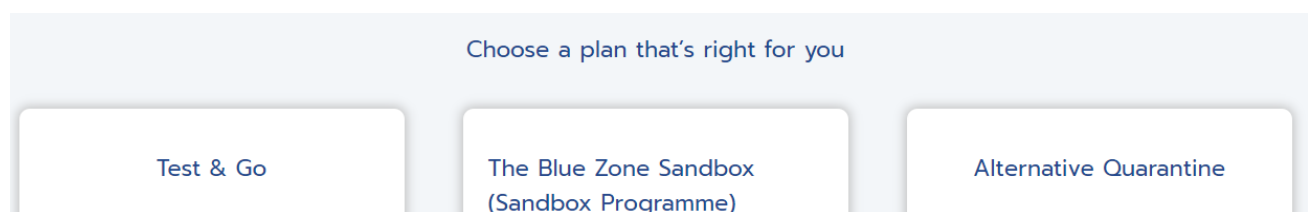


Safe Border Opening – Effective and Efficient processing – An Imperative for Economic Recovery and Thailand’s reputation

In Q4 2021 Thailand moved from a 14 or 15 night quarantine period to a shorter period for fully vaccinated travellers via the Phuket Sandbox model, then to one night quarantine (‘Test and Go’) in key international gateways including Bangkok. The Omicron strain of the virus saw the end of the Test and Go programme for a period of time but it was reinstated 1 Feb 2022 requiring a PCR test one day one and another on day 5 (at a designated hotel), with prepayment for each package required.

There are three pathways into Thailand, for all travellers, all relying on **Thailand Pass**.

<https://tp.consular.go.th/>



Entry needs to cater for:

1. Short-stay professionals (technical skills, engineering, arbitration, mediation, etc.), short-stay businesspeople for managing investments, FDI purposes;
2. Tourism – short stay and long stay
3. MICE (which could fit into either category).
4. Citizens and Residents of Thailand

While Thailand Pass has some positive features, there are negatives which need fixing. It typically takes several hours for a new user to figure out, make and set up all the files required. Secondly, the turnaround and approval time is too long to support the needs of all user groups which causes needless anxiety about whether the permission will be granted in time.. Our **recommendation** is at the top of page 2.

Thailand has many economic positives and lays claim to digital leadership in some respects. The clunkiness, unreasonable requirements (JPEG format) and long turnaround time for Thailand Pass are harming Thailand’s reputation and are a barrier to Economic Recovery.

The time-consuming and cumbersome process for completing Thailand Pass is not appropriate for short visits and the long turnaround time is a deterrent to coming to Thailand altogether

Our focus here is on Thailand Pass rather than on wider issues such the Test & Go model or upload of vaccination cert to local apps, insurance, how travellers with positive results are processed, which all need to be addressed, but separate to this focus.

Recommendation: Address and rectify Thailand Pass shortcomings with a target for 24-hour turnaround, change allowed file types and fix user turnoffs and time waste.




Thailand Pass

POSITIVES

1	Interface is quite clearly laid out – two languages only so far (Thai and English) however
2	Active page does not time out
3	Uploads seem to be quite quick.
4	System capacity seems sufficient (so far)
5	Data entry into various fields, thus potentially supporting machine reading and processing and faster turnaround (but how exactly is this used? – see below)
6	Issues a case number

NEGATIVES – ISSUES NEEDING TO BE ADDRESSED

A	<p>Why the long turnaround time of 3-7 days? This suggests manual inspection and processing. The advantage over COE in entering data in machine readable fields means that data can be processed instantly without manual intervention.</p> <p>So what exactly is the delay?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Hotel information – a pre paid receipt should be enough, but the hotel is required to confirm the booking as part of the workflow. If that is being done, usually within 12 hours of application, then that checks that box fully and means that no manual intervention would be needed for that aspect. (b) Vaccination certificate. Data is entered in machine readable fields and optionally (QR codes can be added). (c) Passport data page – Image is machine readable and the data is separately entered anyway. Passport data pages are designed to be machine readable. (d) Insurance – data is entered and a certification is uploaded. <p>A global standard for tax filing is self-assessment with heavy penalties. 99% do not cheat. Why not use the same approach for Thailand Pass (as some other economies do for the equivalent function)? With Thailand Pass, misstatements will be found out quickly on or before arrival which is a deterrent. Why cater to the 1% and make the 99% wait?</p> <p>If there are specific elements which somehow are said to need manual intervention, they should be identified and a machine solution found at least for the vast majority of cases. Why drag down the vast majority with an unfounded need to prove every detail for every case?</p> <p>The Australian Travel Declaration (ATD) performs the same function as Thailand Pass, apart from hotel information (which Thailand Pass covers but ATD does not), and offers a near instant result, why can't Thailand Pass have turnaround of say 12 hours? See Annex for details.</p> <p>Prepaid airticket for arrival which was required for COE is not required for Thailand Pass. This is positive as logically it is not needed. Without an airticket the traveller would not be able to board. The flight number, date, time and arrival port are needed, that data is entered into fields.</p>
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B	<p>PDF files cannot be used for uploaded files (only at the end for additional documents) but JPEG is required. This means that a PDF-JPEG converter is needed or an original JPEG maker (eg from a scanner is needed). PDF is the recognized format globally for files of this kind. Further a PDF to JPEG converter typically will make separate JPEG files of a multi-page PDF file and have to be merged. An application has to be found to do that.</p>
C	<p>Defects with inability to upload QR codes in support of vaccination certificate. Many complain of not being able to upload the QR Codes.</p>
D	<p>Support contact points are not helpful. Typically there is no reponse to the support email address advised after the confirmation of receipt of filing: “The approval process takes approximately 3 - 7 days. If there is an urgent problem, please contact support@tp.consular.go.th” Emails sent two days before then one day before pre departure PCR test was required, received no response.</p> <p>Calls to +66 2 572 8442 can incur hours-long waits. Eventually on one occasion a staff member was reached. Applicant said words to the effect: “I applied for a Thailand Pass a week ago and I am concerned it will not be granted in time for me to get my PCR test and flight”. Response – words to the effect:” I am sorry there is nothing I can do, we are not allowed to interfere”</p> <p>If the help line was for urgent cases but could not (apparently by design) assist in a case of genuine urgency, what is its purpose and what other recourse does a traveller have who has anxiety over not getting a response in time.</p> <div data-bbox="263 1077 1385 1816" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; background-color: #0056b3; color: white; text-align: center;">  <p>THAILAND PASS HELPLINE FOR TRAVELERS ENTERING THAILAND</p> <p>For Phuket / Krabi / Phang Nga destinations</p> <p>thailandpass.hkt@gmail.com Or  Fill in google form at QR CODE</p> <p>For other destinations</p> <p>02 572 8442 testgo@consular.go.th * For medical emergency / humanitarian assistance only</p> <p>+66(0)65 205 4247 - 49 (3 line)</p> <p><small>Please be advised that your hotel should confirm your booking before your status on TP can be verified by the Department of Disease Control.</small></p> <p>Call Center Department of Consular Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs 02-572-8442 DC</p> <p> Thailand Pass FAQs</p> </div>
E	<p>Unnecessary anxiety over days long wait for approval. There are cases where approval did not come in time for the PCR test, necessitating starting over with flight bookings, PCR test bookings, hotel bookings etc which is an extremely time consuming process even with flexibly tickets.</p>

F	Vaccination : are all scenarios covered? The poster allows for a shot after recovery, some vaccines require one dose. Is Thailand Pass intended to be based on a standard definition of 'fully vaccinated' (eg two doses of most + 14 days)
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Annex – Australian Travel Declaration

The Australian Travel Declaration performs the same function as Thailand Pass, apart from hotel information as quarantine is administered at state level and is provided by each State at mandated rates) there is no choice. For travellers into NSW for example there is no quarantine. If the hotel in the Thailand Pass system verifies the traveller as part of the workflow, usually within 12 hours of applying, why does Thailand Pass need to take so long?

<https://covid19.homeaffairs.gov.au/australia-travel-declaration>

Submitting your declaration

You do not have to pay for an ATD — it is free.

Use the free mobile Australia Travel Declaration app by downloading it from the [App Store \(Apple\)](#) or [Google Play store \(Android\)](#)

If you cannot use the mobile app, the desktop [ATD online form](#) is also available.

In most cases, confirmed response is instant.