

Port of Seattle Commission Meeting

December 10, 2019

Alaska Airlines Comments on Motion 2019-13: *A motion adopting guiding principles for the public-facing use of biometric technology at the Port of Seattle facilities; establishing a working group to develop policy recommendations governing public-facing biometric use at the port; and establishing deadlines for further actions.*

- Good afternoon Commissioners and Executive Director Metruck.
- My name is Vikram Baskaran and I am the Managing Director of Product Management and Software Engineering at Alaska Airlines.
- Alaska Airlines is pleased that the Port of Seattle is preparing for the introduction of new and innovative technologies with the potential to improve operational efficiencies and the customer experience at Sea-Tac airport.
- We applaud the Port's thoughtful work to establish a set of guiding principles to ensure that any implementation of new biometric technology is done in a way that is voluntary, lawful, ethical and transparent, and ensures privacy, equity, and respect for all guests.
- Likewise, Alaska is committed to ensuring the safety, security, privacy and respect for all guests who travel with us.
- Many airlines have tested the use of biometric technologies, and we understand both the benefits and challenges.
- In the case of Alaska, we first tested the use of fingerprint identification in our operation at San Jose Airport and our lounges in 2015, and have since introduced it as a standard voluntary check-in feature across our growing lounge network due to the improved check-in experience and positive feedback from guests.
- As you consider the motion before you, we respectfully ask that you adopt language to expand the new biometric working group to include airline partners like Alaska Airlines.
- The experience from our own tests, combined with the extensive knowledge and resources of Alaska's Information & Technology Services experts headquartered in SeaTac, can and should help inform the Port's consideration of future policies related to the use of biometric technologies, and we are prepared to work closely with the Port to that end.
- It's also important that the Port ensure any biometric technology solution at Sea-Tac be introduced on an open platform that is usable by all airlines in all phases of the airport experience, bringing benefits to guests in both international and domestic operations.
- Having a standard platform available to all airlines at Sea-Tac will ensure that the operational benefits lead to improvements across the airport and that all guests have the option to participate in a familiar and standardized experience.

- We encourage the Port of Seattle to look closely at how other airports are addressing the introduction of new biometric technologies and to work closely with airlines like Alaska toward an industry standard that ensures both operational improvements and a seamless process for travelers who choose to participate.
- Thank you for the opportunity to comment on today's motion. Our company stands ready to work closely with the Port on this important topic going forward.