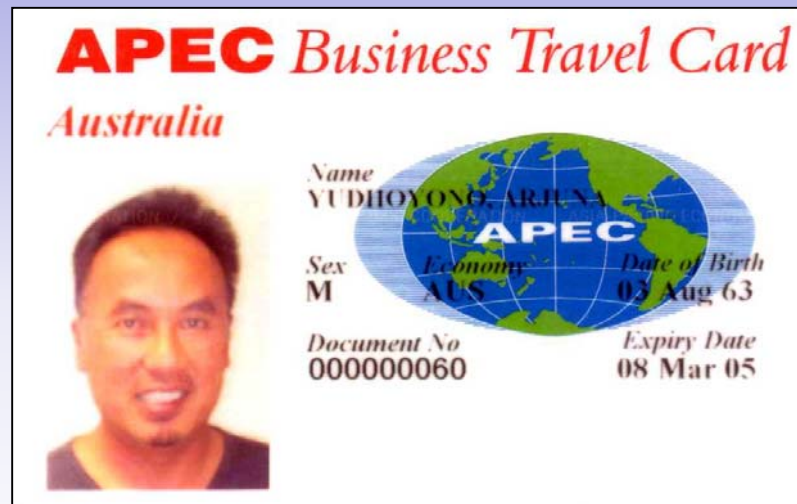


Regional Trade Facilitation

APEC BUSINESS TRAVEL CARD SCHEME



APEC Business Travel Card Scheme

- This presentation covers the following topics:
 - How the ABTC Scheme Has Grown
 - Integrity of the Scheme
 - The ABTC Scheme Today
 - ABTC Operating Framework
 - How the APEC card Scheme Works
 - Establishing In-Country Operation



How the ABTC Scheme Has Grown

- *Pathfinder* approach
 - trial in 1997 with three economies (South Korea, The Philippines and Australia).
 - Now 16 economies
 - allows economies to join when they are able
- Technical assistance given to developing economies
- Low-tech, low resource



Integrity

- All participating economies maintain the integrity of the scheme.
 - Ensure all applicants are bona fide business travellers.
- The passport remains the primary travel document
 - All ABTC holders are required to present a valid passport for immigration processing.
- The scheme is perceived by business and governments to have high integrity
 - home government checks and two documents (card and passport).

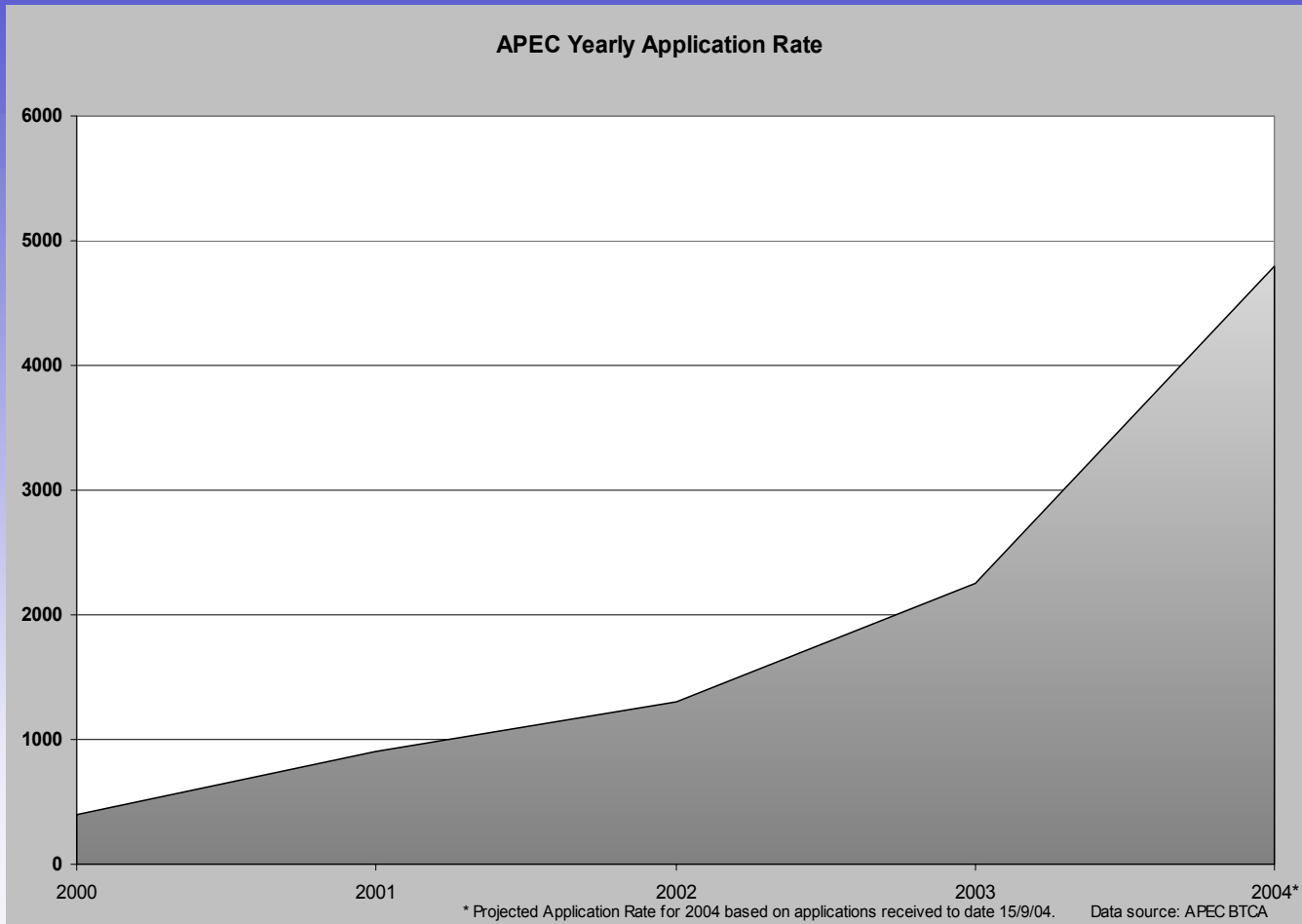


The ABTC Scheme Today

- In the past 18 months the number of participating economies has doubled (eight economies in early 2003, to 16 economies).
- The systems that support the scheme are still evolving.
 - The scheme is still based on the same software developed for the original trial of three economies in 1997.
 - Major upgrades to ABTC systems are underway.



Growth of the Scheme



ABTC Operating Framework

- The *ABTC Operating Framework* sets out the key principles and procedures of the scheme.
- All participating economies agree to abide by the *ABTC Operating Framework* on a ‘best-endeavours’ basis.
 - The *ABTC Operating Framework* is not legally binding (it does not have treaty status).
- The preservation of national sovereignty is the key principle underpinning the ABTC scheme
 - this is embodied in the *ABTC Operating Framework*



ABTC Operating Framework (cont.)

- The *Operating Framework* provides a set of principles and standards on such operational matters as:
 - card eligibility criteria
 - service standards
 - card manufacture standards (basic format of card)

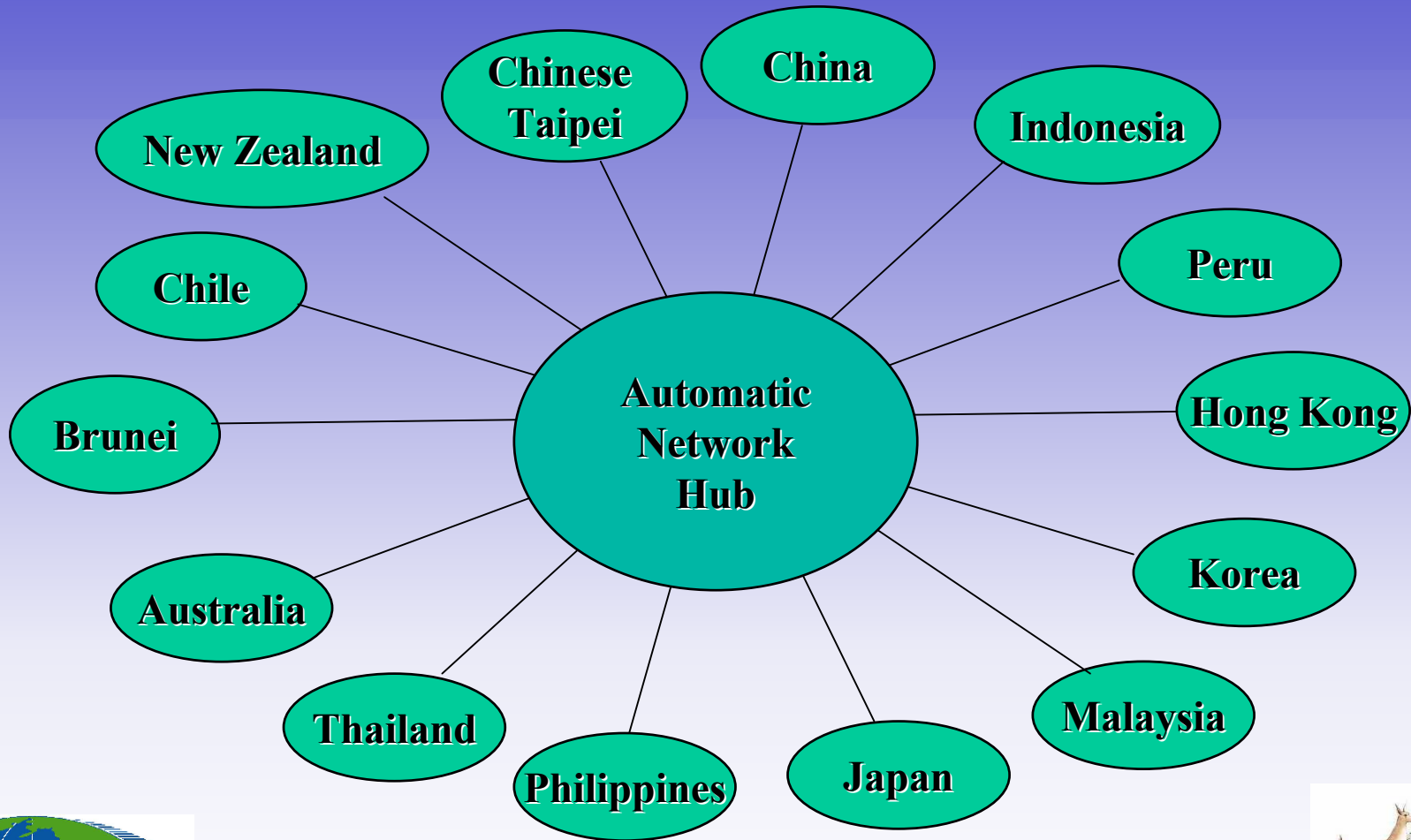


How the Scheme Works

- Economies exchange ABTC processing data via an automated computer network.
- Data exchange includes:
 - **requesting clearance**
 - **receiving clearance**
 - **requesting card production**
- Data is exchanged via a central ‘hub’ computer.
 - All data is encrypted during transfer.



ABTC Automated Network



Pre-clearance Process



- Economies retain their right to control the movement of people through their borders.
- Economies are not required to give reasons for refusing pre-clearance.
- Economies benefit from increased integrity checking by both the home economy and other participating economies.



Establishing In-Country Operation

- Decision to join
- Determine responsible agencies
- Pass required legislation
- Establish eligibility criteria
- Set fees and charges
- Develop operational procedures
- Design Application Form/Required Documentation
- Set up Hardware, Software and Staff training
- Commence operations
- Promote card



Decision to Join

- APEC economies must make a careful decision as to whether they:
 - can be an equal partner in the scheme
 - have the necessary resources to meet member expectations
 - have the necessary legislative framework



Determine the Responsible Agencies

Each economy decides which agencies, government or private, will be involved in processing ABTC applicants.

Special consideration should be given to which agencies will be:

- processing home economy applicants;
- processing pre-clearances of foreign applicants; and
- border processing.



Pass Required Legislation

- Make any necessary changes to their legislation, policy and procedures to:
 - enable cardholders to obtain pre-cleared entry and stay
 - process foreign pre-clearance requests without receiving a fee
 - accommodate the standards of the *Operating Framework*



Importance of the ABTC

- Shows that the APEC community is working co-operatively in the spirit of APEC
- Builds confidence and capacity by enhancing:
 - integrity of entry arrangements
 - transparency of entry requirements
 - legal, organisational and technical infrastructure
- Sound base to move forward on other co-operative BMG trade facilitation initiatives.



In Summary

- ABTC serves the needs of the business community, providing streamlined entry while maintaining integrity
- ABTC enhances economies' capacity to implement streamlined, efficient immigration practices
- Pathfinder approach has generated a high level of cooperation and goodwill within the BMG and APEC.
- Economies maintain sovereignty.



Further Questions

