

# FactSheet

## U.S. e-Passport facts at-a-glance

The **U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO)** is the sole provider of blank U.S. passports to the Department of State. The electronic or e-Passport program, launched in 2005, has improved passport quality, performance, and reliability. Its design incorporates numerous security features, including an integrated circuit.

- **U.S. e-Passports** are printed, manufactured, and assembled in the United States by GPO employees at secure production facilities in Washington, D.C., and at the Stennis Space Center in Mississippi. Continuity of Operations (COOP) is assured by the backup facility in Stennis, where the second GPO production plant is co-located with other Federal agencies under secure conditions.
- **As of June 2010, we have delivered** more than 55 million blank e-Passports without any security breach.
- **GPO and the Department of State** developed the U.S. e-Passport in response to the requirements for Visa Waiver Program (VWP) countries in the 2002 Enhanced Border Security and Visa Entry Reform Act. The first U.S. e-Passport was issued to the Secretary of State in December 2005.
- **The U.S e-Passport meets international standards** for global interoperability. The standards are set by ICAO, the International Civil Aviation Organization. ICAO is a Secretariat of the United Nations that oversees many aspects of international air travel, including passports.
- **In 2004, GPO issued** a Request for Proposal (RFP), at the request of the Department of State, to procure the components necessary to build an electronic passport for the first time. GPO included Buy American Act requirements in the procurement. No vendor responded to the RFP offering domestic-made products that met the rigorous compliance testing mandated by ICAO standards.
- **There has been no security breach** in the electronic passport supply chain. GPO and the Department of State have conducted security evaluations and inspections of supplier facilities. In addition, security audits have been conducted by the GPO Inspector General and by the Government Accountability Office
- **Multiple safeguards** are incorporated throughout the production process. These safeguards include strict integrated circuit tracking and accountability, secure transport of integrated circuits from suppliers to GPO, and secure transport of finished e-Passport books from GPO to the Department of State.
- **GPO locks the Integrated Circuit** using a cryptographic key so that only the Department of State can perform personalization.
- **When blank e-Passports** from GPO arrive, the Department of State loads personal information onto the chip in each traveler's e-Passport. This is the same data that is visually displayed on the photo page of the e-Passport. No personal data is handled by GPO or its suppliers.
- **The traveler's photograph** is now stored in digital form, giving border crossing authorities an additional means of verifying traveler identity.
- **For additional protection**, GPO adds an embedded metallic element to the cover of the e-Passport book that helps to protect against the unauthorized reading of the personal information contained within the integrated circuit.
- **\$15.33 per book** is the price GPO currently charges the Department of State. This price includes materials, labor, equipment, overhead, required inventory, and investment in necessary equipment and facilities, and is established each year under the terms of a Memorandum of Understanding between GPO and the Department of State.
- **The price of an e-Passport charged to the public** is determined by the Department of State based on a cost-of-service analysis.

**For more than 80 years, GPO has employed technology to continuously improve the security of the world's most trusted travel document.**

<b>1783</b>	Benjamin Franklin prints first U.S. Passport
<b>1856</b>	Department of State centralizes control of Passport applications and issuance
<b>1926</b>	League of Nations creates international standard for booklet-style Passport. GPO begins manufacturing U.S. Passports.
<b>1961</b>	GPO employs new technology to expand the capacity and security of U.S. Passport numbering system
<b>1980</b>	Machine readable code is used to automate aspects of Passport issuance and identity verification, adding an additional layer of security
<b>May 2002</b>	Visa-waiver nations* required to develop U.S. e-Passports
<b>2002 – 2004</b>	GPO and the Department of State jointly develop the U.S. e-Passport
<b>December 2005</b>	GPO delivered the first U.S. e-Passport to the Secretary of State
<b>April 2006</b>	Diplomatic and Official U.S. e-Passports are issued
<b>August 2006</b>	U.S. e-passports available to U.S. travelers
<b>May 2007</b>	Last non-electronic Passport produced. Since then, all U.S. Passports manufactured by GPO have been e-Passports
<b>July 2010</b>	GPO has produced more than 55 million e-Passports as of June 2010

\*Citizens of visa-waiver nations are not required to have a visa to enter the U.S.



The U.S. e-Passport features multiple layers of security to protect an individual traveler's personal information and photograph. The gold symbol under the word "America" signifies that this is an e-Passport.