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ACI EUROPE TASK FORCE ON BORDER CONTROL AND RT PROGRAMMES

THE ACI EUROPE TASK FORCE ON BORDER CONTROL AND REGISTERED TRAVELLER PROGRAMMES WAS LAUNCHED ON 21 APRIL. NANNE ONLAND, DIRECTOR, DARTAGNAN, IS LEADING THE TASK FORCE ON BEHALF OF SCHIPHOL GROUP. HE TOLD **ROSS FALCONER** WHAT IS ON THE AGENDA.

The key strategic objectives of the task force are to enhance security and facilitate travel for EU and third country nationals through truly integrated border management. The ACI EUROPE task force will show the way in the implementation of modern processes at airports, airlines and authorities level and seek harmonisation of these processes across Europe.

On the initial agenda is development and approval of an ACI EUROPE position paper to be sent to the European Commission (Directorate General of Justice, Liberties and Security) and local authorities, with a focus on registered traveller programmes and border control. The task force will promote a risk-based approach to facilitate flows and reduce costs through expedited clearance facilities (automated border passage), biometric identifiers, premium membership benefits within RT programmes, and interoperability between RT programmes at EU airports and standardisation of common application and enrolment procedures.

"Border management is directly linked to passenger facilitation. Optimising processes will enhance the customer experience and help airports overcome additional security measures and longer waiting times and also eventually increase non-aeronautical revenues," said Onland.

The proposal for the task force was brought forward at the recent ACI EUROPE Facilitation Committee Meeting in Helsinki. While all airports have their own experiences with the subject and dealings with their authorities, all agreed that a harmonised approach for EU airports was desirable. "The creation of one level playing field and a uniform approach towards travellers making use of EU airports were seen as important reasons to start with a task force. The fact that no EU regulation is in effect yet on the matter, presents EU airports with an opportunity to lead the way with respect to best practise implementations. This is a more desirable situation than to convince



EU regulators that their regulations have to be changed," said Onland.

FACILITATING FRIENDLY FLOWS

The first meeting of the task force will take place in June and Onland hopes to welcome at least 10 actively participating EU airports. There will be an initial two meetings this year and meetings will take place as often as required or requested by members.

"RT programmes present aviation stakeholders with a great opportunity to work together. By facilitating friendly (i.e. known) flows, border authorities can redirect resource to risk (i.e. unknown) flows. Airports and airlines can simplify passenger travel for registered travellers and add comfort and convenience to the travel experience," said Onland. Airports, he explained, have a crucial role to play in providing the necessary 'common-use' infrastructure for RT programmes and, depending on local circumstances, operate these programmes in public and private partnerships with government authorities and airlines.

"For those travellers prepared to voluntarily undertake upfront security screening, RT programmes can ease the journey experience. In exchange for permitting detailed – one-off

– background checks in advance, so called Registered Travelers can make use of expedited clearance facilities for border passage and/or security making use of biometric identifiers as well as enjoying other premium membership benefits included within a service programme," said Onland.

RT programmes are seen as a first step in this change process that can offer immediate benefits to improve the passenger process and experience. "They can be a win-win situation for all stakeholders involved, combining security, convenience and efficiency business drivers all in one programme as well as being an important 'proving-ground' for future mass automated traveller processing," said Onland.

What more needs to be done to make RT programmes more prevalent? According to Onland, the international traveller has to embrace the full benefits. This will only happen, he said, when there is interoperability between RT programmes at EU airports and standardisation of common application and enrolment procedures. "The notion of one application and enrolment procedure in combination with fast lane facilities for border control and security at all participating airports appeals to people in our opinion," said Onland.