



Statement by Secretary Michael Chertoff on Passenger Name Record Data

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On Thursday, June 28, 2007, U.S. Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff, German Interior Minister Wolfgang Schäuble and EU Commissioner Franco Frattini initialed an international agreement between the United States and the European Union on the transfer of Passenger Name Record (PNR) data to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) from air carriers operating transatlantic flights to and from the U.S.

Secretary Chertoff issued the following statement about the agreement:

"I am pleased that we have been able to reach an agreement that satisfies both the U.S. and EU's core goals, ensuring that all passengers traveling to the U.S. will be protected against terrorist and serious transnational criminal threats, while also protecting their personal information. Passenger Name Record data is a proven tool for combating terrorism and serious transnational crime, providing the U.S. with the means to make connections between known threats and associates and identify patterns of concerning activity. We have used this data in the U.S. to identify terrorist cells, dismantle human trafficking rings and arrest drug smugglers, among other successes.

Further, our agreement ensures that PNR data is not used or shared for purposes other than for which it is collected. DHS and the EU have agreed to revise the list of data that may be collected, while retaining the flexibility to ensure sufficient data is collected to address current and future threats. We have modified the types of data collected, and will continue to gather only information already provided by travelers to make flight reservations. This information has proven necessary in concluding numerous investigations, and continued access will be invaluable in the fight against terrorism and successfully protecting our borders by keeping dangerous people from boarding planes and entering the U.S."

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