Electronic Passport

France - 1,000,000 ePassports in just 5 months

PASSEPORT

gemalto

security to be free

Electronic Passport

France - 1,000,000 ePassports in just 5 months

> The context: US and EU deadlines

After intensive debates in 2003 and 2004, the National Commission for Informatics and Liberty (CNIL) – France's independent official data protection watchdog – gave the green light to the French electronic passport project in November 2005.

In 2006, the French government began to roll out its electronic passports in order to comply with the strict US Visa Waiver Program and European Union deadlines.

The new travel document stores the holder's facial image in a microprocessor and meets the strict standards defined by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO). The first documents off the production line were delivered throughout France in April 2006.

> The challenge: Deliver in volume in 5 weeks

On March 3, 2006, the French Ministry of Interior awarded the issuance of electronic passports to the Imprimerie Nationale (IN), the French state printer.

One month earlier, the IN gathered and led an industrial consortium of four reliable suppliers in order to catch up on accumulated delays. According to the commitment of the consortium, the time to deliver granted to the IN was extremely short (5 weeks).

It was also important to make use of existing printing equipment and human resources as there was no time for further investment.

> The solution: Teamwork, five-year durability with security in mind

Alongside a handful of French industry players, Gemalto worked in close collaboration with the IN in order to meet the tight deadline set by the Ministry of Interior for the launch of the new passports.

The result was that Gemalto now provides the IN with an inlay integrating the microprocessor into the back cover of the passport. Gemalto developed a standard paper inlay matching perfectly with the physical and mechanical properties of paper-based coversheets and the IN printing equipment. This solution has been submitted to extreme tests in order to guarantee five-year durability. The IN also adopted the Gemalto highly secure native OS (Operating System) technology with its encrypting capabilities.

Gemalto products not only passed the Standard Groups tests such as the WG3 (attached to ICAO), and the French standardization committee, AFNOR, but also the highly rigorous internal qualification tests.

Security was a major concern and challenge for the Ministry of Interior. The IN selected Gemalto because of its in-depth knowledge of secure operating systems and industrial security processes.

> The results: 1,000,000 ePassports in just 5 months

Thanks to the strong working relationship between Gemalto, the other members of the consortium and the IN, the deadline was successfully met and the IN was able to roll out its first passports on April 13, 2006. These were issued using Gemalto technology with its highly secure operating system and encryption algorithms that work inside a contactless microprocessor incorporated into the passport's cover.

The roll out is now a steady 200,000 to 300,000 passports per month, probably one of the most important projects worldwide.

At the end of September 2006, more than one million electronic passports were issued successfully within the record time frame of 5 months: a world first for the industry.

The Imprimerie Nationale and Gemalto are aiming to issue 2,000,000 passports this year.

> **This new electronic passport means that French citizens may now enjoy greater security, privacy and visa-free travel to the USA.**

Gemalto, a world leader in digital security

gemalto
security to be free