

Electronic Passport Forum: June 2006 event an overwhelming success

With government delegates from all over the world in attendance, the third Electronic Passport Forum, the world's most comprehensive event on electronic travel documents, took place in Paris on June 8th and 9th welcoming 325 participants from 42 different nations.

Milan, June 15th, 2006 - Endorsed by the French Ministry of the Interior, the German Ministry of the Interior, and the European Commission, Wise Media's Electronic Passport Forum went live for the third time on June 8th and 9th in Paris. Once again the event proved to be the ideal platform for experts from government, border control and law enforcement, as well as technology vendors, to discuss and learn more about the key issues relating to the introduction of electronic travel documents.

Produced by Wise Media, this year's event welcomed 325 attendees hailing from 42 different nations. The presence of a significant number of government delegates from all continents underlined the international scope of the event. "For those representing nations currently introducing or considering the introduction of ePassports, national IDs and Visas, the Electronic Passport Forum has become an invaluable opportunity to learn from the practical experiences of others, to develop a greater understanding of the technologies and issues involved, as well as to network with suppliers", stated Sophie B. de la Giroday, President of Wise Media, commenting on the extraordinary convergence of interests and concerns expressed by government representatives from all over the world during the forum.

The conference speakers, over 45 in all, comprised government representatives and industry experts of the highest order. These included Philippe Melchior, General Inspector within the French Ministry of the Interior, who highlighted the increasingly important role that biometrics will continue to play in our ever-evolving society, particularly underlining the additional security that fingerprint biometrics, as opposed to merely the facial biometric mandated by ICAO, will lend to the border control procedure; Martin Schallbruch, Chief Information Officer at the German Federal Ministry of the Interior, who discussed the encouraging results of the ePassport interoperability tests carried out in Berlin the week before; Dr. Frank Paul, Head of Unit Large-scale IT systems at the European Commission, who outlined the three waves of introduction of electronic travel documents (ePassports, national IDs and Visas) and the subsequent consolidation of the systems deployed and creation of an overall ID management infrastructure; and Robert Mocny, Deputy Director, US-VISIT of the US Department of Homeland Security.

The Electronic Passport Forum was sponsored by ACG ID, Axalto, Sokymat, Thales, Feig Electronic, IBM, NADRA, Oberthur Card Systems, and Philips.

The valuable discussions that took place in Paris will continue at the next Electronic Passport Forum, which opens its doors again at the ID WORLD International Congress, the annual world summit on automatic identification, in Milan on November 28-30, 2006, (www.idworldonline.com).

The Electronic Passport Forum is a vertical event of the ID WORLD International Congress, focusing on the evolution of government-driven citizen ID programs. After the success of the events in Berlin (May 2005), Rome (November 2005) and Paris (June 2006), the fourth Electronic Passport Forum will take place with a two-day conference program at ID WORLD 2006 in Milan on November 28th to 29th.

www.electronic-passport.com

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