

Emirates unveils integrated 'biometric path'

Emirates is gearing up to launch a 'biometric path', which will offer its customers a smooth and truly seamless airport journey at the airline's hub in Dubai International Airport.

Utilising the latest biometric technology – a mix of facial and iris recognition, Emirates passengers can soon check in for their flight, complete immigration formalities, enter the Emirates Lounge, and board their flights, simply by strolling through the airport.

The latest biometric equipment has already been installed at Emirates Terminal 3, Dubai International airport. This equipment can be found at select check-in counters, at the Emirates Lounge in Concourse B for premium passengers, and at select boarding gates. Areas where biometric equipment is installed, will be clearly marked.



Improving customer flow

Trials for the Smart Tunnel, a project by the General Directorate of Residence and Foreigners Affairs in Dubai (GDRFA) in collaboration with Emirates, was launched on 10 October. It is a world-first for passport control, where passengers simply walk through a tunnel and are “cleared” by immigration authorities without human intervention or the need for a physical passport stamp.

Once its internal tests are completed, Emirates will shortly launch trials for biometric processing at the other key customer

points at the airport – check-in, lounge, and boarding gate – and subsequently at transit counters/gates, and for its chauffeur drive services. All biometric data will be stored with GDRFA, and customers invited to participate in the trials will be asked for their consent.

Adel Al Redha, Emirates' executive vice-president and chief operations officer said, "Guided by our chairman His Highness Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al-Maktoum, Emirates continuously innovates and strives to improve our day-to-day business. After extensive research and evaluation of numerous technologies and new approaches to enhance our passenger journey, we are now satisfied with the preliminary work we have carried out and are ready to commence live trials of the world's first biometric path at Emirates Terminal 3.

Collaborative nature of innovation

"These ground-breaking initiatives are a result of close collaboration with our stakeholders - particularly GDRFA who have been instrumental in the programme to bring the biometric path to fruition. The recent launch of the Smart Tunnel trial by GDRFA is a great achievement and clearly demonstrates the unique and collaborative nature of innovation at Dubai airport.

All systems will eventually be linked with each other resulting in better service to our customers and a happier journey whether arriving, departing or transiting in Dubai. This is very much in line with Emirates' 'Fly Better' brand promise. We will soon invite customers to participate in the trials for our biometric path, and we look forward to their feedback."



Major General Mohammed Ahmed Almarri, Dubai General Directorate of Residency and Foreigners Affairs (GDRFA) said, "We are pleased to roll-out these new initiatives at Terminal 3 in collaboration with Emirates and our airport stakeholders. The Smart Tunnel tests are running smoothly, and we are now preparing to mobilise the other biometric systems at the other areas in T3. All these initiatives are in line with the government's vision to be a world leader in innovation and public services. It will ultimately improve the traveller experience at the airport and enhance the efficiency of our operations."

Emirates' 'biometric path' will improve customer experience and customer flow through the airport with less document checks and less queuing. Eventually, the "live" passenger tracking capability will also improve security and the airline's ability to deliver even better and more personalised services. For instance, enabling the Emirates airport team to locate and assist 'late' customers who would otherwise miss their flights.

The airline's 'biometric path' will cover departures, arrivals, transit, chauffeur drive connections, and lounge access in Dubai. Initially focused on First and Business class travellers, Emirates intends to speedily extend the 'biometric path' to Economy class travellers in Dubai, and in the future potentially to other airports outside of Dubai, and also for its own dedicated crew check in facility.

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