A history of passports in Australia

The world’s first ‘Australian Passport’ replaced ‘British Passport’ on our covers in 1914. In 1950, 30,000 Australian passports were issued. Fifty years later, in 1999–2000, the number had risen to nearly 1,150,000. Their production accounted for 17 tonnes of paper, 45,560 metres of thread, 69,000 metres of gold foil and 1,100 litres of glue. On average, an Australian passport is issued every 27.5 seconds.

Originally passports were hand written. Technology now plays a vital part in passport production. In 2001, the Australian passport is produced using heating, edge swimming and character recognition technology.

Today’s passports may look very different because of the fast changes that took place in the last 86 years:

- The 1914 Passport Act required that all persons over the age of 18 holding passes be photographed as part of their passport.
- In 1949 two types of passports were issued:
  - A second passport was issued to Australian citizens who were not Australian citizens.
  - B Series passports were issued only to Australian citizens.
- Before 1983, a married woman’s passport application had to be authorised by her husband.
- In 1983, busy Australians passports included machine-readable elements, the first to be issued were passports for children.
- In 1986, the introduction of Single-Identity passports meant children could no longer be included on their parents’ passports.
- Until 1986, a woman had to apply for and receive a passport in her married name. In 1992, “emergency” was added to the list of valid reasons.
- In 1995, digital photos were introduced.
- The current E Series passport was first issued in 1999.
- The next edition of Australian passports is scheduled for release in 2001.

More to Australian passports than meets the eye

Passports to Australia’s goal is to be at the forefront of passport technology, security and customer service. We have developed new technology and processes to further improve all aspects of our products and services.

- Since 1983, Passport Australia’s partnership with Australia Post has created Australia Post offices to apply for passports at most Australia Post offices.
- Australian Passport Information Services (API) is based on behalf of Passport Australia by Comsec and provides information to passport applicants via the post office system.
- Passport applications are now scanned directly into the passport system using high-resolution character recognition technology.
- Passports are issued immediately, as the digital printing of passport photographs are taken on the side of the laminate — a temporary feature.

Passports for the future

Passports to Australia is now working on providing a facility for Australian Citizens to apply and pay for their Australian Passport online.
On 3 September 1912 the Commonwealth Gazette announced the first set of national passport regulations.
Both the B and C Series passports contained manually inserted photos with wet seals and raised embossed seals over the photo as security features.

In March 1937, the A Series passport cover included the Commonwealth Coat of Arms and the words ‘British Passport Commonwealth of Australia’.
In 1980, the Commonwealth Government established a Royal Commission headed by Justice Stewart to investigate the fraudulent use of passports. The commission's finding would have far reaching effects on passport issuance.

Large bound book registers for registering applicants were superseded by the introduction of a computerised Passport Issue Control System (PICS)

The first Australian Passports to be issued on PICS were the M Series passport introduced in 1980.
In 1950, 30 000 passports were issued. In 2007 this figure rose dramatically to over 1.4 million.

1995 - 2003 (L Series)
- A watermark of a stylised map of Australia encompassing a stylised Commonwealth Coat of Arms on all pages except the endpaper and the first and last pages;
- 3M retro-reflective laminate;
- Three colour intaglio ink used to print the Coat of Arms. Early versions of the L Series passport had four colour offset Coat of Arms;
- UV fluorescent binding threads and UV fluorescent features;
- Reactive inks;
In 1999, the Delta System was rolled out to all Passport Offices.

- Conical laser perforated numbering from page 1 through to and including the rear cover;
- Non visible UV fluorescing inks;
- Florescent fibres on visa pages;
- Initials incorporated in microprint;
- Deliberate errors in the microprint;
- Intaglio micro text of Advance Australia Fair;
- See through registration feature of stylised kangaroos;

Colour image printed onto the glue side of the laminate and fused to the Bio Page with heat and pressure.
The Landscape is Changing

In 1998

- Up to 1 million passports being issued annually
- 9 issuing offices within Australia
- 140 overseas posts
- 1700 interview agent outlets (Australia Post)
- Call centre – managing approx 3 million phone calls per year
- Data Transfer to Immigration for Border Control
Accurate Forecasting and Trending

Passport applications 2001-02 to 2025-26

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Delta

- Distributed imaging, workflow and forms processing
- Business analysis (complex business rules)
- Forms design
- Business system integration
- Integration with external systems (e.g. Births, Deaths and Marriages)
- Central image storage archive online
A paperless processing environment

Workflow acting in concert with the PICS mainframe application
The new M Series passport was introduced in 2003. The theme was ‘From the Desert to the Sea’ including kangaroos, shells, sand dunes and seashores to reflect the sense of space and colour of the world’s largest continent. The passport uses neutral colours to reflect Australia’s vast outback. The Governor General’s message also includes a new reference to the passport bearer as ‘… an Australian Citizen…’

Security features included in the M Series include:
- A latent image of the word ‘Australia’ on the Governor General’s page;
- Watermark images of the federation star and stylised kangaroos;
- Ghost image of applicant on Data page;
- See-through registration;
- Fluorescent graphics and threads;
- Fluorescent cover pattern;

Full validity passport only produced using Delta. No full validity Passports produced at overseas posts.
2005 M Series & Delta updated for ePassports & Biometrics

- ePassports issued from 24 October 2005
- **Basic Access Control**
- Facial Recognition integrated into the passport issuing process
2009 N Series ePassport

The N Series ePassport was introduced in May 2009.

The N series incorporates a completely new design with images of Australia’s unique flora, fauna and lifestyle printed throughout the document. It also incorporates a number of highly advanced printing and manufacturing techniques and incorporates the use of environmentally friendly (carbon neutral) paper.

With a strong security and integrity theme, the N series incorporates a unique design on every visa page. The passport includes a security information section designed to highlight to border control officials seven readily identifiable security features.

To complement the physical security improvements, the N series passport incorporates Active Authentication.
2014 P Series

The P series numbering will be 2 alpha characters followed by 7 numerals.

Every 10 years, the APO completely redesigns the Australian passport and every 5 years that passport is reviewed and minor refinements are made. In reviewing a series, the Australia considers new technologies, new security features, and options to minimise any vulnerabilities.

Australia prepares to add PACE

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By 2017 the Passport Redevelopment Program will deliver a contemporary business solution via an ICT platform to provide a more secure, efficient and responsive passport service for Australia. It will:

– deliver an issuance solution enabling operating efficiencies to better manage the projected growth in passport issue rates to at least 3.5 million per year

– increase the integrity of the issuance process including being consistent with the elements of the Australian Government’s National Identity Security Strategy

– improve responsiveness to future requirements of clients and the Australian Government
A move away from labour intensive practices to a more sustainable solution for Capture and Personalisation, while maintaining full control of the Eligibility process as we approach issuance rates of over 2 million passport per year.
Every 10 years, the APO completely re-designs the Australian passport. That it will:

- Use the lessons learnt in previous revisions, N and P Series
- Introduce new security features that will facilitate the secure passage of Australians
- Deliver a new Australian travel document for the next 10 years
Australia’s ePassport Timeline

• Oct 2004, all Standards frozen at the NTWG in Tokyo
• Aus aligns it’s ePassport program to US Visa Waiver deadline.
• 2005 Aus prepares to issue an ePassport
• 2005 Aus issues M Series ePassport with BAC in Oct
• 2009 Aus issues N Series with Active Authentication
• 2014 Aus completes development and testing of PACE
• Aus will introduce PACE in the P Series in 2017
Why an ePassport?

• Facilitation
• Security
Why have Standards?

- Global Interoperability
- Security
- Privacy

The issuer personalises the passport and chip in accordance with "standards" (Doc 9303) and their own policy.

The issuer having done everything correctly no longer cares what happens, it’s a border problem now....
Interoperability
ePassport Standards

User

Participant
Roles and Responsibilities

- **User**
  - Unless you participate you generally don’t get a say and the choices are made for you.
  - Users get the work done for them BUT not necessarily in a timeline that suits them or with the specifications they need.
  - And at what cost.
Participants influence the standards……..

Participants can work to ensure that the changes to standards are aligned to their countries timelines and objectives

Participants are able to learn from experts in the fields of travel document security, PKI, identity management etc and take that knowledge home.

TAG, NTWG, PKD Board, ISO/IEC/SC17/WG3, TF1-5
Questions ?