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Take the FAST Lane at Changi Airport

World's First Fully Automated Check-In and Immigration Clearance System that uses Biometric Recognition Technology, Goes on Trial

Singapore Changi Airport has started to test a biometrics-based system called Fully Automated Seamless Travel (FAST) that speeds frequent flyers through check-in and immigration formalities. The Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore (CAAS), Singapore Airlines (SIA) and the Immigration and Checkpoints Authority (ICA) are jointly conducting a six-month trial of the world's first automated system that combines the check-in and immigration processes for departing travellers into one.

Currently, travellers departing Changi Airport go through departure formalities at three different locations before getting into the transit area :

1. Airline check-in counter (to obtain boarding pass and seat allocation)
2. Police check before entering the departure immigration hall
3. Immigration counter (for passport verification)

With the FAST system, the traveller can clear the same processes at just one spot, saving him precious time. While the normal process may take between 8 and 15 minutes, the FAST traveller will be cleared in less than 2 minutes at the dedicated FAST lane. This lane is located next to the North Departure Immigration counters in Terminal 2.

Upon enrolment, the FAST traveller will get a card containing a microchip that has captured his facial features and fingerprint details. Authentication of his identity will be done at a one-stop kiosk in the FAST lane, where the traveller can check-in, select seat onboard, collect his boarding pass and clear immigration from a user-friendly interactive touch-screen monitor.

For now, the FAST trial is opened to selected frequent travellers on the Singapore Airlines KrisFlyer programme. About 9,000 travellers are expected to participate in the trial, which started on 1 November.

Mr Wong Woon Liong, Director-General of Civil Aviation (CAAS) said, "Changi Airport is always prepared to test and adopt new technologies and ways that can effectively enhance our airport processes, so as to facilitate travellers using the airport. The trial will help us understand the needs of travellers using the system so as to allow further fine-tuning should we decide to implement it on a larger scale."

"SIA pursues excellence in service not only on board our flights, but on the ground too. So we are pleased, in cooperation with CAAS and ICA, to offer frequent travellers the convenience and speed of a personalized one-step automated process for clearing immigration formalities with the FAST facility. This is a good example of the application of new technology to provide user benefits without compromising security and effectiveness," said Mr Chew Choon Seng, SIA Chief Executive Officer.

Mr Lock Wai Han, Commissioner, ICA said, "As our country's first line of defence, our checkpoints have a vital role to play in ensuring the safety and security of Singapore. FAST system is an example of how Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA) works with our strategic partners to leverage on new technologies to enhance checkpoint security and service."

The FAST trial is supported by a Singapore-government sponsored programme called The Enterprise Challenge, which was introduced in 2000 to provide funding and test-beds for innovations that improve public services.