

Safe Skies: Favourable ruling 'good news' for TR innovators

After years of battling patent infringement in the US courts for its TSA-approved luggage locks, the judges finally ruled in favour of Safe Skies' Founder, David Tropp.

The recent ruling is good news not just for Safe Skies, but other entrepreneurs and innovators in the US, says Tropp. It helps to ensure that innovation across all industries, including the travel sector, is subject to proper patent protection and encourages innovation, which is good for manufacturers and consumers alike.

For years Tropp had alleged that its direct competitor, Travel Sentry had infringed two of Safe Skies' patents (US Patent Nos. 7,021,537 and 7,036,728), which specifically relate to luggage inspection by using dual-access locks, through the actions of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA).

In the US, unless checked-in luggage carries a TSA-approved lock, which can be unlocked by a master key at customs, the lock will be broken if it warrants inspection. Travel Sentry and Safe Skies claim to be the only two US providers of TSA-approved luggage locks right now.

In short, the TSA had used master keys provided by Travel Sentry to access and inspect luggage secured by Safe Skies' locks. The US Court's recent ruling, concluded that TSA's actions are, in fact, attributable to Travel Sentry, such that Travel Sentry can be liable for direct infringement (**Travel Sentry, Inc. v. Tropp**).



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ROCKETING DEMAND

Commenting on the ruling, Tropp states: "The Federal Circuit's recent decision reaffirms that companies cannot avoid responsibility for patent infringement by having different entities perform the steps of a patented method."

Since the ruling, demand for his luggage locks has rocketed, which has resulted in faster than average business growth, confirms Tropp.

We are satisfying the additional market demand coming our way and developing new products to cater to market needs.

INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS

Tropp says he expects Safe Skies business to increase exponentially in the near future, particularly with customs organisations. Its agreement with the USs TSA has been in place for over a decade and it has seven other agreements with international customs and security organisations.



Safe Skies boasts eight agreements with international customs organisations, including the TSA in the US and the Swiss Government.

These include the Swiss Government, German Government, Australian Government, New Zealand Government, Canadian Air Transport Security Agency, Israeli Airports Authority and Her Majestys Revenue and Customs (HMRC) in the UK, adds Tropp.

“New agreements with other global security and customs agencies are in the pipeline and will be announced shortly.