

## Passenger Satisfaction at Heathrow and Gatwick Airports



### The challenge

Strategic Business Partners' objective was to improve satisfaction of passengers as they pass through the airports. Queues at security are a source of frustration, anxiety and unhappy customers. Strategic Business Partners were called in by BAA to find ways of reducing the time to pass through security without compromising passenger safety



### What we did

We worked with a number of teams in both Heathrow and Gatwick airports to understand the reasons for queues and how they developed. Teams then worked on understanding in fine detail every step in the process and why there was waste and variation.

Following detailed analysis, root causes identified included:

1. Poor visibility of passenger numbers
2. Poor staff morale
3. Poor communication with customers for preparation
4. Lack of utilisation of security lanes
5. Too long to set up new lanes

At Gatwick airport we then developed a simulation model based on real customer data to predict passenger flow so that team leaders could manage the lanes effectively.



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Communications and signage projects enabled passengers to be prepared before the security belt.

Layouts and configurations of belts and arches were worked on at Heathrow

Staff structure, roles and measures were changed

Education was rolled out to all levels about belt utilisation and new processes put in place to ensure maximum usage of the security lanes

This was all achieved through working closely with the airport staff and a structured problem solving and improvement methodology based on Lean Six Sigma.

## Results

The process improvements and simulation models developed enabled queues to be controlled, forecasted and shortened. This led to increased customer satisfaction and reduced staff issues whilst maintaining security performance. Over 100 staff were trained in the philosophies and principles of Lean and Six Sigma, leaving a lasting cultural change in those concerned.

## What the clients thought

“Strategic Business Partners delivered real change, through the use of practical applications of Lean Six Sigma that worked. Their approach enabled staff at all levels to engage and develop their working environment. The result has been improved staff morale and customers get through security more quickly and more safely than before.”

Head of continuous improvement, Heathrow