



NEWS RELEASE

ICA ANNUAL STATISTICS 2024

ICA TRANSFORMS AND REDEFINES CHECKPOINT CLEARANCE AMIDST 20% INCREASE IN TRAVELLER VOLUME

In 2024, the Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA) successfully achieved our New Clearance Concept (NCC) vision to transform and redefine checkpoint clearance operations. This paradigm shift in border clearance has enabled us to enhance Singapore's border security and provide efficient and seamless immigration clearance for all travellers and conveyances, despite a 20% increase in traveller volume as compared to 2023.

2. With the NCC, residents now enjoy passport-free clearance at major checkpoints and automated clearance was extended to all foreign visitors. With the full roll-out of the NCC at Changi Airport in May 2024, more foreign visitors posing immigration or security risks to Singapore were refused entry compared to 2023.

Facilitating cross-border trade and travel

Significant increase in traveller volume

3. There was a **significant increase in traveller volume** in 2024. ICA cleared almost 230.4 million travellers last year, an increase of nearly 20% or about 38 million more travellers compared to 2023. Traveller volume in 2024 also surpassed pre-COVID-19 levels¹, largely due to a sharp rise in the number of travellers using the land checkpoints, which accounted for more than 75% of the total traveller volume.

¹ About 217.3 million travellers were cleared in the year 2019.

Traveller volume had also exceeded pre-COVID-19 levels in 2024, with a record number of more than 562,000 land crossings in a single day on 20 December 2024.

	2023	2024	
Total travellers cleared	192,846,000	230,399,000	▲ 19.5%

[Figures are rounded to the nearest thousand]

Decrease in cargo volume

4. The volume of cargo cleared through the checkpoints decreased in 2024 as compared to 2023. The **number of containers, consignments and parcels cleared dipped by 5.8%**, mainly due to the continued decline in the number of parcels cleared since 2021. The volume of low-value goods also saw a decline of 9.4% across the same period.

	2023	2024	
Containers cleared	1,177,000	1,182,000	▲ 0.1%
Consignments cleared	5,082,000	5,323,000	▲ 4.7%
Parcels cleared	2,724,000	1,957,000	▼ 28.2%
Total cleared	8,983,000	8,461,000	▼ 5.8%

[Figures are rounded to the nearest thousand]

	2023	2024	
Low-value Goods Cleared	38,152,000	34,581,000	▼ 9.4%

[Figures are rounded to the nearest thousand]

NCC has strengthened Singapore's border security

5. ICA adopts a risk-based multi-layered approach to safeguard Singapore's borders. With the full implementation of the NCC, ICA was able to effectively manage the 20% increase in travel volume in 2024. Leveraging biometrics and data, the NCC has enhanced our profiling and detection capabilities. **More foreigners were refused entry after being picked up for screening. More contraband smuggling cases were also detected at the checkpoints compared to 2023.**

6. To support our NCC operations, ICA set up the Integrated Targeting Centre (ITC), which leverages advance information and conducts data analytics to identify high-risk travellers before they arrive at our checkpoints. These travellers, including those on our watchlist, are flagged for more stringent checks when they attempt to clear immigration.


7. ICA's automated lanes possess counter forgery detection capabilities and are supported by multi-modal biometrics screening systems. This enables ICA officers to detect travellers using fraudulent passports, as well as repeat travellers impersonating and/or using false identities (i.e. multiple identities), as we would have their biometrics in our database. Furthermore, our systems can identify Persons-of-Interest, such as those who have previously committed crimes in Singapore and are attempting to re-enter the country under a different identity.

8. With the progressive implementation of automated clearance for all travellers at the passenger halls in 2024, ICA was able to redeploy more ICA officers who were previously manning manual counters to conduct profiling of travellers at the automated lanes. Suspicious travellers were sieved out for further checks.

Increase in the number of foreign visitors refused entry

9. **The number of foreign visitors who were refused entry at Singapore's checkpoints increased by about 16%** compared to the previous year.


10. The majority of the 33,100 foreigners who had been refused entry were assessed to pose immigration (i.e. potential to overstay or work illegally) or security (i.e. potential to commit crimes) risks to Singapore. Most of these high-risk travellers were identified by ICA's targeting and ground profiling efforts.

	2023	2024	
Foreign visitors refused entry	28,600	33,100	 15.7%

[Rounded to the nearest hundred]


Decrease in number of multiple identity cases

11. In 2024, there was a **decrease in the number of multiple identity cases** detected at the checkpoints. ICA's use of the multi-modal biometric clearance systems at the checkpoints and sustained publicities have likely deterred such attempts of illegal entry. Foreign visitors who were previously detected with multiple identities would have been barred from entering Singapore.

	2023	2024	
Multiple identity detected on arrival	437	233	 46.7%


Decrease in number of forged/tampered travel documents

12. The number of **travellers detected with forged/tampered travel documents has remained largely unchanged** with 61 cases in 2024.

	2023	2024	
Forged/tampered travel documents detected on arrival	65	61	 6.2%

Rise in contraband smuggling attempts

13. ICA remains vigilant in detecting and preventing contraband from entering Singapore. Through the use of data analytics to target higher-risk consignments and joint checkpoint operations with other agencies, there was a **2.3% increase in foiled contraband smuggling attempts**. A number of cases involved large consignments of contraband cigarettes and e-vaporisers, including those smuggled in cars with modified compartments or concealed among legitimate consignments in lorries. There were also more cases of illegal importation of significant quantities of food via the air and land checkpoints. (Refer to Appendix A for the case detections in 2024.)

	2023	2024
Contraband cases detected	43,000	44,000 

2.3%




[Rounded to the nearest thousand]

Keeping Singapore safe through inland enforcement operations

14. ICA also conducts regular inland enforcement operations, including with other law enforcement agencies to arrest immigration offenders (IOs).




Decrease in number of IOs

15. There was a decrease of 8.7% in the number of IOs arrested in 2024 compared to the previous year. Despite increasing the number of intelligence-led operations from an average of 58 per month in 2023 to 63 in 2024, the number of overstayers arrested dropped by 12.4% while the number of illegal immigrants (IIs) arrested increased by about 35.6%. Of the 61 IIs arrested in 2024, 25 (41%) were apprehended by the Police Coast Guard (PCG) before they had entered Singapore.

	2023	2024	
Illegal immigrants arrested	45	61	 35.6%
Overstayers arrested	542	475	 12.4%
Total IOs arrested	587	536	 8.7%

Increase in number of harbourers and employers of IOs

16. The total number of **harbourers and employers of IOs arrested by ICA increased** by 19% in 2024. Most harbourers either had existing relationships with the IOs (i.e. were family members, friends or employers) or had allowed the IOs to stay for financial gain.

	2023	2024	
Harbourers of IOs arrested	204	217	 6.4%
Employers of IOs arrested	123	172	 39.8%
Total harbourers and employers of IOs arrested	327	389	 19%

17. The majority of harbourers either (i) claimed to have overlooked applying for a pass extension/renewal for the IO; (ii) did not check the immigration status of the IO; or (iii) only performed the initial checks to ensure that their tenant's stay was valid at the start of the tenancy.


18. As for employers of IOs, most claimed that they (i) were aware that the pass validity had lapsed and were in the process of extending/renewing the pass, (ii) only performed initial checks to ensure their employee had a valid pass at the point of employment but did not track their employee's work pass status subsequently, (iii) had overlooked applying for work pass extension/renewal for the IO, or (iv) failed to check if their workers had any valid stay in Singapore. The nearly 40% increase in employers

dealt with in 2024 could be largely attributed to the increase in those who had employed IOs to work as domestic workers as well as in sectors such as construction. There was also an increase in the number of employers who had defaulted on levy payments or failed to send their worker for mandatory medical examinations, thus resulting in work permit cancellations and their workers overstaying.

19. ICA will continue to take tough action against such harbourers and employers. We have stepped up public education efforts at various public touchpoints to remind members of the public that it is a serious offence to harbour IOs (refer to Appendix B for an example). Members of the public and employers must play their part to deter IOs by denying them shelter and means of subsistence, to make it tougher for them to stay illegally in Singapore. Homeowners who wish to rent out their property must exercise due diligence by checking the immigration status of their prospective foreign tenants, to ensure that their stay in Singapore is legal. We urge the public to report suspected cases to ICA at [<https://go.gov.sg/icafeedbackio>].

Sharp increase in number of persons arrested for marriage-of-convenience (MOC)-related offences

20. The number of persons arrested for MOC-related offences in 2024 **rose significantly from eight to 41 persons** as compared to 2023. This was due to ICA’s increased enforcement efforts to investigate and disrupt MOC arrangements by syndicates, some arising from tip-offs by members of the public.

	2023	2024	
Persons arrested for MOC-related offences	8	41	 412.5%

21. ICA takes a serious view of individuals trying to circumvent our system by engaging in, arranging or assisting MOCs to obtain immigration facilities in Singapore. We will take firm enforcement action against errant couples and middlemen.

Redefining checkpoint clearance operations under the NCC

22. To strengthen border security and enhance travellers' experiences, ICA has extended **full automated clearance to all foreign visitors** and rolled out **passport-less clearance** (including both **QR code clearance** and **token-less clearance**) to eligible travellers by digitalising and streamlining border clearance processes. As of 31 January 2025, about 47 million travellers have cleared immigration without having to present their passports.

<p><i>Extension of automated clearance to all travellers</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since May 2024, all arriving foreign visitors via Changi Airport can use our automated lanes without prior enrolment. They can also depart without presenting their passports for immigration clearance since September 2024. This was extended to Marina Bay Cruise Centre Singapore in December 2024. • Singapore is likely the first in the world to achieve automated clearance for all travellers.
<p><i>QR code clearance for cars</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since March 2024, all travellers arriving and departing Singapore by car via Woodlands and Tuas checkpoints have been able to use QR codes in lieu of passports. • Instead of handing their passports to ICA officers at the car counters, all travellers in a car can be cleared using a single QR code generated prior to arriving at the checkpoint. Travellers can also create multiple QR codes for travels with different groups of people. • This leads to estimated time savings from around 20 seconds for cars with four travellers, to approximately one minute for vehicles with 10

	<p>travellers. Immigration clearance time can be reduced by more than 30%.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • About 70% of vehicles cleared use QR code clearance.
<p><i>QR code clearance for motorcyclists</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since August 2024, QR code clearance was extended to motorcyclists and their pillion riders arriving and departing from Singapore via the land checkpoints. • Each motorcyclist and their pillion rider can present one group QR code for immigration clearance, instead of scanning two passports. • QR code clearance, coupled with ICA's enhancements to its Biometric Identification of Motorbikers (BIKES) System, has reduced the immigration clearance time for motorcyclists and pillion riders by about 30%.
<p><i>QR code clearance for bus passengers</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICA has progressively rolled out QR code clearance at all automated lanes and Special Assistance Lanes (SALs) at the bus halls of Woodlands and Tuas checkpoints from December 2024. • This applies to all bus passengers, including travellers with wheelchairs and family groups of up to four persons. • While first-time foreign visitors and those re-entering Singapore using a different passport from their previous trip will need to present their passports for clearance upon arrival, they will be able to clear immigration using QR code on their subsequent trips.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With group QR code clearance, family groups of up to four members using the SALs can expect time savings of up to 40 seconds.
<p><i>Token-less clearance for air and sea passengers</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since September 2024, ICA has fully implemented token-less clearance across all four terminals at Changi Airport. • Arriving and departing Singapore residents can clear immigration by simply using facial and iris biometrics, without the need to present their passports. All foreign visitors can also enjoy the convenience of token-less clearance when they depart Singapore. • With the full roll-out of passport-less clearance at Changi Airport, the average clearance time for each traveller has been reduced by 60%, from 25 seconds to 10 seconds. • Token-less clearance was also extended to Marina Bay Cruise Centre Singapore since December 2024. ICA will progressively implement token-less clearance at other air and sea checkpoints, such as Seletar Airport and Tanah Merah Ferry Terminal, from 2025 onwards.

Redesigning Services Centre processes under SCNG

23. From 7 April 2025, the new ICA Services Centre (ISC), located at 2 Crawford Street, will commence operations. At the ISC, the public will enjoy a more seamless transaction experience and can access a suite of services at a single touchpoint. Come July 2025, customers can also collect their identity cards and passports from

the automated kiosks at the ISC without the need to make an appointment. Operationalisation of the ISC will realise ICA's vision for its Services Centre Next-Generation (SCNG), leveraging digital, robotic, biometric and automation technologies to provide a "No Fuss, No Visit and No Waiting" experience for our customers.

24. Moving forward, ICA remains committed to exploring innovative solutions to build more robust capabilities to provide better and secure customer experiences and to keep Singapore's borders secured and yet connected to the world.

IMMIGRATION & CHECKPOINTS AUTHORITY

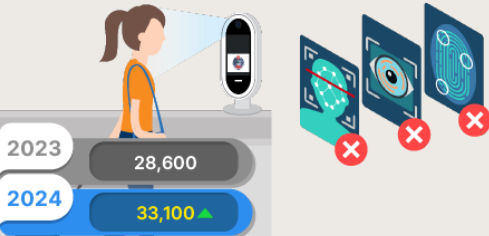
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Overview of ICA's Annual Statistics 2024

ICA ANNUAL STATISTICS | 2024

CHECKPOINT OPERATIONS

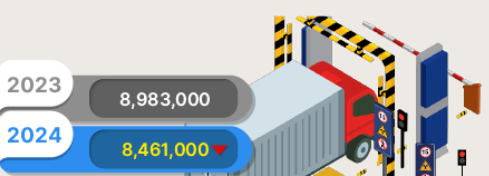
Foreign Visitors Refused Entry



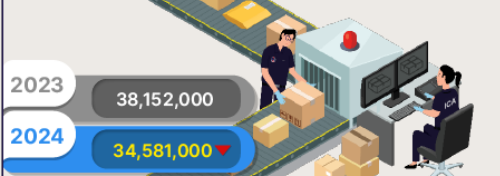
Travellers Cleared



Consignments, Containers and Parcels Cleared

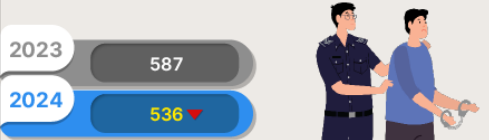


Low-value Goods Cleared



ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS

Immigration Offenders Arrested



Harbourers and Employers of Immigration Offenders Arrested



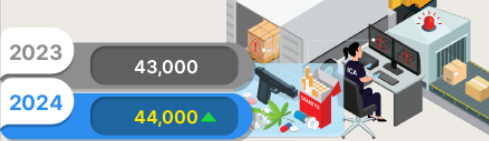
Multiple Identities Detected on Arrival



Persons Arrested for Marriage of Convenience-Related Offences



Contraband Cases Detected



Forged/Tampered Travel Documents Detected on Arrival



Appendix A – Significant case detections in 2024

Case #1 – Largest vape bust of 2024 at the land checkpoints

On 21 August 2024, ICA officers at Tuas Checkpoint foiled an attempt to smuggle 37,588 pieces of e-vaporisers and refills into Singapore. ICA Radiographic Image Analysts noticed irregularities in the scanned images and directed the Malaysia-registered lorry for further checks. During the course of checks, vaping products were uncovered and extracted from within the consignment.



E-vaporisers and refills extracted by officers.

QR code to ICA's Facebook post on 16 Oct 2024:



Case #2 – Smuggling of swords through Pasir Panjang Scanning Station and Tuas Port

In August 2024, ICA officers at Pasir Panjang Scanning Station and Tuas Port foiled three attempts to smuggle 10 swords into Singapore via inbound cargo containers. ICA officers noticed anomalies in the scanned images and detected the cargo containers for further checks. The cases were referred to the Singapore Police Force for further investigation.





Swords seized at Pasir Panjang Scanning Station and Tuas Port.

QR code to ICA's Facebook post on 9 Oct 2024:



Case #3 – Detection of duty-unpaid cigarettes smuggled in stuffed toys at Air Cargo Parcel Post

On 22 October 2024, ICA officers at Air Cargo Parcel Post foiled multiple attempts to smuggle duty-unpaid cigarettes in seven separate postal articles. ICA Image Analysts noticed anomalies in the scanned images of the postal articles and directed them for further checks. A total of 2,180 sticks of duty-unpaid cigarettes were found hidden in the various soft toys. The cases were referred to Singapore Customs for further investigation.



Soft toys stuffed with duty-unpaid cigarettes.

QR code to ICA's Facebook post on 20 Nov 2024:



Case #4 – Traveller with over \$190,000 in undeclared currencies detected at Changi Airport

On 16 November at Changi Airport Terminal 1, ICA officers profiled a traveller for checks and found undeclared currencies equivalent to S\$190,303.71 in value on him. This was one of the highest sums of undeclared currencies detected at Changi Airport in 2024. The case was subsequently referred to the Singapore Police Force for further investigations.



Bundles of cash found on the traveller

Appendix B – A key visual used for the anti-harboursing campaign



DEAR LANDLADY, HAVE YOU DONE YOUR HOME WORK?

If you're renting out your property, verify that your tenants are not illegal immigrants or overstayers. Follow the instructions below and conduct the mandatory checks for a stress-free rental.

1 CHECK

the validity of your tenant's original immigration or work passes with ICA or MOM:

For immigration passes




For work passes




Tenants may also present digital immigration passes or work passes via the MyICA Mobile app or SGWorkPass app respectively using their Singpass.

2 COMPARE

the original pass with the original passport to ensure that the tenant is the rightful owner of both.



DON'T ACCEPT: pictures or photocopies of the passport / permit / work pass.



If you have information on suspected immigration offenders, report it to ICA via our online form: <https://go.gov.sg/icafedbackio>
Under the law, any person caught harbouring immigration offenders may be sentenced to imprisonment for up to 2 years and a fine not exceeding S\$6,000.