ACI EUROPE POSITION on THE USE OF AUTOMATED MEANS FOR BORDER CONTROL AT EUROPEAN AIRPORTS

June 2009

ACI Europe Position – Executive Summary

ACI EUROPE member airports strongly believe that the use of automated means for border control and the standardization of border management processes throughout the European Union is essential for ensuring a secure yet enjoyable travel to both EU and third country originating passengers.

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ACI recommends that European, national authorities and airport operators work in close cooperation in order to develop efficient and intelligence-driven processes for border control aimed at promoting a single EU Border Control standard that will reduce security risks while successfully managing the passenger flow.

These processes shall be automated and be based upon the use of an internationally standardised globally interoperable biometric(s) embedded in Machine Readable Travel Documents (MRTDs) and on standardised formats of biometric data.

At an operational level, the system or systems chosen should allow the largest possible number of passengers to benefit upon simplified border control.

Therefore, the system(s) to be deployed at our member airports shall:

- **efficiently manage the passenger flow** in our airports by simplifying the border control processes while ensuring that high security standards are met;

- **ensure system interoperability** and **promote** the highest possible level of **operational harmonisation** within the European Union, and

- make use of **publicly financed solutions** in order to secure a sufficient level of coordinated deployment within the airports.

Use of a harmonised approach, focus on the passenger

1. ACI EUROPE recognises the benefits for the European Union, third party government authorities and airports, of adopting a common acceptable standard for border management.

2. ACI EUROPE calls for a harmonised approach, building upon internationally recognized ICAO/ISO standards, and making use of the recommendations of the Simplifying Passenger Travel Program (SPT) to focus on the passengers, facilitating their travel, while ensuring the deployment of very efficient automated border control solutions.

3. In order to promote the efficient functioning of such automated solutions, ACI EUROPE encourages governments and member airports to support the use of a universally adaptable and recognisable standard for biometric passports based on integrated RFID chips and machine-readable travel documents (MRTDs).

The use of Biometrics for automated border control solutions

4. ACI EUROPE fully recognises the operational benefits of a biometrically enabled automated border control solution, developed in accordance with the recommendations set by ICAO, to improve the passenger processing time in our airports and therefore enhance the quality of their travel experience.

System interoperability

5. The design and coordinated deployment of fully interoperable, automated border control systems will benefit not only to the public authorities, airport operators and carriers, but also, and most importantly, to the air travelling public. A proliferation of non-interoperable automated border control systems would very much diminish the possibilities of creating a common border control interface throughout the European Union, and extend it later to non EU countries.

Border Control Management

6. ACI EUROPE calls on European Union Member States, in full compliance with data protection regulations, to register travellers and allow them to self-process through automated border control machines that can read a variety of electronic travel documents while controlling their registered biometric data. ACI EUROPE is of the view that this approach will enable government authorities and airport operators to process a greater number of travellers within the existing limited airport space without compromising standards of security, border protection and facilitation.

7. ACI EUROPE encourages border control authorities to ensure that the processes for border controls include the use of biometric-based travel documents and automated border control equipment. These must be designed from the end-users perspective and in such a way as to ensure a hassle free use. Automated border control systems should require limited instructions and be simple to operate. In order to further facilitate the user, a universally recognisable symbol depicting an automated border control point shall be concurrently established.

Public Financing

8. ACI EUROPE takes the view that the border control is, fundamentally, a national security and immigration issue and, therefore, calls for public funding of the costs needed in order to adapt the infrastructure at our member airports and render it apt for the use of automated border control solutions.

9. Furthermore, ACI strongly believes that this approach will reduce future operating costs, and at the same time enable control authorities and airport operators to better evaluate potential risks in a coordinated way while facilitating a rapid and efficient clearance process of passengers through international gateways.

Brussels, June 2009

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ACI EUROPE is the European region of Airports Council International, the only worldwide professional association of airport operators. ACI EUROPE represents over 400 airports in 46 European countries. Member airports handle 90% of commercial air traffic in Europe, welcoming nearly 1.5 billion passengers each year.