



# SIMPLIFYING PASSENGER TRAVEL (SPT)

## EXECUTIVE BRIEF

### OBJECTIVE

Cut passenger-processing times; improve security and border controls; reduce barriers to travel; make optimal use of staff and facilities.

### THE PROBLEM

Check-in, security and border clearance processes for international passengers are inefficient. Basically unchanged for decades, these tasks result in high staff costs and cumbersome procedures that discourage travel and hinder effective screening. Unless the situation is addressed, growth in travel will be severely limited, borders will become increasingly difficult to control, and vulnerabilities inherent in the travel network will be exploited.

### THE SOLUTION

The SPT is historically unique – an active initiative by airlines, airports, governments and technology providers that has been looking at ways to solve this problem since 2000. It is proposing a “win-win” solution that combines new-generation passports, biometrics, and advanced telecommunications capabilities with the existing infrastructure to automatically authenticate a passenger’s identity worldwide. If implemented broadly the SPT concept will enable passengers to move through the system seamlessly, freeing up staff to concentrate on security threats and customer service.

Typically a passenger would use a Self-Service Kiosk (SSK) to automate check-in, security, boarding and immigration checks. At the SSK the traveler’s identity is verified against biometric information that is either securely stored in travel documents, or is housed in databases that comply with privacy laws. Simultaneous checks against government watch lists ensure that the passenger is either processed expeditiously or referred for follow up by the appropriate authority.

### SPT BENEFITS

- Friendlier, quicker travel experience for passengers
- Enhanced security
- Stronger border controls
- Better use of facilities and staff
- Lower costs

### RESULTS TO DATE

Key technical components such as SSKs, passport readers, and data networks are already in place. New international standards for passports have been adopted, and biometric technologies are coming into widespread use. SPT members have conducted a series of feasibility trials and program implementations in Europe, North America, and the Asia-Pacific region. Results indicate that travelers fully support the use of the new technologies and processes that speed up check-in, security, and border clearance. These first stages of introducing SPT into mainstream operations are being closely tracked to ensure that the benefits are achievable and costs are clearly identified.

### NEXT STEPS

- Expand existing programs to cover large numbers of travelers
- Expand the breadth of trials to cover all passenger processes
- Ensure that privacy issues are fully addressed

When SPT is fully implemented, the entire community – airlines, passengers, airports and governments – will benefit from a convergence of vision, technology and co-operation that would bring changes and benefits on a scale that has not been seen since Global Distribution Systems (GDS) were introduced decades ago.