



Government, Public Interest Panel Discusses Increased Role of Smart Card, Biometric Identification in Government Security Policy

WASHINGTON, DC, September 15, 2005 – This week Axalto took part in a Washington, D.C. event hosted by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) on the topic, “Smart Cards and Biometric Identification.” A distinguished panel of government, public interest and technology influentials presented their views on how to strengthen identity credentials to prevent counterfeiting, forgeries and ID theft – a matter at the core of the Real ID Act and related legislation.

Neville Pattinson, director of technology and government affairs for Texas-based Axalto, was joined at the event by moderator James Lewis from the CSIS, Congressman Tom Davis (R-VA), who provided the keynote address; Richard Clarke, former national coordinator for security and counterterrorism; Robert Atkinson of the Progressive Policy Institute; Mike Butler of the Department of Defense; Nancy Libin for the Center for Democracy and Technology and Paul Rosenzweig of the Heritage Foundation.

In his remarks former security advisor Richard Clark said, “If we start looking at the important things in the 9/11 Commission recommendations, one of them is certainly using the driver’s licensing system to add to security and making that system more secure. In my view, making driver’s licenses smart cards would certainly go a long way to achieving that goal if, and this is the important if, we get the credentialing verification step right.”

Axalto’s Pattinson agreed. “As the federal government sets standards for identification, such as driver’s licenses in the Real ID Act, they should look to smart card technology,” Pattinson said to the gathering of leading government executives and CIOs. “Bringing this technology to credentials will virtually eliminate risks to security and privacy.”

The Real ID Act will, in part, provide federal guidelines for making state government issued ID cards machine readable and interoperable across the whole country. The rationale for the bill is twofold: to make it more difficult for terrorists and undocumented immigrants to obtain government issued identification documents and to make it much harder for anyone to forge government issued identification documents and use them for criminal purposes.

Pattinson explained to attendees that identification credentials with smart card and biometric technology, e-IDs, make the ability to forge “exponentially harder.” A machine can rapidly authenticate the document electronically, eliminating the dependence of people to spot falsified documents. If biometrics is used, Pattinson said, the bearer’s identity can be verified quickly and tied to the bearer presenting the ID. E-IDs also expand the world of e-commerce because they can be used online.

Axalto, the world leader in microprocessor-based smart cards, has already sold more than 5.7 million Common Access Cards (CAC cards) to the Department of Defense (DoD) for online security, strong authentication and highly secure identity credentials. Axalto is a finalist in the running to work with the Department of State and the Government Printing Office (GPO) to produce highly secure electronic passports (“e-Passports”) using the cover sheets embedded with contactless smart card chips and antennas, increasing the security of passports with anti-counterfeiting measures and better linking of the passport to its owner.

About Axalto

Axalto (Euronext: NL0000400653 AXL) is the world's leading provider of microprocessor cards (Gartner 2005, Frost & Sullivan 2004) — the key to digital networks — and a major supplier of point-of-sale terminals. Its 4500 employees come from over 60 nationalities and serve customers in more than 100 countries, with worldwide sales exceeding 3 billion smart cards to date. The company has 25 years' experience in smart card innovation and leads its industry in security technology and open systems.

Axalto continuously creates new generations of products for use in a variety of applications in the telecommunications, finance, retail, transport, entertainment, healthcare, personal identification, information technology and public sector markets. Microprocessor cards provide convenience, security and privacy to public and private services operators, their customers and end users. For more information, visit us at

www.axalto.com

Contacts:

Axalto: Deb Montner

Montner & Associates

Tel: 203-226-9290

dmontner@montner.com