

ENHANCING MAIL SECURITY WITH RAYSECUR'S MAILSECUR® TECHNOLOGY FOR THE TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE (TDCJ)



INDUSTRY

Corrections



CUSTOMER

Texas Department of Criminal Justice



CHALLENGE

TDCJ's digitized mail system reduced hidden threats found in standard inmate mail, but special mail, such as legal, media, and business mail, remained a major avenue for contraband. Smugglers used these exceptions to disguise treated paper, liquids, powders, and other dangerous items as official documents. A systemwide search uncovered 3,021 instances of drug-treated paper, along with 1,810 additional threats, including cell phones, weapons, alcohol, and other prohibited items. These findings underscored the significant security gap left by unscreened special mail.

OVERVIEW

The Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) faced a critical challenge: intercepting and managing contraband hidden within special mail and packages, including legal correspondence, without violating the privacy of inmates or compromising security.

Traditional X-ray systems could only detect a limited range of materials, leaving gaps in security and increasing the risk of contraband smuggling.

In response, TDCJ implemented RaySecur's **MailSecur® T-Ray mail screening technology**, deploying 87 devices across its facilities and post offices. The innovative solution not only improved contraband detection but also streamlined the screening process for legal and special mail.

THE CHALLENGE

TDCJ had already transitioned personal inmate correspondence to a digitized mail system, reducing risks from general mail. However, special mail—such as legal correspondence, media packages, and business mail—remained a vulnerability.

Contraband, including liquids, powders, and chemically treated paper, continued to find its way into facilities through clever smuggling tactics, often disguised as legitimate legal or government correspondence.

Reviewing the TDCJ News archives and the Systemwide Lockdown and Comprehensive Search data, they reported the following contraband collected during their search. The scale of the treated paper contraband problem was staggering:



3,021
INSTANCES
(detectable by MailSecur®)



584
CELL PHONE



587
WEAPONS



75
GALLONS OF ALCOHOL



564
OTHER DANGEROUS ITEMS

1,870
SUBTOTAL OF ALL OTHER THREATS

Illegal drugs on treated paper far outweighed other forms of contraband, highlighting a pressing need for advanced detection systems.

A specific challenge was the discovery of contraband being smuggled through a “mail-back” scheme, where inmates manipulated legal mail to send and receive illicit items via external parties. Traditional X-ray systems could detect only three out of nine Department of Homeland Security-designated substances, leaving significant blind spots.

THE SOLUTION: MAILSECUR® T-RAY TECHNOLOGY

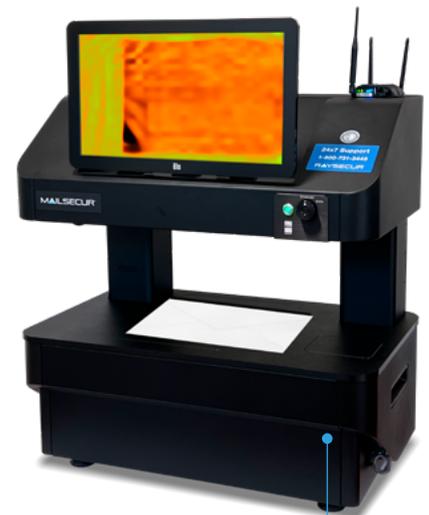
TDCJ partnered with RaySecur to deploy MailSecur® T-Ray mail screening systems, an advanced technology capable of detecting all nine DHS-designated substances, including:

- Liquids
- Powders
- Chemically treated paper

Using T-Ray technology, MailSecur® provides real-time, non-destructive 4D imaging, allowing for a safer and more effective screening process. Unlike traditional X-ray systems, MailSecur®’s multicolored screen display highlights anomalies in mail, such as fluid movements or foreign materials, enabling operators to identify potential threats with greater accuracy.

Amanda Flinn, TDCJ Assistant Director of Classifications and Records, explained:

“ The saying is that ‘Ink does not float,’ so if the scanner detects certain movements within the envelope this could be cause for concern. It doesn’t necessarily mean it’s something bad. But if there is some type of fluid or powder in the envelope, it will need to be further examined. ”



THE IMPLEMENTATION

MailSecur® machines were strategically deployed to screen all mail arriving at TDCJ units, including:

- Mail for wardens and other facility staff
- Legal correspondence for inmates
- Media packages and business mail

Legal mail, once screened, is opened in the presence of officers to ensure further security. The advanced detection capabilities have proven effective in identifying anomalies, such as contraband concealed in packages mimicking legal or political correspondence.



THE IMPACT

The introduction of MailSecur® technology has had a transformative effect on TDCJ's mail security:

- 1. Enhanced Detection Capabilities:**
MailSecur® can detect a broader range of contraband materials compared to traditional X-ray machines, closing critical gaps in security.
- 2. Reduced Contraband:**
The system significantly increased the interception of illicit materials, improving overall safety for inmates and staff.
"I think this will have a huge impact on our contraband interdiction," said Amanda Flinn. "I think it's made a big difference in the amount of contraband that is seized."
- 3. Improved Operational Efficiency:**
Real-time imaging and advanced detection tools have streamlined the mail screening process, reducing the burden on staff while enhancing security protocols.
- 4. Reinforced Safety and Trust:**
By adopting cutting-edge technology, TDCJ reaffirmed its commitment to the health and safety of its employees and inmates. Bobby Lumpkin, Correctional Institutions Division Director, noted:

"We are always examining the latest trends and practices to see what might work for Texas."

CONCLUSION

Through its partnership with RaySecur, TDCJ has addressed one of its most significant security challenges, setting a new standard for mail screening in correctional facilities. The deployment of MailSecur® T-Ray systems has not only curbed contraband smuggling but also demonstrated TDCJ's dedication to leveraging innovation to maintain safety and security.

For organizations facing similar challenges, MailSecur® offers a proven solution to enhance mail security and protect against evolving threats.



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