



New plans for U.S. air safety

Congress approved a bill for increased aviation security Friday. The bill now goes to President George W. Bush for his promised signature.

What the feds are going to do . . .

Airport screening



The federal government will take over control of airport baggage screening. All baggage screeners will be federal employees.

Checked bags



Airports will use improved detection systems for explosive, biological and chemical weapons.

Oversight



A new Transportation Department agency will have jurisdiction over transportation security.

Technology



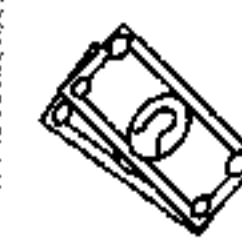
A database will be set up for cross-checking names on watch lists with passenger lists.

Airplanes



There will be increased safety measures including strengthened cockpit doors, video cameras in the cabin, additional federal air marshals, a hijacking alert switch for cabin crew, and possibly the use of weapons in the cockpit.

Fees



A \$2.50 passenger fee with a maximum of \$5 per trip would pay for the increased security.

Liability



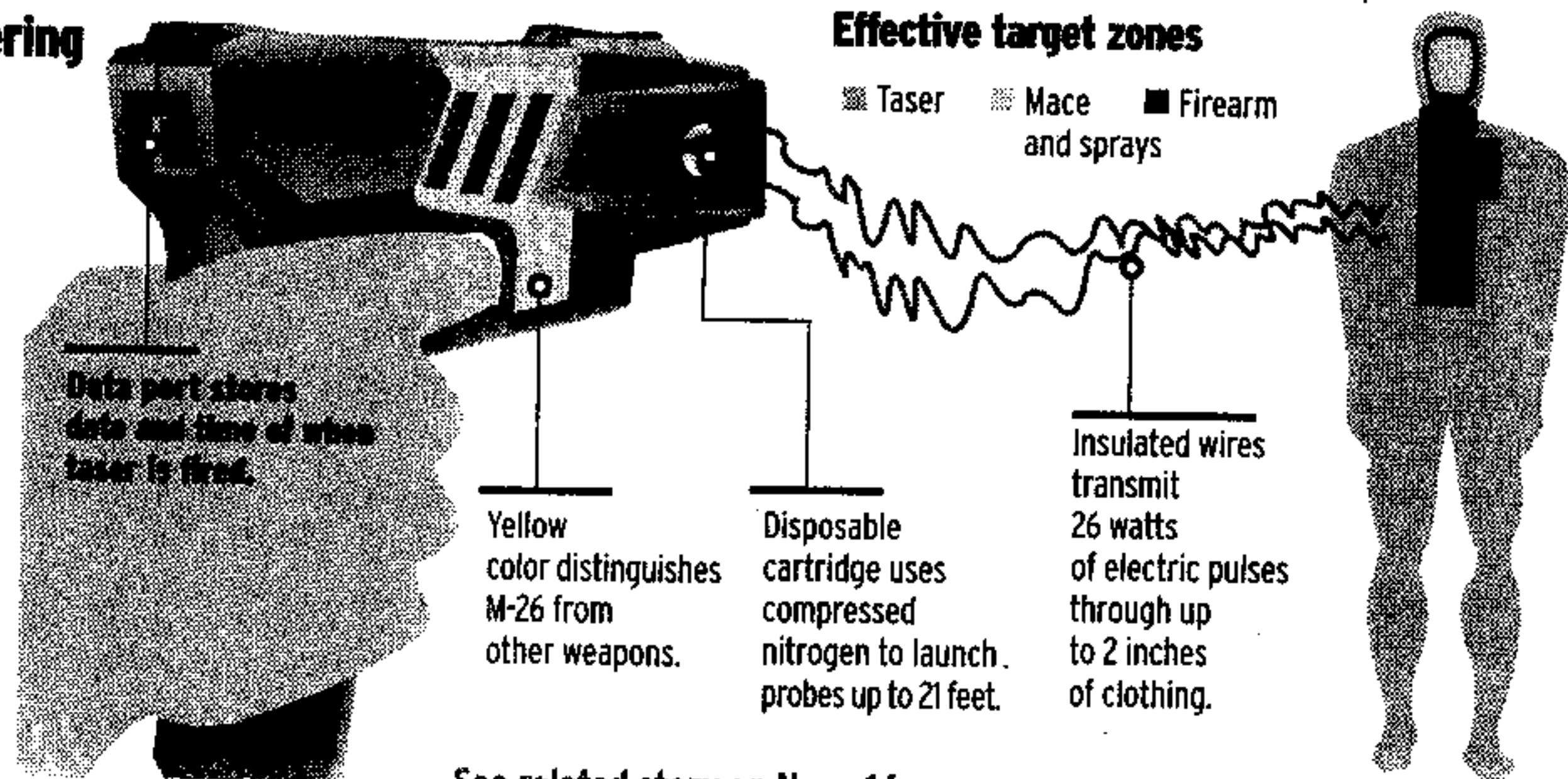
Owners of the World Trade Center and others harmed in the Sept. 11 attacks will have limited liability.

. . . and what the airlines are considering

Airlines are now considering arming their pilots and flight attendants with the M-26 Advanced Taser, a hand-held remote stun system. The Taser runs on eight standard AA batteries and costs about \$400 per weapon.

A shock to the system

When a person is hit by the Advanced Taser, electric pulses override the body's central nervous system. This causes uncontrollable muscle contractions, bringing the person to the fetal position. The initial burst lasts five seconds and can be readministered at least 30 additional times.



Sources: Taser International, The Associated Press

See related story on News 14

The Register