

## **ICAO Tenth Symposium: Summary and Conclusions**

**Barry J. Kefauver—October 09, 2014**

### **Introduction**

I am honored to be with you here today and very pleased that I have been asked to summarize this Symposium and to express my views with respect to the past as well as the future. The nearly twelve months that have passed since we last met together here have witnessed many changes, unfortunately some with tragic consequences. In the largest sense, events over the recent past have affected our goals and objectives in a couple of highly tangible ways. First, our long-standing emphasis on sound and comprehensive identity management, a very important component of this and previous Symposia, has been underscored and must assume even greater and widespread priority. Secondly, the interest in more effectively utilizing the tools (that is the “e” in the ePassport) over which we have labored for so long, has now moved from important to urgent. So, in order to prepare today's summary, I looked back over the content and conclusions of the past several years. The evolution and threads of continuity are striking. For example, the summary of the Seventh Symposium three years ago observed that the focus and content were different from the then-preceding six symposia. For the most part, the essential thrust of those earlier Symposia was basically how-to-do-it, that is, the fundamentals of making a passport program and, eventually, a bit of the intricacies of an ePassport program. Conversely, the Eighth Symposium of two years prior had a much different content: A rather finite focus on the humanitarian aspects of travel document functionality. Last year's Ninth Symposium format evolved further in shape, form and meaning and went toward conceptual anticipation and introspection, seeking a clearer sense of strategic vision in a global frame. Almost as though Part Deux of last year, but additive in that same quest for clarity of purpose and meaning, this year's Symposium has evolved into an intent to bring all of the pieces of the travel continuum into harmony, a holistic strategy that will chart the next decade and beyond. Quite presciently, the summary of the Eighth Symposium concluded, "Hopefully we will have a presentation at the Ninth Symposium that summarizes the work of the 38th Assembly as having laid the groundwork for an even more successful coming decade." And indeed the vehicle that was in a formative stage at the time of Symposium Nine, called TRIP, has now formed in many ways the heart of this, the Tenth Symposium.

With that as an introductory perspective, I will comment on and pull together some of these component pieces of this Symposium and draw them into a cohesive whole. That whole in its entirety looks out over all of the elements associated with travel document reasons for being, the developing and expanding nature of the functionalities of machine readable travel documents and, of especial focus in this Symposium, the foundational integrity and the proper inspection of those documents in the broadest sense of border control and management.

## Summary of TENTH ICAO Symposium

These past three days have been filled with many issues, concerns, successes, failures, needs and realities. Previous Symposia have tended to coalesce around a core group of identifiable thematic variables that within tolerances allowed themselves to be discretely identifiable and definable. This year's Symposium assumes a slightly different kind of form and format. The concentration on TRIP, and the kinds of initiatives that this strategy urges, essentially demand that other focal areas assume something of a subset kind of relationship to TRIP's umbrella breadth and depth. While some accomplishments and country-specific programs have been dissected in presentations, for the most part the discussions over these past days has been future-oriented, posing what I would characterize as challenges to meet the evolving and global demands of the future of travel. In summarizing past Symposia, I have generally identified the specific threads of emphasis woven by the speakers. While the information shared in this Tenth Symposium has many complexions, I will suggest broadly five such threads that characterize this Symposium. Please note that these threads, other than the first one which I am considering first among equals, are in random order that in no way signifies importance.

*First*, I will single out the presentations by Jim Marriott and Mauricio Siciliano that in their entirety encompass an umbrella compendium within which all other themes and focal areas fit, **the ICAO Traveller Identification Programme (ICAO TRIP) Strategy**. As I noted earlier, a previous Symposium conclusion "hoped" that we would have a presentation at a future Symposium that would summarize the work of the 38th Assembly as having laid the groundwork for an even more successful coming decade. That is precisely the ICAO TRIP strategy. The Symposium of three years ago viewed ICAO at a crossroads of institutional and programmatic intersection in the MRTD program. Last year's observation was that positive movement forward had taken place, a direction at that crossroads had been chosen, but the program required refinement and burnishing in order to proceed along the path chosen. Now, we have learned that MRTD has become TRIP in ICAO organizational nomenclature. With the formal and complete adoption of the TRIP strategy, ICAO has taken a light-years leap forward and has chosen direction and purpose that no longer evoke head-scratching; that crossroad has been crossed and ICAO is on a more clearly defined and substantially broadened course. As Jim reported, reinforced by Mauricio, the 38th Session of Assembly adopted the ICAO Traveller Identification Programme (ICAO TRIP) Strategy in order to establish the goals and objectives of traveller identification management, to lead and reinforce a global approach, and to provide direction for action to ICAO, States and the many international, regional and industry partners in identification management. ICAO's leadership in pursuing these Strategic Objectives is a signal event from which all other travel document and border management activities will more effectively flow, to bring together the five (or seven as one presenter suggested) elements of identity management, and to acknowledge the singular importance of partnerships. This framework yields a new approach to the next thematic focus, global issues.

*Second*, although always of great importance, **the challenge of immense growth of numbers as well as complexity in the global movement of people** has assumed a wider variety of threat faces as well as a heightened content of terrorism and other forms of malevolence in general. In the twelve months since the last symposium, terrorism has worn an increasingly barbaric cloak of acts viewed as unthinkable by virtually the entire world. The terrorist's arm of evil has reached levels that clearly demonstrate that these hatreds know no geographic boundaries nor is there respect for any aspect of humanity. Indeed, much of the world has been touched by heinous acts of barbarism seldom seen if ever encountered before.

However vile and despicable, those who would engage in these unthinkable acts are susceptible to countermeasures that are within the aegis of TRIP to thwart. As the speaker from INTERPOL observed, use the passport as an effective weapon against these very bad people. Enhanced tools of identity management will pay huge dividends in depriving the terrorist or international criminal of their most cherished asset, the ability to move freely. The use of false identity has been with us before the advent of the ePassport and is with us today. However, the nature of fraud has shifted from one driven by document fraud to one now directed predominantly to identity fraud. The current generation of biometric-enabled passports has forced bad people to use new and different ways to exploit the cracks in, especially, our ability to determine true identity. One of the gaping cracks has now witnessed a growth of real passports in false identities, a dangerous mockery of the ePassport. Always elusive, the identity judgments associated with passport entitlement are the foundation of our MRTD issuance processes and thereby the trust and confidence that inspection authorities can have in linking the bearer and the document.

Since the last symposium, we have seen exploitation such as the successful use of stolen passports in the case of MH 370. This one incident grabbed widespread public attention and brought new meaning to the SLTD program and the critical need to use it. Also, as the anticipated volume of air travel moves toward that anticipated annual six billion, issuers as well as inspectors must remain steadfast in never allowing volume to compromise standards.

*Third*, as it was at last year's Symposium, this year the very clear and now even more urgent need to **use properly the electronic verification and integrity tools** that we have expended so much energy and time and money incorporating into the ePassports. Unless and until they are, the full return on the ePassport investments will not be realized, and, of perhaps greater concern, the use of the inadequately inspected document will yield a dangerous and false sense of credibility and security. Last year, presenters likened the ePassport without the use of proper inspection as an expensive toy. However, toys imply pleasure; failure to use the tools of border management that are readily available is suicidally foolish. In realizing border control as definitionally facilitating the genuine and deterring the fraudulent, we again have heard indelibly that the use of the PKD as one of the tools, an important tool, but only one aspect of a properly managed border control system that will provide the means to accomplish that simple, yet far-reaching definition. This Symposium, even more strongly than any others of the past, underscored

the importance of PKD membership. Also, the message became clear that it is not enough to have 45 states as members of the PKD; only when those 45 and many others of ePassport capability USE the document can we declare success. There are over half a billion of these eDocuments in circulation and growing each day. The Symposium through several speakers, using precisely this term, strongly emphasized that the “e” of ePassport become an upper case letter in our border management vocabulary.

*Fourth*, the concepts embedded in **civil registration and vital statistics** are essential component parts of the overall TRIP strategy. However, I am singling them out as discrete considerations that deserve acknowledgement and recognition in their own right. Several speakers made clear their fundamental role in effective identity management, and thereby much of the mortar forming the foundation of trust in our document issuance programs.

Obtaining a birth certificate of another person, living or dead, is a lot easier than falsifying a passport. While the uniform application of standards and enhanced technology have dramatically improved the quality of travel documents, doing the same for evidence of identity such as breeder documents, particularly birth certificates, requires a broader and more comprehensive approach, frequently known as the social footprint. It is no longer enough for issuers to strive to produce a secure passport; we must now endeavor to determine true identity: The shift to identity fraud as the primary path of passport malevolence. The transition from where the world stands now with regard to identity management and the quality of civil registration programs must be viewed as a planned and systematic consciously sought effort over time; it cannot be done all at once. We know that bad people do bad things. However, we must ensure that every individual is afforded his or her fundamental right to a civil identity and to ensure that the information is collected accurately and reflects the existence of a unique, living human being.

*Fifth*, the concept of **Integrity/TRUST** was woven throughout the fabric of this Symposium by a number of speakers in a number of settings, some using those same words. While integrity is an umbrella factor that includes other considerations such as evidence of identity, I chose to single this out as a conceptual and conscious theme unto itself. Ranging from sound and effective initial procurement practices, through the ways in which we handle the raw materials that eventually comprise a passport book through to the ways in which we deal with human resources, storage and processing facilities, legal frameworks for breaches such as passport and identity fraud, the issue of integrity is fundamental and absolute. The heightening stakes of terrorism and the shifting face of threats such as document fraud now segueing into identity fraud engenders new and perhaps unknown methods of making mischief. Just as we have rallied ourselves to develop the world’s most secure passport, so must we now gird to make certain that the systems on which those documents rely for their credibility are equally sound and effective.

**Conclusions:**

When we left the Symposium last year, the crossroads that ICAO MRTD had been facing were still laden with uncertainties, land mines of indeterminate origin and daunting pitfalls. The work of the MRTD program was respectfully applauded and its human impact was acknowledged as relevant to the overall work of ICAO as an institution, as the concept of TRIP began to take form and meaning. However, still lingering was the lack of clarity and organizational respect in how this program "really" fit into the civil aviation safety and security fabric around which the organization is woven. The murky slippery slopes of that crossroads have been navigated and the amorphous choices of that crossroads have been confronted and ambiguity no longer beckons. With the 38th Assembly adoption of the ICAO TRIP strategy forming a corner stone of last year's Symposium the groundwork has been laid such that this year's Symposium can look toward the demands and opportunities we now must face in fulfilling the promise of TRIP. With ICAO as the catalyst to bring together the multidimensional efforts of States and the many international, regional and industry partners, we now have that framework and we are beginning to reap the respect that these functions deserve. Ambitious yet feasible global solution initiatives such as ABC can now confidently rely on ICAO TRIP for the solid worldwide foundation on which to flourish. I don't think we have left a previous Symposium where the challenges of the global future were as daunting, nor did the future look as bright and as exciting as it does today. I thank all of you for your time and attention throughout the Symposium and I look forward to our collective next steps.