
PKD Board Annual Report 2024**PKD Board Discussion Paper**

Forwarded by: 2024 Chairperson

Reference Document(s): B-Pub/73 - PKD Board Annual Report 2023 dated 05.02.2024

BACKGROUND

The MoU, Attachment C, paragraph 1.2 states the following:

"1.2 The PKD Board is the standing body responsible for the ICAO PKD. Its duties will include:

...

j) submit to the Participants an Annual Report on its activities and other relevant issues in the preceding year on or before 31 October;"

PURPOSE

This Discussion Paper is intended to fulfil the MoU requirement.

URGENCY

This report should be considered by the Board through written procedure in order to allow for publication on the ICAO public website in a timely manner.

PROPOSAL**PKD Board Annual Report 2024****Purpose**

Based on, and in continuation of the previous PKD Board Annual Reports, the present Annual Report gives an overview of the development of the PKD as well as important activities of the PKD Board in the year 2024.

1. PKD Organization – PKD Board, Executive Body Meetings**a) PKD Board**

The 31st meeting of the PKD Board took place in Xi'an, China on 25 and 26 September 2024. Some 70 attendees from PKD participants and International Organizations joined the meeting. A variety of organizational, technical and financial matters were discussed and decisions made regarding update of PKD services, application of user fees, extension of use to private sector entities, enhancement of capacity building efforts and their alignment with related initiatives, and finalizing of a PKD tender process for PKD services from 2026. A technical workshop was organized alongside the Board meeting on 24 September 2024 that provided an opportunity for participants to share technical insights, share information and experiences regarding organizational and administrative structures that support PKD usage nationally and learn how to obtain full and optimal benefits from PKD participation.

During the meeting, it was agreed that Mr. Cor de Jonge (Netherlands) would be the 2025 PKD Board Chairperson and that Mr. Justin Rowlands (New Zealand) would be the 2025 PKD Board Vice-Chairperson.

Representatives of China, Bermuda (United Kingdom), the Netherlands, Spain and the United Kingdom were elected by acclamation and nominated by the Board to occupy the five vacancies arising from the ending of Board terms. The ICAO Council approved this proposal on 18 October 2024.

b) Executive Body

The group convened in Melbourne, Australia on 25-26 March 2024 and in Bangkok, Thailand on 7-9 December 2024. The meetings focused on key updates and strategic planning for the PKD programme. Discussions included system updates, the private sector use initiative, the Data Quality Coach programme, the PKD strategy post-2026, and collaboration with TRIP Working Groups. The transition to the new PKD contract and fees for 2026 were also discussed. Key decisions included selecting countries for Data Quality Coach programme coaching and finalizing preparations for the 31st PKD Board meeting, along with promoting upcoming activities.

Attendees of the 31st Board meeting elected Ms. Tori Lamb of Australia as Executive Body member for a two-year period to September 2026.

c) Contract Support Group

The Contract Support Group is steering all activities related to the procurement of a new PKD service from 2026 and delivery of this system, with its input being considered by the PKD Executive Body ahead of approvals by the Board. Following publication of a call for tender in Request for Proposals for a new PKD system December 2023, the Group gathered in Montreal for the technical evaluation of the submitted applications on 6-10 May 2024. The Group was joined at appropriate times by the ICAO Procurement team and management and advised the ICAO Technical and Evaluation Committees in their deliberations, providing for completion of the technical and financial evaluations at this time.

The group continued to monitor and support ICAO's finalization of the appropriate contractual texts ahead of an anticipated signature of the contract by the favoured bidder in early 2025.

PKD Administration

a) Membership Fees

The fees for 2024 were approved by the PKD Board to consist of an ICAO fee of US\$ 6,595.00 and an operator fee of US\$ 14,200.00, thus totaling US\$ 20,795.00 (compared to US\$ 23,745.44 in 2023). The annual fee decreased in 2024 relative to previous years based on cost sharing amongst an increased number of members compared to previously. As per the PKD operational contract signed in April 2016, the PKD operator fee decreases as the number of PKD participants increases and such participants become active. The ICAO fee also decreased compared to previous years as the cost decreases associated with PKD participation growth outweighed cost increases associated with new services and inflation.

70 Participants	USD 19 250
75 Participants	USD 18 000
80 Participants	USD 16 850
85 Participants	USD 15 850
90 Participants	USD 14 950
95 Participants	USD 14 200

Table 1. Operator fees for the ICAO PKD system relative to the number of active PKD participants

b) Participation

In the course of 2024, seven new PKD Participants were welcomed. Specifically, Yemen, Southern African Development Community (SADC), Chile, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Albania, Ethiopia and Angola joined the PKD.

Together with Australia, New Zealand, the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Japan, Singapore, Germany, Republic of Korea, France, China, Kazakhstan, India, Nigeria, Switzerland, Ukraine, Latvia, the Czech Republic, Macao/China, the United Arab Emirates, Hong Kong/China, Slovakia, the Netherlands, Morocco, Austria, Hungary, Norway, Bulgaria, Luxembourg, Sweden, United Nations, Spain, the Russian Federation, Malaysia, Argentina, Thailand, Ireland, Moldova, Belgium, Brazil, Qatar, Seychelles, Uzbekistan, Philippines, Iran, Colombia, Romania, Finland, Benin, Botswana, Kuwait, Georgia, Turkey, Iceland, Oman, Turkmenistan, Peru, Barbados, Panama, the European Union, Mali, Cote d'Ivoire, Serbia, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Egypt, Indonesia, Italy, the United Republic of Tanzania, Uganda, Bangladesh, Togo, Ecuador, Rwanda, Sudan, Lesotho, Mexico, Ghana, Nepal, Viet Nam, Mongolia, Cameroon, Zimbabwe, Belize, Vanuatu, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kenya, Iraq, Costa Rica, Jamaica, Namibia and Bermuda (United Kingdom), there were 101 PKD Participants at the end of 2024.

2. Technology, System Maintenance and Evolution

The PKD system remained stable in operation throughout 2024. No instances of unplanned downtime were noted throughout the year. Services to participants were maintained with 100% availability. The annual audit undertaken in December 2024 confirmed full functionality without error.

A full maintenance update across all 3 PKD sites was successfully completed in September 2024.

a) ICAO CSCA Master List

The ICAO CSCA Master List, first published in March 2020, continued to grow through 2024. Seventeen key import ceremonies were completed in 2024, nine of which involved in-person deposit by a representative in Montreal. The Master List available online and through the ICAO PKD at the end of 2024 contained 450 certificates from 83 different document-issuing entities.

b) ICAO Health Master List

The ICAO Health Master List, first made available on the ICAO PKD website in January 2022, provides the public key certificates required for electronic verification of digital health proofs (i.e. digital certificates of vaccination, testing and/or recovery) presented during travel. During its 29th meeting (October 2022), the PKD Board agreed that the Health Master List should be maintained and offered free of charge to all as a Global Public Good and as a measure that can better assure aviation's resilience to future health-related challenges such as communicable disease outbreaks.

The Health Master List is made available based on an innovative partnership with a Luxembourg State Agency that provides the hardware, infrastructure and software for ICAO's maintenance of the Health Master List. The Agency has agreed to continue supporting the service, as requested by the Board, until the service is integrated into the new PKD service from 2026.

While no new certificates are being added, the list continues to be made available online and was re-issued at intervals through 2024. Updated CRLs are made available through the ICAO PKD website.

c) Private sector use of PKD data

The pilot on private use of PKD data, launched in May 2021, continued through 2024. Seven new companies joined the pilot during 2024, meaning that a total of forty-eight were participating as of December 2024. All participants have authorization to use data from the PKD – the master lists and data obtained from the public download site – within their own solutions, products and projects, subject to certain limitations included in the authorization agreement that they have concluded pertaining to matters such as use cases and service offerings to states. The agreements absolve them of the requirement to comply with the commercial use clauses of the Terms and Conditions published on the download pages.

Preparations for the rollout of a full private sector use programme to replace the pilot initiative continued in earnest through 2024, following the agreement of the Board to move towards such a goal. The necessary legal agreements were consulted internally within ICAO and with the PKD Board, while the Board also considered financial and organizational matters related to the intended future programme. ICAO Council was set to be briefed on this work and future plans at a briefing to be held in February 2025.

Free-of-charge pilot participation continues to be offered until such time as a permanent programme is launched and companies continue to enrol in the pilot. Where feasible, the Secretariat provides some straightforward guidance and support to the users.

f) PKD Usage

The contents of the PKD continuously grow as participants continue to upload their relevant data. Table 2 shows PKD contents in the final three months of 2024.

	Certificates	CRLs	CSCA Master Lists
October 2024	25,581	67	51
November 2024	25,975	68	55
December 2024	27,895	68	55

Table 2. Contents of the PKD repository at the end of 2024

g) Capacity Building

The PKD Board hosted a PKD workshop alongside its meeting in Xi'an, China. The workshop took place on 24 September 2024 and brought together the community of PKD participants attending the associated Board meeting. Presentations by experienced PKD participants and the ICAO Secretariat were interspersed with discussion sessions to facilitate information and insight sharing and exploration of topics of interest to all. The event focused on using the PKD to combat document fraud and enhance border control. Topics included trends in document fraud, detecting fraudulent applications and integrating PKD into national border control systems. The verification of ICAO Digital Travel Credentials (DTC) and documents beyond ePassports, such as barcodes and eID cards, was also discussed. Additionally, the event addressed building resilience for future developments in document issuance and border management, and the strategic use of the PKD. Participants learned about accessing support through the PKD website and secure portal, followed by coaching and mentoring sessions.

A workshop targeting the African region and seeking to cater for French-speaking PKD participants was held in Yaounde, Cameroon on 29 and 30 October 2024. Speakers from across the region spoke about their work and raised some frequently encountered challenges, while ICAO PKD community experts responded by sharing information and insights and proposing some means for cooperative efforts to address such challenges in later sessions. Topics considered included building of national PKDs, data quality and conformance, use of the PKD in the context of passport issuance and border control and inter-State cooperation in Africa to enhance border management including through use of the ICAO PKD.

The PKD Executive Body meeting that took place in Bangkok, Thailand in December 2024 was convened alongside a meeting of the Implementation and Capacity Building Working Group (ICBWG) of the ICAO TRIP programme. The co-location of meetings provided an opportunity for discussions on cross-group cooperation, including in dedicated bilateral discussions. The groups agreed to work more closely together moving forward on topics including certificate conformance and capacity building in the area of PKD while retaining an on-going dialogue to contribute to each other's materials and outreach efforts.

In 2024, the ICAO PKD Data Quality Coach programme made notable progress, including a new partnership with Cameroon and continued efforts to engage other States including Nigeria and Sudan. The Secretariat actively liaised with interested countries and maintained a database of coaches. The programme's value was reinforced through research undertaken by Australia and Canada with a view to improving the programme that is continuing into 2025.

Additional work has been completed to update capacity building materials. An updated PKD website FAQ was published. An informative brochure was prepared as a dedicated resource for sharing in the context of the 2024 ICAO Year of Facilitation outreach.

3. Promotional activities

The PKD Secretariat maintained strong communication between ICAO Headquarters and Regional Offices, facilitating the promotion of the PKD. Presentations were delivered at meetings of Regional Security and Facilitation groups in Asia-Pacific, Middle East, Europe-North Atlantic and South America, and a dedicated presentation was made at the 9th Africa Indian Ocean Aviation Forum in July 2024. The Secretariat also engaged with resident and visiting delegations throughout the year.

The PKD also gained attention at international events, including the TRIP Regional Seminar in Almaty, Kazakhstan, the ICAO Global Facilitation Forum in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, the ICAO Innovation Fair in Montreal, Canada, Identity Week 2024 in Amsterdam, Netherlands, the ICAO Facilitation Global Forum in Bogotá, Colombia and the TRIP Symposium in Montreal, Canada.

In February 2024, the Secretariat briefed the ICAO Council on the Year of Facilitation, highlighting the PKD's development and encouraging non-participating States to join. An Information Paper on PKD developments was tabled at the 13th Meeting of the ICAO Facilitation Panel that took place in February 2024, emphasizing the system's stability and introducing new services such as the ICAO Master List. Updates on PKD-related matters continued at the TRIP programme's Implementation and Capacity Building Working Group meetings.

The Secretariat has been actively engaging with potential PKD participants through virtual calls, explaining how to join and the benefits of participation. A State Letter was sent to 77 ICAO Member States in July 2024, encouraging those issuing eMRTDs but not yet part of the PKD to join. Responses received regarding challenges for some in participating in the programme are being actively considered by the Board for future work.

Social media activity continued to highlight PKD milestones, including key import ceremonies and governance meetings, particularly through ICAO's LinkedIn and Facebook profiles. An article was published in Passenger Terminal World magazine, meanwhile, discussing ICAO's role in seamless travel and the importance of the PKD as a trust foundation.

A two-sided PKD leaflet was produced as part of the Year of Facilitation initiative, distributed at key events including the ICAO Global Facilitation Summit in May 2024. Quarterly newsletters on the Year of Facilitation were shared with a variety of stakeholders in the domain, with PKD-related information and updates being provided in all issues.

Conclusion

The ICAO Public Key Directory program has enjoyed another successful year in 2024. The community continues to grow, novel initiatives such as the private sector use pilot and Data Quality Coach initiative are allowing innovative exploration of future developmental possibilities.

The Chairperson would like to acknowledge all the work provided by the entire PKD community and the many experts and stakeholders with whom the community interacts

for their positive contributions and proactive engagements to support continued growth of the PKD program.

The Chairperson and the Board look forward to continued enhancement of service provided to participants through the PKD and further enlargement of an active PKD community in the coming years.

Mr. Cor de Jonge
2024 Chairperson
(on behalf of the ICAO PKD Board)

June 2025
