

FACILITATION PANEL (FALP)

(Third Meeting, Montreal, 12 to 16 February 2001)

Agenda Item 3: General revision of Annex 9 – Chapters 2 and 3

INFORMATION PAPER

(Presented by Mr. J. Manning, Australia)

EMBARKATION/DISEMBARKATION CARDS

REFERENCE

FALP/3-WP/5 – Section F of Annex 9.

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 The Australian Customs Service (Customs) has the responsibility for the primary processing of passengers. This process can be described as a “one stop” system where arriving and departing passengers present themselves to one official – a Customs officer – who carries out clearance functions, including primary immigration processing on behalf of the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs and other agencies including the Australian Quarantine Inspection Service, the Australian Federal Police and the Australian Transaction Reports & Analysis Centre. The “one stop” approach has allowed considerable efficiencies in staffing and provided the flexibility to meet rapidly changing demands in airport environments.

1.2 For many years Australia required arriving passengers to complete two documents:

- a) an incoming passenger card which asked for personal details including citizenship, arrival information and questions about the reason for travel; and
- b) a Travellers Statement that asked questions about goods in possession subject to customs, agriculture, quarantine, wildlife, health and currency laws.

1.3 In anticipation of an increase in visitors for the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, the Australian Government sought ways to achieve efficiencies in the collection of passenger information at the border and to streamline passenger processing. One of those efficiencies was the introduction of a new disembarkation card that combined the two documents required on arrival.

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1.4 The new disembarkation card, known as an Incoming Passenger Card (IPC) was introduced on 1 July 1998 following extensive consultation with stakeholders.

2. OPERATION

2.1 The IPC, which is the same size as an airline boarding pass, requires the passenger to complete personal biodata (including reasons for travel) and provide yes/no answers to questions about customs, agriculture, quarantine, wildlife, health and currency matters.

2.2 The card is available in English, Arabic, Chinese Simplified, Chinese Traditional, Greek, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Malaysian, Spanish, Thai and Vietnamese.

2.3 As a result of the introduction of the single card, processing times were reduced by an average of 23%.

2.4 Simplified embarkation cards were also introduced in July 1998 and are the same size as a boarding pass.

3. ADVANCE PASSENGER PROCESSING

3.1 As Incoming and Outgoing Passenger Cards are the same sizes as boarding passes, airlines can use the same printers to produce the EXPRESS cards required for Advance Passenger Processing.

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