

Yeager Airport

A Schlage Recognition Systems Access Control Case Study

West Virginia Airport Secures Critical Areas with Biometric Hand Readers

"It has been the consensus since 9/11 that using biometrics in access control validation is the way to go."

- Rick Atkinson, Director,
Yeager Airport

Summary

West Virginia's Yeager Airport uses biometric hand readers to guard entry to sensitive areas in the open-access passenger terminal.

Business Need

The U.S. Transportation Security Administration (TSA) soon will issue rules for how airports control access to control towers, perimeters, vehicle gates and other sensitive areas. The requirements will be based on pilot security technology projects currently underway at 20 U.S. airports. Yeager Airport in Charlottesville, West Virginia is getting a jump on the new Homeland Security regulations by conducting its own pilot program.

Challenges

Yeager Airport's control tower is in the busy passenger terminal. Not all of the airport's 80 employees need control-tower access, but a significant number do. The doors open an average of five times an hour around the clock. In the past, Yeager Airport's own police force guarded the control tower doors 24 hours a day, at a daily cost of \$1,200. The airport's HVAC systems and other sensitive equipment are in the basement near the stairway that leads to the control tower. Two months after 9/11, the airport began testing a cost-effective system for controlling access to both critical areas.



STATISTICS

Industry: Transportation

Application: Access Control

Biometric: HandKey®

Hand Readers: 5

Geography: United States

“It is our belief that the TSA will recommend some form of biometrics be used either instead of or in addition to other access control measures.”

- Rick Atkinson, Director,
Yeager Airport

Solution

Yeager Airport installed five Schlage Recognition Systems biometric HandKeys® to secure the control tower area. The airport employee uses the keypad to punch in a personal identification number (PIN) and then places a hand on the reader.

The Hand Reader simultaneously analyzes more than 31,000 points and instantaneously records more than 90 separate measurements of an individual's hand -- including length, width, thickness and surface area -- to verify that the person using the device is really who he or she claims to be. The Hand Reader compares this information with a previously-stored template of the individual's hand.

Once the person is identified as a valid user, the control tower door opens. The entire reading and verification process takes less than a second.

Airport Director Rick Atkinson and his staff first saw the HandReader and other hand geometry systems at a day-long forum on biometric technology at the University of West Virginia. The forum was led by Senator Jay Rockefeller (D-WV), the ranking member on the Aviation Subcommittee of the Senate Commerce Committee.

“It has been the consensus since 9/11 that using biometrics in access control validation is the way to go,” said Atkinson. “It is our belief that the TSA will recommend some form of biometrics be used either instead of or in addition to other access control measures.”

Results

The HandKeys significantly lowered payroll costs by eliminating the need for around-the-clock guards at the control tower doors. “In the three years since the readers were installed they have been remarkably easy to administer and simple to maintain,” Atkinson said.



HandKey® is a registered trademark of Schlage Recognition Systems
Specifications subject to change. Please check with your system vendor for details.



Yeager Airport

Yeager Airport, named for flying ace Brigadier General Charles “Chuck” Yeager, began operations in 1947. The airport sits 937 feet above sea level in the hills near Charleston, West Virginia’s capital, a government, coal-mining and transportation hub. Today, the airport occupies 737 acres. Six commercial carriers serve the region’s residents and businesses.



**Schlage
Recognition Systems
1520 Dell Avenue,
Campbell, CA 95008
Tel 408.341.4100
www.recognitionssystems.schlage.com**