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Dirty bomb sensors for Ottawa airport

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OTTAWA - The federal government will install dirty-bomb detectors at the Ottawa International Airport as part of a test project that could see them placed in airports across the country.

The \$4-million project is designed to detect crude devices that use conventional explosives to scatter radioactive material over a wide area.

The project will be managed by the Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Research & Technology Initiative, a federal agency established after the Sept. 11 attacks to provide science-based solutions to national security threats.



Ottawa Airport

The detectors are aimed at quelling fears a dirty bomb could be smuggled into an airport or on a plane.

Last year, documents uncovered in Afghanistan suggested Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda network had built a dirty bomb.

"Radiological agents have high potential for psycho-social impacts and the disruption of political and economic systems," says a brief on the agency's website.

- INDEPTH: [Dirty Bombs](#)

As part of the test project, fixed sensors, along with roving detectors, will patrol the grounds of the Ottawa airport by

next fall for a one-year test phase.

It will use a geographical positioning system, cellular communication and mapping technology to send information to a central control room.

From there, staff can view colour-coded readings of what the detectors are sensing.

The project will develop a "model transferable for the protection of other airports in the national aviation system," says a brief on the institute's website.

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