

Bali Process Workshop: *Enabling Electronic Authentication of Travel Document Information* – 20-22 August 2007.

Speech delivered by Department of Labour Deputy Secretary for Workforce Mary Anne Thompson.

- Welcome to the third Bali Process Lost and Stolen Passport Information Sharing Workshops
- I would extend a particular welcome to those who have travelled here to present at this workshop
- As you all know, the objective of this workshop is emerging border security systems around the authentication of travel documents – an increasingly significant area for all countries and border agencies represented here today
- Over recent years, we have seen significant changes in the way people travel – as travelling becomes more accessible and certain countries become more attractive, more people are crossing our borders and the integrity of our border security, identity authentication and national passports integrity becomes paramount. A heightened threat of international terrorism, people smuggling, people trafficking and trans-national organised crime are signs of our times
- With these global changes, we are seeing an increased international focus on border security and the introduction of a range of initiatives to keep ahead of the game
- Today, I'm going to briefly reflect on the importance of domestic and regional initiatives in building on the strength of border security, and how the Bali Process workshop contributes to this picture

Domestic initiatives to boost border security:

- Faced with this new global environment and the challenges it brings, the Department of Labour is currently working through what we call the Immigration Change Programme
- This is a long-term vision for immigration consisting of a strong legislative base, a future-focused, robust policy framework, and an operational side which will transform the business of immigration from a reactive, border-focussed activity to one that proactively seeks the migrants we want, keeps out those we don't
- The legislative base – the Immigration Bill - was tabled in Parliament earlier this month. This new Act will increase New Zealand's flexibility to adapt our border security measures going forward. It will clarify and strengthen border security, tighten the law against those who pose a risk to New Zealand's well-being, and facilitate the entry of those migrants we want
- Other examples of domestic measures being carried out to increase New Zealand's border security include:
 - enhancing data sharing with other New Zealand agencies such as New Zealand passport data through the Department of Internal

Affairs, and collaborating on a fines regime with the Ministry of Justice

- eliminating duplication of activities and services at the border so border agencies are more effective and efficient at what they do - through the formation of the Border Sector Governance Group. This group has been tasked with carrying out a review of New Zealand's border and the government agencies
- ensuring a national strategy and collaboration between government agencies and the private sector to improve management of identity crime – the draft 'Secure Identities Strategy'

Regional initiatives to boost border security:

- However, it has to be stressed that domestic initiatives to strengthen border security are only one part of the puzzle. By themselves, they can only be effective to a point. Involvement in regional initiatives to strengthen not only our own border security, but those of the countries around us, is vital. Only with this sort of information-sharing and collaboration, can our border security be world-class. The Bali process, APEC and Interpol are all important mechanisms in achieving this co-operation
- Historically, New Zealand has a close relationship with many Pacific nations. One of our international obligations is to provide support where possible, and leadership where appropriate, in the Pacific
- This commitment is reflected in our involvement in a number of initiatives in the Pacific region and includes building capability in immigration processes and systems
- It also includes encouraging strong communication with and between overseas agencies involved in the Pacific to ensure the best use of resources and avoid duplication
- Some examples of regional initiatives are:
 - The Pacific Immigration Directors' Conferences provide a forum for up to 23 countries, regional organisations, and government agencies to share information and plan initiatives to strengthen border security in the Pacific
 - New Zealand shares information through the Pacific Region Immigration Identity Project (PRIPP) – to develop a regional capability and mechanism in sharing identity information
 - We take a lead role in the development of a whole-of-Government border security strategy in relation to the Pacific. The aim of this is to strengthen New Zealand's whole-of-government response to Pacific border security issues by building a framework for working with other agencies.
 - Our strong involvement in the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and initiatives such as the Regional

Movement Alert System have raised border security and facilitation standards

- And, of course, we support the development of effective regional arrangements for secure electronic sharing of information on lost, stolen and non-genuine travel documents

The Bali Process:

- The Bali Process is one of New Zealand's most important regional engagements on immigration related issues
- It plays a unique and valuable role in the region, by drawing together both source, transit and destination countries, as well as policy and operational agencies
- New Zealand is a strong supporter of the Bali Process and has taken a leadership role since its beginning - from February 2002 as the co-ordinator of Ad hoc Expert Group One, and from June 2004 as the co-ordinator for regional and international cooperation on policy issues and legal frameworks
- The obvious benefits of the Process to New Zealand include:
 - its broad regional membership of over 50 participating countries and a number of international agencies;
 - its flexibility and capacity to focus on key issues as they arise, as well as its comprehensive focus - covering prevention, protection, and prosecution issues
 - its boost to regional co-operation between Foreign Ministries, Police, Justice and Border agencies on policy, legislation, operations and enforcement issues
 - its positive impact on capacity building and sharing of information – such as on lost and stolen passport data
- New Zealand places a very high value on the cooperation and excellent working relationship that we have with all Steering Group members. *Note: New Zealand is also involved, along with Australia, Indonesia, Thailand, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), in an informal Steering Group, which meets biannually to provide direction on the Bali Process and its work programme*
- As you'll be aware, this workshop focuses on information-sharing on systems for linking and sharing information between countries and border security agencies
- I know that good things are in store for this workshop – that we are going to see an increased participation by Bali Process members in bilateral and multilateral electronic information exchange systems
- To touch on a few things we will be hearing about today:

- APEC's Regional Movement Alert System. The benefits of this system for New Zealand since its inception in March 2006 have already been significant – the system has already detected over 700 lost or stolen travel documents that could otherwise have gone undetected
- Interpol will be presenting on current systems and future direction around sharing of lost and stolen passport data. The data is currently reported to Interpol on daily basis. Increasing the linkage of this data to border security systems to identify and prevent the use of lost and stolen passports by people smugglers and traffickers
- And we will also be hearing about frameworks for working together. New Zealand already has an Arrangement with Indonesia, under which Indonesian authorities will tip off Department of Labour border staff if they find any evidence of immigration activities linked to New Zealand.

Conclusion:

- In conclusion, I'd like to take a moment to thank those who have contributed to today. None of this would have been possible without generous funding contributions from both the European Community and from our Australian counterparts which also helped to make the proposal for this workshop a reality
- I look forward to the advances that come out of the 2007 workshop and ongoing work between the countries and agencies represented here today.

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