



INFORMATION PAPER

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Agenda Item 7: The Role of the Machine Readable Travel Document (MRTD) Programme, Advance Passenger Information (API) and Passenger Name Record (PNR)

CURRENT STATUS OF APIS, iAPP AND SES

(Presented by the Republic of Korea)

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 According to the Standard 3.47 of Annex 9 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation, the Contracting States, where appropriate, should introduce the Advanced Passenger Information System (APIS) which involves the capture of certain passport or visa details prior to departure and the transmission of the details by electronic means to their public authorities to manage risks to passengers and expedite immigration clearance. APIS has been implemented worldwide, including in the Republic of Korea as well as Japan, China, the U.S. and the U.K. The Republic of Korea is expected to expand the Advance Passenger Processing (APP), a program that prevents certain passengers from boarding, from the departure inspection to the arrival inspection.

1.2 In addition, Smart Entry Service (SES) for pre-approved, low-risk passengers has been successfully settled as an alternative to the existing immigration clearance by reducing congestion during the immigration process.

2. APIS, APP AND PNR

2.1 APIS, launched in Korea in September 2005, is a system developed to transmit data on any arriving aircraft (within 2 hours prior to arrival or 20 minutes after departure) and departing aircraft (as soon as they are ready to depart) from aircraft operators to the Korean Ministry of Justice in accordance with the specifications of UN/EDIFACT (UN Electronic Data Interchange for Administration, Commerce and Trade) or US/EDIFACT.

2.2 APIS enabled preventive risk management such as detecting high-risk persons in advance including inadmissible persons, which goes beyond the previously passive and non-preemptive measures using paper-based General Declaration (G/D). The system also eliminated the need to submit the embarkation and disembarkation card by combining the electronically transmitted passenger data and machine-readable passport information, and streamlined immigration clearance services by reducing the handling time of clearance for innocent passengers.

2.3 However, it turns out that APIS had limits in preventing high-risk passengers from boarding due to the one-way data transmission from aircraft operators to the Ministry of Justice. Under these circumstances, there was a growing need for introducing the APP which allows aircraft operators to

immediately check the admissibility of a passenger into a country of arrival at the check-in counter prior to departure.

2.4 In this regard, the Ministry adopted a program of the interactive advance passenger processing (iAPP) for real-time response to the queries on the admissibility of a passenger before embarkation and implemented the pilot program on national flag carriers in 2008. After a seven month grace period from the amendment of the Immigration Act in November 2010, the program has been mandatorily applied to all national and foreign airlines starting from July 2011.

2.5 The iAPP is applied to any departing passengers of any aircraft regardless of its type including cargo or charter, except for the crew members and transit passengers. Aircraft operators should transmit the details of passengers (for example, name, gender, date of birth, nationality, passport and reservation number) and flights (flight number, port, and time of departure and arrival) to the Ministry from 72 hours to 30 minutes prior to departure in real-time or in batches per flight number, in accordance with the specifications of UN/EDIFACT adopted by the UN Economic and Social Council.

2.6 The response types of the iAPP system to aircraft operators are divided into four categories: "Cleared", "Not Cleared", "Selectee" and "Error". The iAPP is more client-oriented than the APP of several other countries since it involves not only the permission of boarding pass issuance but also the detailed response to the issues related to departure (i.e. lost or invalid passport, overstay, or unauthorized overseas travel etc.). Thanks to the program, aircraft operators became capable of addressing the issues caused by a belated realization of disqualified passengers for boarding, such as difficulties in assigning seats to passengers on the waiting list, airport security issues with cancelled decision at departure inspection or disruption of on-time flight schedule from unloading the already loaded luggage.

2.7 APIS identified an increasing number of disqualified passengers from 10,556 in 2007, to 16,905 in 2010 to 16,259 in 2011 that led to entry bans and visa restrictions and the iAPP detected a growing number of inadmissible passengers from 3,659 in 2010 to 6,327 in 2011 which caused departure bans, making tangible results of identifying violators.

2.8 If a passenger has been found to be in or under suspicion of violation of the Immigration Act, the Ministry finds out relevant information of the passenger through the Passenger Name Record (PNR) which is mandatorily provided by aircraft operators. The PNR has enabled the Ministry to efficiently identify and manage potential high-risk passengers along with APIS. As of January 2012, 55 aircraft operators had transmitted the passenger reservation information.

3. SES (SMART ENTRY SERVICE)

3.1 The Smart Entry Service (SES) is a system that is introduced to curtail the psychological burden of a passenger from a face-to-face interview by streamlining and automating immigration clearance procedure based on high-tech IT technology and efficiently handling an ever-growing travel volume under a situation where it is difficult to increase the personnel for clearance.

3.2 Persons eligible for the SES are: i) Koreans holding a Machine Readable Travel Document (MRTD) who are aged 17 and older and have agreed to provide fingerprints and face image, and ii) certain registered foreigners who are staying in Korea, such as foreign investors and foreign professional workers. As of the end of May 2012, 848,540 people had registered with the program, and 11,696,446 people had used the auto-gate in total. The Ministry of Justice is planning to expand the auto-gate in operation at Incheon, Gimpo and Gimhae international airports to Jeju airport and the port of Incheon by the end of 2012.

3.3 It is assessed that SES made a significant contribution to raising the efficiency of immigration clearance and border security by providing one of the best services to pre-approved, low-risk travellers and strengthening face-to-face inspections on suspicious or high-risk figures at the same time.

3.4 The Ministry of Justice agreed to the “*JOINT STATEMENT REGARDING COOPERATION BETWEEN U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY, U.S. CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION AND REPUBLIC OF KOREA-MINISTRY OF JUSTICE, KOREA INNUGRATION SERVICE TOWARD DEVELOPMENT OF AN INTERNATIONAL EXPEDITED TRAVELER INITIATIVE*” in April 2011 and launched the Korea-US trusted traveller program (SES-GE) on 13 June 2012. The Ministry plans to push forward the discussion and coordination for the reciprocal trusted traveller program with the Netherlands and other countries.

4. CONCLUSION

The Republic of Korea expects the expansion of APIS and the APP, which have yet to be adopted in some of Member States despite the provisions of Annex 9 to the ICAO Convention, so that the programs will contribute to strengthening aviation safety and facilitating an international movement. To that end, the Korean Government will make every effort to proactively provide information upon request of advice on the institutions by any concerned Member States.

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