In my last column, I discussed some of the practical consequences of new restrictions on carry-on baggage for travelers from the UK to the US. In this column, I want to continue the discussion of implications of these new restrictions for business travelers.

I have already written about the risks of putting laptop computers in checked baggage. But readers will note from the list of permitted objects on flights from the UK (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/4778615.stm>) that “electrical key fobs” are also forbidden in the cabin. What are you going to do when you reach your home airport and discover that your checked baggage has been lost, stolen or even just taken by mistake because it looks like somebody else's bag? How are you going to get into your car if you can't turn the alarm off?

I keep a spare electronic key fob hidden somewhere in my car (no, I'm not going to tell you where) so that I can quickly turn off the alarm if I am forced to use my extra key to get into the car when the alarm is on. To reduce the likelihood that my carry-on bag will be taken by somebody else, I always strap it with a brightly colored, wide nylon strap that not only makes it more distinguishable but also serves as a safety measure in case the zipper fails.

Assuming that you have encrypted your data, you'll want to think about ensuring the value of your hardware (<http://www.travel-insurance-online.com/laptop-insurance.php>). See if you can get a policy that ensures against both damage and loss.

Since rebuilding your software configuration can take days of work, you may want to invest in a product that provides disk imaging (<http://disk-imaging-software-review.toptenreviews.com/>) or cross-computer software installation (<http://www.laplink.com/pcmover/>). These products can allow you to create installation disks that will duplicate your software set up on a replacement computer in minutes or hours. Taking this kind of backup may become a normal precaution for business travelers before setting out on a trip.

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M. E. Kabay, PhD, CISSP-ISSMP is Program Director of the Master of Science in Information Assurance (<http://www.msia.norwich.edu>) at Norwich University in Northfield, VT. Mich can be reached by e-mail at <mailto:mekabay@gmail.com>; Web site at <http://www.mekabay.com/index.htm>.

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