Passengers by Observation Technique, or Spot, is run<sup>34</sup> by the US<sup>35</sup> Transportation Security Administration (TSA).

“There are infinite ways to find things to use as a weapon and infinite ways to hide them,” said Kip Hawley, the director of the TSA. “But if you can identify the individual, it’s by far<sup>36</sup> the better way to find the threat<sup>37</sup>.”

Paul Ekman, emeritus professor<sup>38</sup> of psychology at the University of California and a leading<sup>39</sup> expert on<sup>40</sup> facial expressions, has been helping<sup>41</sup> to train the TSA’s officers.

Earlier this year three British officials attended<sup>42</sup> a three-day course<sup>43</sup> run by Ekman in Vancouver. “(They were from) a branch<sup>44</sup> of your government that has similar responsibilities to the TSA,” he said.

“A year earlier, we had<sup>45</sup> four people participate<sup>46</sup> in a five-day course. So our work with the UK has been going<sup>47</sup> on for some time. It isn’t practical for us to be the trainers for the UK, so we are training the trainers.”

Ekman added that a British official had told him last week that “things are going to start moving forward<sup>48</sup> now”.

The Spot teams, who are in uniform<sup>49</sup> and work in pairs<sup>50</sup> at US airports, use a list of more than 30 unusual behaviours against<sup>51</sup> which to check passengers.

Some things they look for are obvious, such as a person wearing a coat on a hot day or pacing around<sup>52</sup>, but there are more subtle signs.

“They are all things that people do with their posture, with their hands, with their heads, with their voice if you can hear it and with their gestures,” said Ekman.

In particular, officers are trained to recognise concealed emotion, such as fear or anxiety. These so-called “micro-facial expressions” appear on a person’s face for 1/25th<sup>53</sup> of a second. “They are so fast, that unless you’ve been trained you don’t see them,” said Ekman.

If a passenger’s behaviour gives cause<sup>54</sup> for concern<sup>55</sup>, the Spot officers ask a few casual questions, such as the reason for travelling.

Those who arouse<sup>56</sup> further<sup>57</sup> suspicion are referred to<sup>58</sup> other law enforcement officers for screening, and, if found<sup>59</sup> to be involved in criminality, barred<sup>60</sup> from flying.

The move<sup>61</sup> towards passenger profiling follows the chaos endured<sup>62</sup> by travellers at British airports in the wake of<sup>63</sup> the alleged<sup>64</sup> plot<sup>65</sup> to blow up<sup>66</sup> transatlantic airliners<sup>67</sup>.

Although several airlines flying out of the UK, including Virgin Atlantic, employ security staff to carry out a basic form of passenger profiling, the government is thought<sup>68</sup> to want a more centralised system in place.

This may<sup>69</sup> lead airlines to adopt some of the practices of El Al, the Israeli carrier<sup>70</sup> that pioneered<sup>71</sup> profiling.

The process of checks start when a passenger books<sup>72</sup> a flight, according to Isaac Yeffet, the airline’s former<sup>73</sup> head of security.

Signs that trigger<sup>74</sup> suspicion are buying a one-way ticket<sup>75</sup>, booking at the last minute<sup>76</sup>, paying in cash or buying a ticket for someone else. “I like to be waiting for someone of interest when he arrives at the airport, rather than<sup>77</sup> for him to surprise me,” said Yeffet.

A spokesman<sup>78</sup> for the Department for Transport said: “We have a layered<sup>79</sup> approach to security at airports, but cannot comment further.”



*Exercise*

Click on the correct word to complete the sentences:

1. Passengers' **behaviour/attitude** is monitored at airports.
  2. People are prevented from flying if they **miss/fail** to explain their actions.
  3. Suspicious passengers are referred to police officers for **screaming/screening** purposes.
  4. Unusual behaviours are checked by Spot teams working **in pairs/in couple**.
  5. People who **arouse/arise** suspicions are reported to police.
  6. Passengers' conduct is checked **with/against** a list of unusual behaviours.
  7. Passenger profiling resulted from the risk of having transatlantic airliners **blown up/burnt up**.
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<sup>1</sup> **'Spot'**: sigla che sta per *Screening Passengers by Observation Technique*: lo screening dei passeggeri attraverso la tecnica dell'osservazione.

<sup>2</sup> **To spy on** [*spied, spying, spies*]: *to watch, inspect, or examine secretly*. Si noti che in inglese il verbo è seguito dalla preposizione *on*.

<sup>3</sup> **Elite teams**: [*team*]: squadre, gruppi scelti. Il termine *elite*, importato dal francese, indica *the part or group having the highest quality or importance*=scelto, d'élite.

<sup>4</sup> **Security officers** [*officer*]: addetto alla sicurezza.

<sup>5</sup> **Are to** [*to be, was/were, been, is*]: *to be to* è una costruzione formale che si usa per parlare di progetti o altri accordi ufficiali (es. *The Prime Minister is to open the meeting*) o per fatti che era destino dovessero accadere (es. *We were to meet again*). Indica anche un dovere, un obbligo: *She is to leave at 9 tomorrow morning*.

<sup>6</sup> **Behaviour** [*AE behavior*]: *the way in which one conducts oneself*: comportamento, condotta. In questo caso è *uncountable*.

<sup>7</sup> **Attempt**: *in an attempt to*: nel tentativo di.

<sup>8</sup> **Gestures** [*gesture*]: *motion of hands or body to emphasize or help to express a thought or feeling*: gestualità, gesti.

<sup>9</sup> **Aims** [*aim*]: *goal, purpose*.

<sup>10</sup> **To spot** [*spotted, spotting, spots*]: *qui: to detect or discern, especially visually*: individuare.

<sup>11</sup> **Concealing** [*to conceal, concealed, concealing, conceals*]: *to hide, to put or keep something or somebody out of sight, or prevent the person or thing from being found*: nascondere, celare.

<sup>12</sup> **Deemed** [*to deem, deemed, deeming, deems*]: *consider to be*, come nell'esempio: *He was deemed to be a competent architect*: era considerato un architetto competente.

<sup>13</sup> **Suspiciously**: dall'aggettivo *suspicious*: *arousing or apt to arouse suspicion*.

<sup>14</sup> **Questioning** [*to question, questioned, questioning, questions*]: *to pose a series of questions to*: interrogare.

<sup>15</sup> **Prevented from** [*to prevent, prevented, preventing, prevents*]: *stop somebody from doing something*. È un verbo molto comune in inglese e vuol dire prevenire, evitare. Per esempio, impedire che qualcuno faccia qualcosa si dice *prevent somebody from doing something*: *bad weather prevented him from leaving*.

<sup>16</sup> **Fail** [*to fail, failed, failing, fails*]: qui: *be unable*. In senso scolastico, *fail* significa essere bocciato, respinto, non superare (un esame): *he failed his exam*.

<sup>17</sup> **UK** : abbreviazione per *United Kingdom*. In questo caso è sinonimo dell'aggettivo *British*.

<sup>18</sup> **Trainers** [*trainer*]: *one who trains other persons or animals. One who coaches athletes: a coach*=allenatore.

<sup>19</sup> **Deployed** [*to deploy, deployed, deploying, deploys*]: to distribute (persons or forces) systematically or strategically.

<sup>20</sup> **Overhaul**: qui: *improvement*. Generalmente significa *periodic maintenance on a car or machine*: revisione.

<sup>21</sup> **Screening**: *testing objects or persons in order to identify those with particular characteristics*: analisi, esame, controllo.

<sup>22</sup> **Instead of**: *in place of ; as a substitute for or alternative to*.

<sup>23</sup> **Relying on** [*to rely, relied, relying, relies*]: *to be dependant for support, help, or supply*: fare affidamento, contare su.

<sup>24</sup> **Searches** [*search*]: *the activity of looking thoroughly in order to find something or someone*: perquisizione. La perquisizione domiciliare si traduce con *search of premises*, mentre la perquisizione personale è la *search of person*.

<sup>25</sup> **To uncover** [*uncovered, uncovering, uncovers*]: *to make visible*: scoprire.

<sup>26</sup> **Seeking** [*to seek, sought, sought, seeking, seeks*]: *to make an effort or attempt*.

<sup>27</sup> **To pinpoint** [*pinpointed, pinpointing, pinpoints*]: *to locate exactly or identify with precision*: individuare, localizzare.

<sup>28</sup> **In the long run**: *after a very lengthy period of time*: nel lungo periodo.

<sup>29</sup> **Hubs** [*hub*]: *a center of activity or interest or commerce or transportation*; questo sostantivo è entrato nell'uso della lingua italiana, specie a seguito della costruzione dell'Aeroporto di Milano Malpensa, cui si fa spesso riferimento come all'*hub* di Malpensa. Il significato figurato della parola è fulcro, centro.

<sup>30</sup> **Face** [*faced, facing, faces*]: *to deal with something unpleasant, to confront with*: affrontare, confrontarsi.

<sup>31</sup> **Lie-detector test**: test della macchina della verità. *Lie* significa bugia, *detector* è un rivelatore.

<sup>32</sup> **Board** [to board, boarded, boarding, boards]: get on board of (trains, buses, ships, aircraft, etc.)

<sup>33</sup> **Dozen**: dozzina. *Dozens*, invece, indica *an indefinite, large number*. In Italia dove prevale il sistema decimale, molto spesso si tende ad utilizzare il termine "decine" piuttosto che "dozzine", quindi "*dozens of people*" si potrebbe tradurre "decine di persone".

<sup>34</sup> **Run** [to run, ran, run, running, runs]: to control, manage, or direct.

<sup>35</sup> **US**: *United States*. Qui è usato come aggettivo.

<sup>36</sup> **By far**: *greatly, much*: di gran lunga. Rafforza comparativi e superlativi: per esempio: *it is by far the most expensive car on the market; she is by far the better of the two*.

<sup>37</sup> **Threat**: *something that is a source of danger*: minaccia.

<sup>38</sup> **Emeritus professor**: professore emerito. *Professor*: *a teacher of the highest rank at a college or university*. Da notare che il termine "professor" in inglese si riferisce solo ai docenti universitari.

<sup>39</sup> **Leading**: eminente, di primo piano, di spicco.

<sup>40</sup> **Expert on**: è seguito da un sostantivo (es.: *expert on trade*), ma *to be expert at* è seguito dal verbo nella forma in -ing. Es.: *Italians are expert at cooking*).

<sup>41</sup> **Has been helping** [to help, helped, helping, helps]: questa forma verbale è il *present perfect continuous tense* (passato prossimo progressivo). Si forma con il *present perfect* del verbo *to be* più il *present participle*: *I have been studying*. Si usa per indicare un'azione iniziata nel passato e ancora in corso o che si è appena conclusa: *He has been waiting for an hour and she hasn't arrived yet*.

Si noti la differenza tra: *I have cleaned the house* e *I have been cleaning the house*: nel primo caso (*simple present perfect*) l'azione è terminata; nel secondo caso (*present perfect continuous*) l'azione non è necessariamente conclusa e potrebbe continuare nel futuro.

<sup>42</sup> **Attended** [to attend, attended, attending, attends]: to go to or be present at: frequentare, partecipare.

<sup>43</sup> **Three-day course**: il trattino (hyphen) unisce l'aggettivo numerale *three* e il sostantivo *day* (rimasto invariato al singolare) formando così un aggettivo per *course*: un corso di tre giorni.

<sup>44</sup> **Branch:** *a separate or subordinate division or part of a central system:* settore. Nel caso di una banca *branch* si traduce con agenzia, di una ditta con filiale, di un'attività commerciale con succursale.

<sup>45</sup> **Had** [*to have, had, having, has*]: *to have somebody do something.* In questo caso il verbo *to have* è utilizzato in maniera particolare e corrisponde all'italiano "fare+infinito": abbiamo fatto partecipare 4 persone ad un corso di 5 giorni - *we had four people participate in a five-day course.* Quando è utilizzato in questo modo il verbo "*to have*" richiede l'ausiliare *do, does, did*, nella forma interrogativa e negativa: *Will you have Robert help us?* oppure *I didn't have Davide translate our letter.*

<sup>46</sup> **Participate** [*to participate, participated, participating, participates*], *take part.* Attenzione! Entrambi questi verbi richiedono in inglese la preposizione *in*: *take part in a meeting; he participated in race.*

<sup>47</sup> **Has been going on** [*to go, went, gone, going, goes*]: *to continue, to keep on.* Per l'uso del present perfect continuous tense si veda la nota su *has been helping.*

<sup>48</sup> **Moving forward** [*to move, moved, moving, moves*]: composto dal verbo *move* + *forward=ahead*: avanzare, progredire.

<sup>49</sup> **In uniform:** in uniforme, in divisa. In borghese: *plain clothes: a plainclothes detective.*

<sup>50</sup> **In pairs:** in coppia.

<sup>51</sup> **Against:** *in contrast with or in comparison with, compared to:* rispetto a. Si noti che oltre a contro, contrario a, la proposizione *against* può avere altri significati come in questo caso in cui indica un confronto.

<sup>52</sup> **Pacing around** [*to pace, paced, pacing, paces*]: *to walk or stride back and forth:* gironzolare, camminare su e giù.

<sup>53</sup> **One twentyfifth:** un venticinquesimo. Per ulteriori approfondimenti su numeri e frazioni vedi la scheda Ebac "Numbers".

<sup>54</sup> **Gives cause** [*to give, gave given, giving, gives*]: essere motivo di, suscitare.

<sup>55</sup> **Concern:** *worry:* preoccupazione.

<sup>56</sup> **Arouse** [*to arouse, aroused, arousing, arouses*]: destare, suscitare.

<sup>57</sup> **Further:** *additional:* ulteriore.

<sup>58</sup> **Referred to** [*to refer, referred, referring, refers*]: *send or direct someone for treatment, information, or a decision.*

<sup>59</sup> **If found** [to find, found, found, finding, finds]: espressione ellittica per: *If they are found*.

<sup>60</sup> **Barred** [to bar, barred, barring, bars]: *prevent from; keep out*: impedire o proibire di fare. *To bar someone from doing something: His religion barred him from drinking alcohol*.

<sup>61</sup> **Move**: *an action taken to achieve an objective*: iniziativa, misura.

<sup>62</sup> **Endured** [to endure, endured, enduring, endures]: *to suffer, to bear patiently*: sopportare, tollerare.

<sup>63</sup> **In the wake of**: *following directly on, as a consequence of*: sulla scia, a seguito di.

<sup>64</sup> **Alleged**: *declared but not proved; supposed*: asserito, supposto, presunto.

<sup>65</sup> **Plot**: *a secret plan to accomplish a hostile or illegal purpose*: complotto.

<sup>66</sup> **To blow up** [to blow, blew, blown, blowing, blows]: *cause to explode*.

<sup>67</sup> **Airliners** [airline]: aereo di linea.

<sup>68</sup> **The government is thought** [to think, thought, thought, thinking, thinks]: questa forma passiva si traduce con: si ritiene che il governo...

<sup>69</sup> **May**: qui il verbo modale *may* indica possibilità al presente o al futuro, come nell'esempio: *He may know her address*. In questo tipo di frase *may* e *might* sono intercambiabili, mentre non lo sono quando *might* indica un condizionale e quando la principale è introdotta da un verbo al *past tense*: *She knew they might come; They said they might take a taxi*.

<sup>70</sup> **Carrier**: *a firm or a person engaged in transporting passengers or goods*: vettore, compagnia aerea.

<sup>71</sup> **Pioneered** [to pioneer, pioneered, pioneering, pioneers]: *take the lead or initiative in*: essere tra i primi a. Questo verbo viene dal sostantivo *pioneer*=pioniere.

<sup>72</sup> **Books** [to book, booked, booking, books]: *to reserve*: prenotare.

<sup>73</sup> **Former**: *having once been*: ex.

<sup>74</sup> **Trigger** [to trigger, triggered, triggering, triggers]: qui: *to set off; initiate*: scatenare. Il sostantivo *trigger* indica il grilletto di un'arma dai fuoco, l'innesco (anche in senso figurato).



<sup>75</sup> **One-way ticket:** biglietto di sola andata (in BE anche "a single"). Biglietto di andata e ritorno si traduce roundtrip ticket (o round-trip o round trip) in AE e return ticket in BE.

<sup>76</sup> **Last minute:** the latest possible moment.

<sup>77</sup> **Rather than:** instead of , invece di.

<sup>78</sup> **Spokesman :** a person who speaks for another or for a group. Plurale: spokesmen.

<sup>79</sup> **Layered** [to layer, layered, layering, layers]: a più livelli, articolato. Il sostantivo layer si traduce con strato.