



DATA EXCHANGE SOLUTION FOR COUNTER-SMUGGLING (DESC) INITIATIVE

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC



Established in 2012, the Data Exchange Solution for Counter-Smuggling (DESC) is coordinated by IOM's Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific in Bangkok, Thailand and works in close coordination with document examination experts of immigration authorities across the Asia and Pacific region. Since 2024, DESC is a global IOM flagship initiative with global presence.

OUR OBJECTIVE

“ Assist requesting Governments in countering transnational organized crime and curbing irregular migration through capacity development to support law enforcement agencies in travel document examination and identity verification. ”

DESC ACTIVITIES

1. TECHNICAL EXPERTISE AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT FOR TRAVEL DOCUMENT EXAMINATION AND IDENTITY VERIFICATION

The Data Exchange Solution for Counter-Smuggling (DESC) provides resources and support to immigration and other law enforcement officials in the Asia-Pacific region when conducting secondary inspection at border crossing points.



TECHNICAL EXPERTISE ON TRAVEL DOCUMENT EXAMINATION AND IDENTITY VERIFICATION

IOM develops resources and Standard Operating Procedures to facilitate travel document examination and identity verification focusing on intra-service cooperation at front and second line control.



CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT ON PASSPORT EXAMINATION PROCEDURES

IOM provides tailored basic, advanced, and specialized trainings and on-site job mentoring for immigration agencies of requesting participating Members.



TRAINING ON DATA COLLECTION, MANAGEMENT, INTELLIGENCE, RISK ANALYSIS AND PERSONAL DATA PROTECTION

IOM delivers tailored training on data collection, management, intelligence, risk analysis and personal data protection at the request of participating Members. The training is intended to support the dissemination of best practices in data collection and information management.



TRAINING ON RIGHTS AND GENDER-BASED APPROACHES TO BORDER MANAGEMENT

IOM delivers tailored training on rights-based approaches to border management at the request of participating Members, to equip border officials with best practices that align with international standards as it relates to gender equality.

2. IN-HOUSE DEVELOPMENT OF VERIFIER TD&B, INSTALLATION, TROUBLESHOOTING, AND MAINTENANCE

The Verifier Travel Document and Bearer (TD&B) secondary inspection system assists immigration and border control officers in the detection of fraudulent travel documents and identities at border control points. The system also has the capacity to generate a PDF report on Verifier TD&B scan results and imposter recognition checklist, which can be used according to each immigration agency's procedures and regulations.

Verifier TD&B is interoperable with INTERPOL's Stolen and Lost Travel Documents (SLTD) database and further interoperability and system-to-system interactions can be developed to ease cross-check of available national and international databases. At locations implementing interoperability, when a travel document is checked with Verifier TD&B, the system will automatically check the document against the SLTD database. The results will support border and other law enforcement officials in carrying out investigations. It further enhances cooperation nationally and internationally to better address transnational and cross-jurisdictional crimes involving fraudulent travel documents and false identities.



SYSTEM MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT

The in-house software developer maintains and upgrades the software according to the needs of the participating Member countries.



INSTALLATION AND CAPACITY-BUILDING

IOM stands ready to assist with the installation of Verifier TD&B at border crossing points, deliver trainings, and develop tailored Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) as requested by participating Member countries.

3. DATA MANAGEMENT AND REGIONAL TRENDS ANALYSIS

The Verifier TD&B system was developed to collect non-sensitive data on sex, age, and travel document used in fraud and imposter cases as well as information on the travel route (country of origin, country and BCP of interception and country of intended destination). The immigration focal point shares quarterly data summaries and specific cases of interest with IOM. Facilitating high-quality data collection and analysis enables DESC to provide timely and accurate trends analysis of document and identity fraud and emerging modus operandi of transnational organized crime in the Asia and Pacific region.



VERIFIER TD&B NEWSLETTER & ONLINE E-DASHBOARDS

IOM compiles and distributes a quarterly Verifier TD&B Newsletter to provide more detailed information on intercepted cases and showcase patterns of intercepted fraud cases in the region. An interactive dashboard, based on Power BI, visualizes these patterns on a secure, user-friendly platform to convey key irregular migration and people smuggling trends in a timely manner.

4. FACILITATE INFORMATION EXCHANGE AND REGIONAL COOPERATION TO ADDRESS IRREGULAR MIGRATION

DESC serves as Secretariat of the Regional Network for Document Experts (ANDEX) Asia and the Pacific which was established as a regional information-sharing network for experienced senior law enforcement officials in Asia and the Pacific. ANDEX is a forum to share best practices in travel document examination and identity verification as well as patterns of frauds. The ANDEX Annual Meeting, organized by IOM and hosted by the Chair of the Network, serves as the primary platform through which Members exchange information to promote regional coordination on curbing irregular migration and countering transnational organized crime.



ANDEX FRAUDULENT DOCUMENTS REPORTING SYSTEM (AFDRS)

AFDRS is a secure web-based information-sharing platform on the detection of document and identity frauds, designed to collect non-sensitive data at border control points. The information collected is visualized in the online eDashboards and can be used for trends analysis, intelligence development, as well as serves as a basis for contextualized capacity development initiatives.



ANDEX ENTRY AND EXIT STAMP SPECIMENS E-LIBRARY

The ANDEX Entry and Exit Stamp Specimens E-Library was launched in January 2024. The ANDEX E-Library serves as a centralized and comprehensive repository of entry and exit stamps specimens used by the DESC Countries at selected border checkpoints, on a secure database platform. Authorized personnel including immigration officers, border management officials, and other authorized persons, can seamlessly access the specimens during travel document examination. The establishment of this E-Library is in response to the request by the ANDEX Network, and it includes stamps from participating ANDEX Members and select Observers.