
Business Mobility Group

Virtual APEC Business Travel Card Launched during APEC Leaders' Week 2020

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As the APEC Business Mobility Group (BMG) Convenor, I am pleased to confirm the Virtual APEC Business Travel Card (ABTC) was officially launched during APEC Leaders' Week in November 2020.

The Virtual ABTC is an innovative new method for travelling on the ABTC and brings the existing Scheme into the digital era, providing the much-valued service on cardholder's smart devices. The Virtual ABTC is a more secure, efficient, convenient and user-friendly service and importantly, it provides real-time updates, so that a cardholder can immediately benefit from using their Virtual ABTC. Travelling on the ABTC will allow for the same streamlined and VIP service existing cardholders have come to enjoy, but will provide an alternative method for producing and presenting their card when entering and exiting an Economy.

Each Economy will determine its own timeline to transition to the Virtual ABTC for its cardholders; however, from March 2021 we expect to see the first travellers in the region using the Virtual ABTC. Australia will be the first APEC Economy to transition to this superior service for all Australian cardholders and I look forward to seeing other Economies transition as soon as possible thereafter. I encourage everyone to familiarise themselves with the features of this new service reading the [FAQs](#). Please consult with your Home Economy for further details.

Advancing Regional Economic Integration

APEC Business Travel Card Scheme (ABTC)

One outcome of the BMG's collaboration with ABAC was the development of the APEC Business Travel Card (ABTC). Frequent business travellers that are approved ABTC holders can enjoy streamlined entry into participating APEC economies.

In 2013, APEC Economic Leaders recognized the increasing need for more efficient flows of goods, services, capital and people. APEC intends to accelerate our region's physical, institutional, and people-to-people connectivity through a long-term commitment. BMG has been tasked to further the work on travel facilitation which includes enhancing the APEC Business Travel Card scheme.

On 1 September 2015, the validity of the ABTC was extended from three to five years. This significantly improved the user experience for cardholders by reducing the need to apply for a new card as frequently. In turn, the extension created additional efficiencies for users and economies through a reduction in processing times, printing and distribution costs.

To improve information available to ABTC holders, participating members are preparing a survey on pre-clearance policies, regulatory settings, and have fielded answers to [frequently asked questions](#).

[Click here for more information on the APEC Business Travel Card Scheme.](#)

APEC Business Travel Card Mobile Application 'Soft Launch' Announcement to Senior Business Leaders of the APEC Business Advisory Council

The Convenor of the APEC Business Mobility Group, Ms Kimberlee Stamatīs met with senior business leaders of the APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC) at the first ABAC Conference for

APEC 2020 held in Sydney, Australia, on Wednesday 12 February to announce the development of the APEC Business Travel Card (ABTC) Mobile Application ahead of its planned official launch at APEC Leaders' Week in Malaysia 2020.

“ABAC was instrumental in the establishment of the Business Mobility Group in 1997 so it makes sense to work with the Council in the lead up to the official launch of the APEC Business Travel Card Mobile Application. ABAC is a strong and powerful voice in the APEC structure so their influence cannot be underestimated,” said Ms Stamatis.

Ms Stamatis delivered a presentation and demonstrated the features of the Pilot of the ABTC Mobile Application, including to the incoming ABAC Chair for 2021 and the ABAC Australia and New Zealand representatives.

This soft launch aims to promote the ABTC and publicize the development of the ABTC Mobile Application for the awareness of senior business leaders of the APEC community. The development of the ABTC Mobile Application gained the keen interest of senior business leaders of the ABAC community, with multiple participants excited for what the digitalization of the ABTC means for the ABTC Scheme and business mobility APEC Economy-wide.

Convenor of the APEC Business Mobility Group, Ms Kimberlee Stamatis, with members of the APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC)

For More:

Information on the ABTC Mobile Application, please visit the [APEC Business Mobility Group Press Release](#) and the [ABTC Mobile Application page](#).

Information on application process and eligibility criteria, please visit the [APEC Business Travel Card page](#).

**Strengthening Comprehensive Connectivity and Infrastructure
Advanced Passenger Information Systems**

By receiving passenger information in advance of travel, authorities can expedite the assessment and processing of legitimate travellers through ports of entry and shift their focus on those requiring additional scrutiny.

The BMG is helping economies implement advance passenger information systems through on capacity building projects or the sharing of best practices and methods.

**Expanding Regulatory Cooperation and Advancing Regulatory Convergence
Legal Infrastructure Standards**

The BMG conducts reviews of legal infrastructure standards. Its previous review concluded interessionally in 2014. These standards aim to assist in further developing economies' immigration infrastructures, which are critical for economies to achieve effective and efficient border management practices and procedures. In the 2017, the BMG agreed to review the infrastructure standards again.

Innovative Development, Economic Reform and Growth

Passport Checking Service (PCS)

The BMG contributes to APEC's Consolidated Counter-Terrorism and Secure Trade Strategy by exploring future strategic direction of the **Passport Checking Service (PCS)**. The intended result will be a real-time travel document validation service between economies.

Source: <https://www.apec.org/Groups/Committee-on-Trade-and-Investment/Business-Mobility-Group>.