

International Civil Aviation Organization Public Key Directory (ICAO PKD) in the OSCE Area

Introduction

Terrorists, criminals, and traffickers use fraudulent passports to travel undetected. It has been said that “For terrorists, travel documents are as important as weapons.”¹ We have seen in recent attacks in the OSCE area that foreign terrorist fighters use altered passports, fake passports or even the travel documents of family members to travel to and from the conflict zones. The UN Security Council has repeatedly called upon States to ensure the security of identity documents to prevent the movement of terrorists.

Fraud resistant e-Passports are a useful tool in countering organized crime and terrorism, and 55 of the 57 OSCE participating States are now issuing such documents. These are considered more secure because they incorporate a passenger’s biometric information (face, fingerprint or iris scan). However, having an e-Passport is not enough. The country reading the passport needs to

DECLARATION ON THE OSCE ROLE IN COUNTERING THE PHENOMENON OF FOREIGN TERRORIST FIGHTERS

Declaration calls upon the participating States “to prevent the movement of foreign terrorist fighters through effective border controls and controls on the issuance of identity papers and travel documents, and to exchange information

MC.DEC/11/09

“It is ICAO recommended practice that States issuing or intending to issue ePassports and/or implementing automated checks on ePassports at border controls should participate in the PKD”

be able to confirm that it is authentic, by validating that the traveler’s fingerprint/face/iris matches the traveler’s passport. ICAO’s Public Key Directory allows authorities to confirm an e-Passport belongs to its holder.






What is the ICAO PKD?

For the border control authorities of a receiving State to authenticate the e-Passport of a foreign traveler, the receiving State must have access to certain information from the issuing State. The ICAO PKD provides an efficient means for States to upload their own information and download that of other States.

In more technical terms, the PKD is a repository for certificates that are part of the validation process of ePassports via Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) technology. Specifically, the validation of certificates enables border control authorities to determine whether a document held by a traveler has been issued by the responsible authority, whether biographic and biometric information on the chip has been altered after issuance as well as whether the certificates have been revoked. In sum, it is a more secure and faster identity verification process at the border control check points.





¹ The 9/11 Commission Report, <http://www.9-11commission.gov/report/911Report.pdf>

BENEFITS of ICAO PKD

-  PKD enables a simple, fast and cost-efficient way of validating ePassports
-  Multilateral data exchange is more efficient than bilateral diplomatic exchanges
-  Your citizens will be more respected at foreign border check-points
-  The possibility to falsify the document is diminished as the compromised or false chips are immediately detected
-  Citizens with e-Passports can enjoy easier border crossings

Joining the PKD is a proactive approach in fighting international terrorism and organized crime

PRACTICAL STEPS to join the ICAO PKD

-  Register with ICAO PKD (*you can find the instructions [here](#)*)
-  Review National Legislation
-  Identify key national stake-holders responsible for PKD implementation
-  Make sure that National PKD system is compatible with the ICAO PKD standards

ICAO PKD in OSCE Area

Recognizing the inseparable link between e-Passports and the ICAO PKD, OSCE participating States adopted Ministerial Council Decision [MC.DEC/11/09](#) in December 2009. The Decision encourages the participating States to consider becoming the members of the ICAO PKD “...to enable relevant national authorities to effectively validate the authenticity of electronic security features and biometric data stored in eMRTDs² as a precondition for the verification of the identity of the bearer of an eMRTD...”

In 2014 OSCE Ministerial Council agreed on a [Declaration on the OSCE Role in Countering the Phenomenon of Foreign Terrorist Fighters in the Context of the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions 2170 \(2014\) and 2178 \(2014\)](#) , which calls on the OSCE Executive Structures to “support requesting participating States in the implementation of their commitments regarding travel document security and border management and to facilitate technical assistance in this field by Interpol and other relevant international organizations to requesting participating States.”

*As a member of ICAO PKD you significantly **improve** and **contribute to global security!***

Currently the ICAO PKD has **61 member states** world-wide, of which **30 are OSCE participating States** and **5 are OSCE Partners for Co-operation**. Over half of OSCE participating States are now members of the ICAO PKD. (See Annex 1)

In the last two years 6 OSCE participating States have joined the PKD: *Romania, Finland, Georgia, Turkey, Iceland and Turkmenistan.*

²eMRTD - Electronic Machine Readable Travel Document

**The OSCE Transnational Threats
Department supports participating
States in becoming members of the PKD**

The Transnational Threats Department/Border Security and Management Unit (TNTD/BSMU) provides technical support to OSCE participating States (pS) wishing to join the ICAO PKD.

During the first phase of the project, TNTD conducted seminars and workshops in Albania, Armenia, Moldova, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Since then, Kazakhstan (in 2008), Moldova (in 2013), Uzbekistan (in 2014) and Turkmenistan (in 2017) have all joined the ICAO PKD.

The next phase of the project is more technical, practice oriented and has the regional approach to minimize the costs and maximize the number of participating States benefiting from the project. The design of the project is threefold and includes:

- a. Sub-regional workshops to develop **a road map** on Assessment and Planning for those States wishing to join the ICAO PKD. This regional workshop will provide the necessary **tools, templates and step-by-step check-lists** for joining the PKD.
- b. Country Visits **to meet with the key decision-makers** to explain the benefits of joining the ICAO PKD.
- c. Hiring a **Technical Expert** to provide **on-site, practical guidance and operational support** in developing national compatibility with the ICAO PKD.

States interested in requesting the above-mentioned workshops or providing donor support to the project should contact TNTD/BSMU for further information:

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ANNEX 1. LIST OF PKD PARTICIPANTS³ (As of June 2018)

No.	STATE	JOINING DATE
OSCE participating States		
1	UK	19/03/2007
2	Canada	19/03/2007
3	Germany	01/11/2007
4	US	02/11/2007
5	France	19/06/2008
6	Republic of Kazakhstan	19/12/2008
7	Switzerland	10/07/2009
8	Ukraine	30/10/2009
9	Latvia	28/06/2010
10	The Czech Republic	30/06/2010
11	Slovak Republic	23/11/2010
12	The Netherlands	08/12/2010
13	Austria	31/12/2010
14	Hungary	15/02/2011
15	Norway	20/06/2011
16	Bulgaria	12/10/2011
17	Luxembourg	30/11/2011
18	Sweden	01/12/2011
19	Spain	10/07/2012
20	Russian Federation	31/08/2012
21	Republic of Moldova	11/06/2013
22	Ireland	08/03/2013
23	Belgium	31/10/2013
24	Uzbekistan	19/03/2014
25	Romania	03/02/2016
26	Finland	26/02/2016
27	Georgia	25/05/2016
28	Iceland	30/09/2016
29	Turkey	30/09/2016
30	Turkmenistan	13/02/2017
OSCE Partners for Co-operation		
1	Australia	19/03/2007
2	Japan	19/03/2007
3	Republic of Korea	28/03/2008
4	Kingdom of Morocco	29/12/2010
5	Thailand	05/03/2013

ANNEX 2. Infographics: “Passport to Security”

³ You can access the complete list here: <https://www.icao.int/Security/FAL/PKD/Pages/ICAO-PKDParticipants.aspx>