

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In August 2008 communications consultancy Porter Novelli was contracted by the Australian Customs Service (Customs) to develop and implement a public relations strategy to support the agency's roll-out of SmartGate terminals in airports across Australia.

This document provides an overview of Porter Novelli's proposed public relations strategy for the project incorporating a highly targeted communications campaign.

It includes an outline of the key considerations and research that has informed the development of the communication approach, the primary objectives of the project, the target audiences, as well as a detailed implementation plan designed to raise awareness, educate stakeholders and minimise potential communication issues.

Due to the delay of the opening of SmartGate at Sydney Airport, Porter Novelli recommends that communications activities focus on regional media outlets and high priority stakeholders until Australia's largest airport is incorporated in the scheme. This is particularly important to avoid causing confusion amongst travellers from the broad-based promotion of SmartGate before it is available at the airports through which nearly 50 per cent of travellers enter/exit Australia' - Sydney and Melbourne. Furthermore we believe the SmartGate solution is more likely to become of interest to national media, once it is installed in Sydney.

The public relations strategy is therefore a two-phased, highly targeted communications campaign, incorporating:

- Stakeholder liaison
- Geographically targeted media relations activity
- An online awareness campaign
- Issues management

The first phase of the campaign, taking place prior to the opening of Sydney (the timing of which is yet to be confirmed), will focus on educating high priority stakeholders about the program and seeking their support in disseminating key messages to eligible members of the traveling public via cost neutral channels.

The media relations campaign during this time will focus on regional announcements and milestones, where possible linked with peak travel periods and events, focusing on airports where SmartGate is currently available.

Following the opening of Sydney, phase two of the campaign will be initiated and communications will become more widespread, with media relations activity growing to include major consumer travel publications and national newspaper supplements.

In addition, at this point in time an online outreach campaign, focusing on targeting travel/IT forums and blogs will be initiated, to raise awareness of SmartGate amongst key audiences including technology experts, frequent flyers and travellers.

Throughout the project, Porter Novelli will continue to monitor potential issues, and where requested by Customs, provide input into the development of issues management strategies, key messages and statements.

We believe the approach outlined in this document will be successful because it:

- Allows us to utilise materials that *have* already been developed and distribute key messages with a focus on cost-neutral communication channels
- Is highly focused and will allow communications effort to be targeted towards those stakeholders who are likely to *have* the biggest interest and impact on the target audience
- Will limit the impact of the potential delay of the Sydney opening