



Electronic Passport

August 15, 2006 - the first ePassports for Singapore

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> Singapore means innovation

Singapore, with 693 km² and a population of 4.4 million inhabitants, is well known as a country of innovation and business. Singaporeans enjoy a strong economy and travel widely. There are over 2.8 million Singapore passports in circulation.

Singapore's immigration authority is one of the first immigration authorities in the world to implement a biometric system for secure immigration clearance at checkpoints. As part of their security efforts to enhance the integrity and security of the Singapore passport, as well as being one of the member countries of the US Visa Waiver Program, Singapore's Immigration & Checkpoints Authority launched the Singapore Biometric Passport Project. A tender was called on 5 November 2004.

> Effective and fast implementation

Singapore's Immigration & Checkpoints Authority was seeking a cost effective and highly secure global solution that would reliably and effectively integrate the highest standards, protect its citizens against terrorist entry and combat passport forgery. The project timeline was intensive as Singapore wanted to carry out extensive tests in advance of the US deadline of 26 October 2006 to ensure that the system was sufficiently robust before it went 'live'.



> Top of the line biometric passport and teamwork

The project was awarded to a consortium led by NEC solutions Asia Pacific in March 2005. The team included SNP Security Printing Pte Ltd as the local passport booklet manufacturer, NCS Pte Ltd, a local application developer and Gemalto. Singapore selected a highly secure passport with a durable polycarbonate data page. The secure document microprocessor contains biometric information of the passport holder such as facial and fingerprint details.

Gemalto's highly durable and field proven contactless chip technology was chosen to be embedded in Singapore's new biometric passport.

The Singapore biometric passport, called BioPass, carries advanced security features,

which make it extremely difficult to tamper with. Carrying the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)'s ePassport logo on its cover, the passport complies with the recommendations and requirements laid down by ICAO.

> Singaporeans get their ePassport starting August 15, 2006

Singapore adopted a careful and calibrated approach towards the BioPass project. They carried out a phased introduction of BioPass which began in April 2006, where certain groups of individuals were among the first to carry the BioPass. As Phase 1 had proceeded smoothly, Singapore commenced the full launch of BioPass to all Singaporeans on 15 August 2006 as scheduled.

It only takes three working days to obtain a new biometric passport and a volume of 250,000 is expected to be issued each year.

Following this, Singapore has met the requirements of the US Visa Waiver Program, which calls for countries to roll out their Biometric Passports before 26 October 2006.

Singaporean citizens will benefit from the enhanced security and convenience offered by biometric passports.

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