
ADVANCE PASSENGER CLEARANCE IS POPULAR



The one millionth Qantas passenger to use the Advance Passenger Clearance system, Mr Summit Chan, from Hong Kong, presents his passport at Sydney Airport on 17 September 1997. Mr Chan was met by Customs, Immigration and Qantas managers and presented with a small gift to mark his arrival.

The APC system was jointly developed by Customs, the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs and Qantas. It allows passenger information to be passed between airline check-in counters in

designated countries and the Department of Immigration in Australia.

APC passengers carry a card like a boarding pass and use express lanes on arrival. Their cards are swiped through a document reader, further reducing the time taken for entry formalities.

More than 16 per cent of passengers arriving in Australia are using APC cards. Ansett Australia joined the system in 1996.

APEC TARIFF DATABASE SPEEDS TRADE

A new database covering the tariffs of the 18 APEC countries available on the Internet is playing a significant role in facilitating international trade.

And it is free and easy to use.

The APEC Tariff Database, was launched at the APEC Trade Ministers' Meeting and Customs-Industry Symposium in Montreal, Canada, in May this year.

The Australian Customs Service played a key role in developing the database, chairing a taskforce established in 1993 to report to the APEC Committee on Trade and Investment, and negotiating the legal agreements that allowed publication on the Internet.

A pilot CD-ROM version produced in 1995, created such a favourable response from importers, exporters and brokers, that all countries agreed to proceed to an Internet version.

A key recommendation of the taskforce was that the Internet operation should be handled by private enterprise. Subsequently, a proposal from the United States firm Federal Express Corporation was accepted and FedEx demonstrated a prototype to APEC ministers in Manila, The Philippines, in November 1996.

The database has sophisticated search and comparison features, is much cheaper, quicker and much more up to date than printed tariff manuals.

The database could be expanded to include information such as trade statistics and non-tariff trade regulations.

APEC Tariff Database: www.apectariff.org