
ALMATY-BISHKEK ECONOMIC CORRIDOR (ABEC)

REPORT ON THE TWO PRIORITY ROAD BORDER CROSSING POINTS (BCPs) AK- JOL-
KORDAY AND AK-TILEK-KARASU



KYRGYZ REPUBLIC REPORT

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I. AK -TILEK – KARASU ROAD BORDER CROSSING POINT

1. Topographic and spatial characteristics

1.1. Description and Dimensions

Ak-Tilek is located 30 km northeast of Bishkek and 200 km southeast from Almaty, on the southern coast of Chuy River. Together with the bridge to Karasu (Kazakhstan), it constitutes the Kyrgyz (south) side of the Ak-Tile-Karasu Road Border Crossing Point (BCP).

The description will be given consistently from the point of view south to north, i.e. looking in the Direction A – Kyrgyz Republic to Kazakhstan, unless otherwise indicated.

The landscape is quite open, not wooded, unpopulated in the immediate vicinity and is spacious with good visibility. The control facilities of both countries are visible from Kyrgyz Republic and from Kazakhstan (even better visibility due to a slightly higher ground). The access road is asphalted dual carriageway, in reasonably good repair, with two wide lanes in each direction. The road is slightly curved to the right, in the northbound (exit from Kyrgyz Republic) direction. Approximately 500 meters (estimate) before the actual Kyrgyz Republic control building, the road is divided into two by hard concrete blocks and towards the control facility, two manually operated boom gates are installed. Two Kyrgyz Border Officers stop and release traffic towards and from the control facility. This is the First Checkpoint at Ak-Tilek. It is also the only operating checkpoint, because there are no checkpoints on the opposite (northern) side of the facility (Direction B – Kazakhstan to Kyrgyz Republic), or, more precisely, it was abandoned, because it created too much congestion, being practically at the bridge.

The main control facility is 150 meters away from the (First) Checkpoint. This is the length of about 7 trucks or 30 cars.

The control facility is made in the form of a covered gate 41 meters long and 21 meters wide. From either side of the main covered passage, there are covered buildings where offices and control cabins for passengers are located, as well as covered corridors for passengers.

Currently, the three control lanes are not designated and dedicated in any way: neither by type of vehicle, the nationality of drivers/vehicles, nor by direction (inbound/outbound). While this entails maximum flexibility – which is always welcomed – nevertheless, two dedicated lanes for inbound and outbound traffic each, would be a better solution. Outside lanes should be dedicated to trucks and buses, while the two inside lanes would be dedicated to cars and equivalent units (motorcycles, bicycles, pedestrians without transport).

The three control lanes are separated by concrete barriers and radiation control poles. Two lanes are 4.40 meters wide and the lane at the extreme right (Direction A) is 4.80 meters wide. By

removing concrete barriers and radiation controls full 19 meters of open control area could be obtained, which is sufficient for 4 control lanes – 2 in each direction. However, four control cabins on the left-hand side of each line would require each 1.20 meters, which is additional 4.80 meters. It is also possible to designate control cabin 2 for simultaneous control of both directions, which would reduce the need for additional space to 3.80 meters only. The total then would be 22.80 meters for control lanes and three (3) control cabins. This implies the widening eastwards, using the space of current passenger hallway – if remaining at the current location – or using the current free space eastwards, if the building is moved southward (inland into Kyrgyz Republic).

It should be noted that control cabins at two extreme lanes should be high-level cabins at the height of truck cabins.

Further, looking eastwards, there is the covered passageway for passengers and after that, there is the end of the covered area and the main building itself; the remaining space at the extreme right is a dirt road used by cement factory trucks, both inbound and outbound. The area ends at the edge of the river meander (canal) by perimeter fence and one portable toilet.

This is the description of the BCP and its facilities, left (west) to right (east).

The next question is whether this BCP can be improved and expanded and in which direction.

1.2 Potential Improvements & Expansion

Looking always northwards, the terrain at the extreme left side forms a several meters deep depression, in which staff buildings and parking are located. For this reason, this extreme left/west side is not feasible for an eventual future widening.

On the opposite side, the limitation for widening expansion is formed by a canal (or an old river meander) connected under 90 degrees to the Chuy River. This canal contains water and is about 5 meters deep and 70 meters long. To remove this obstacle to expansion it can be dried, dammed from further contact with the river and then filled in.

Another way to obtain space for expansion eastwards is to set back the new control facility building 100 meters southward, where the canal naturally ends, and where it would not be limiting the expansion any more.

At that new location, either the new Joint BCP could be built or the re-designed Ak-Tilek BCP would be moved, but still operated, as it is currently, only by the Kyrgyz Border Guards,

The conclusion is that the Kyrgyz side of Ak-Tilek can be improved if it is re-located in the direction of south from the current location and expanded eastwards. In the new location, it can be operated: 1) as it is currently; or 2) in the Joint BCP One-Stop-Shop mode, together with the Kazakh Border Officers.

Infrastructure improvements **to be done under any scenario:**

- 1) Widen the bridge, ideally to 2+2 lanes – two per direction. Complete the missing eastward half and widen it at either end. Whether the current bridge span can be incorporated into the new structure, or torn down, and then completely rebuilt, remains to be decided by engineers and transport economists.
- 2) Pave over (asphalt) the current dirt road bypass area for cement trucks (east of the main control facility).
- 3) Remove the following obstacles to traffic:
 - ❖ any boom gates operated or not;
 - ❖ concrete blocks that prevent vehicles from changing lanes and bypassing other vehicles;
 - ❖ radiation control poles to be moved in front of the Sorting Area or immediately before the First Line of Control.

Additional infrastructure improvements would include:

1. Moving the control area 100 meters southwards.
2. Widening the area eastwards, so that the following control lanes are created, west to east:
 - ✓ Inbound cement trucks from Kazakhstan
 - ✓ Inbound Trucks/Buses Control Lane 1, with the control cabin to the left in the direction of driving and raised to the level of truck cabins
 - ✓ Inbound/Outbound Control Lanes 2 & 3 with one Bi-directional Control Cabin for cars in either direction
 - ✓ Outbound Trucks/Buses Control Lane 4 with the control cabin to the left in the direction of driving and raised to the level of truck cabins
 - ✓ Outbound cement trucks to Kazakhstan

All control cabins to be reversible, i.e. to have windows on both sides and with space to enable Border Officers to move and work from either side of the cabin.

Control cabins and the window size should be such as to allow two Border Officers working, in case the countries agree to set up Joint One-Stop-Shop BCP – now or in the future.

3. To the right in the direction of driving, two covered facilities for buses, trucks and suspect cars, small offices and toilet facility. For outbound traffic, this would be the current cement trucks area; for inbound traffic, this facility would be located approximately where current First Outbound Checkpoint is located.
4. Completely covered and asphalted, with overhead gantry with electronic traffic panels

1.3 Note about the Weight Control Station

Right at the intersection of roads to Bishkek and Kant, on both sides of the road leading to Ak-Tilek, Ministry of Transport operates two weighbridges for all trucks. The ADB ABEC consultants visited this facility, even though it is only indirectly related to Ak-Tilek BCP. The importance of its location cannot be overestimated, because if it were to move to the BCP itself, it would cause additional congestion and slow down the clearance time considerably.

At the Weight Control Station, the actual weighing was done expeditiously, and no queues formed. The fee for truckers was 250 Kyrgyz Som. The Weight Control Station officers print Weight Certificates, showing total weight as well as per axle weight. The weighbridge had the second-category accuracy class.

It would be even better if this certificate – see the example – was valid and accepted also outside Kyrgyz Republic; the officers stated that it was so, but this does not sound convincing.

It appears that this procedure is repeated after Kara Su BCP, as the Kazakh Border Officers remarked that there is a Kazakh weight station near to the Karasu BCP. Thus, it may well be that a truck would be subject to weighing twice, with the duplicate expense of time and money.

Even though it did not directly affect the processing time at the BCP, this still is an issue subject to an appropriate Trade Facilitation action.

The best practice is to weigh the truck only once, at the departure, and issue the International Vehicle Weight Certificate (IVWC) in the form prescribed by the UN Economic Commission for Europe - UNECE. The purpose is to avoid repetitive weighing, as well as to remove this operation away from Road BCPs. Ideally, the IVWC would be transmitted electronically and/or carried and shown by the driver.

In addition, this is a requirement of the UNECE International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods (1982), of which both Kyrgyz Republic and Kazakhstan are contracting parties.

2. Current Inbound and Outbound Control Operations

2.1. Description of Traffic

The traffic at Ak-Tilek Road BCP consists of the following categories:

1. Cars
2. Commercial Trucks
3. Cement trucks, carrying raw materials for Kant Cement Factory. They come loaded from Kazakhstan, then return for another load.
4. Buses

At Ak-Tilek, there are also pedestrians, however those are actually passengers of cars and buses, who are required to get out of the vehicles and be processed as pedestrians. Pedestrians without any transport are very few and will not be considered in the remaining analysis and Recommendation section. In addition, it is strongly recommended to process both car as well as the bus passengers on board the vehicles; therefore, pedestrians as a category would disappear in any case.

In the Questionnaire completed by the Kyrgyz Border Guards and Kazakh Border Guards for 2017, they reported the following numbers for each category, per direction:

From Kyrgyz Republic to Kazakhstan, Direction A, 2017, OUTBOUND (*the larger number is highlighted*):

Category	KGZ Statistics	KAZ Statistics
Cars	84.241	82.416
Trucks (all types)	95.448	115.264
Buses	1.199	3.582
TOTAL (highlighted numbers:	203.087	

From Kazakhstan to Kyrgyz Republic, Direction B, INBOUND - 2017 (*the larger number is highlighted*):

Category	KGZ Statistics	KAZ Statistics
Cars	40.880	63.237

Trucks (all types)	75.555	117.557
Buses	592	2.767
TOTAL (highlighted numbers:		183,561

Recent experience teaches that discrepancies between the statistics of the two bordering countries are to be expected; there is no need to analyze here how and why they appear. For further analysis, it is advisable to use the larger of the two numbers.

Ak-Tilek Road BCP, also has its **seasonality peak(s)** as well as **daily and weekly peaks**. According to the replies from Kyrgyz and Kazakh Border Guards, the busiest months are July and August, due to the summer vacation season at the nearby Issyk Kul Lake.

The busiest days of the week were Fridays and Sundays. The Kyrgyz Border Guards explain this by the fact that state inspections are closed during the weekend. The Kazakh Border Guards explain this peak by the weekend leisure traffic from and to Kazakhstan. It is reasonable to expect that both explanations have merit and that the first affects mostly cargo traffic from Kyrgyz Republic (trucks), whereas the second relates to the increased traffic by cars from/to Kazakhstan.

Daily peaks were not separately explained in either Questionnaire and the Field Observations have not registered any extreme fluctuations of operational relevance. It is reasonable to assume that the daily traffic follows the rhythm of a working day.

Only the Kazakh Border Guards quantify (Question 9) the absolute peak number of vehicles and they put this number at 1.000 vehicles from each direction. The Kyrgyz Border Guards consider that the peak has been reached in 2017.

For the inbound workload of Kyrgyz Border Officers, there are 173 cars daily and **7.21 cars** per hour coming for inspection; in other words, they have 8.32 minutes per car to complete inbound control. If we compare that with the reply to Question 14, we see that the total needed – as reported - was 3 minutes, of which 1 minute was waiting and 2 minutes maximum for processing.

In addition, there are 117.557 inbound trucks, which is equivalent to 322 per day and **13.4** per hour; the inverse calculation shows that there are 4.47 minutes available to clear each inbound truck.

The cement trucks are not separately counted in the Questionnaires; however, Field Observations show that they are driving in both directions at a steady rate and the estimate is that they represent about 50% of all the trucks. This has important positive implications on the workload at Ak-Tilek, because these trucks require minimal time and effort, which can be further reduced

by introducing ALPR-equipped automated electronic gates for each direction and separating the two directions at both Ak-Tile and Karasu.

Buses arrive at the rate of **0.31 per hour**; consequently, there 3.22 hours available to clear one bus. Due to the operational methodology used in practice, clearance of a car, one bus or a truck are actually very similar, including the time needed. All passengers are cleared as pedestrians. Therefore, the vehicles of all types at Ak-Tilek can be summarized and capacity calculated on basis of “units.”

Outbound traffic was slightly higher; however, clearance times are slightly lower and there are no capacity issue for that direction of traffic.

From the Questionnaire, the reported implied clearing capacity at Ak-Tilek was 175.200 units annually per direction, or 350.400 units total.

This is lower than 386,648 units reported in 2017. In the foreseeable future, the Kyrgyz Border Guards estimate 5-10% growth, while the Kazakh side expects no growth.

The conclusion is that Ak-Tilek requires a minor capacity upgrade, which will be introduction of the four-lane traffic control, widening of the bridge, removal of Checkpoints and all obstacles to traffic and streamlining cement truck lanes on extreme left and right sides of the BCP, without crossing the other traffic.

Additional changes are recommended regarding the clearance procedures, which will be explained in detail in the sections below.

2.2. Inbound Procedure

The inbound traffic – coming into the country, in this case Kyrgyz Republic – is always more important for any country, because it has a higher risk profile and because it is subject to customs duties. In our case, this is mitigated by the fact that practically all trucks and cargoes are from inside the Eurasian Economic Union, and not subject to customs duties – or they are pre-cleared already at another BCP. Thus, trucks clearance become much simpler and no Customs presence is needed. In addition, almost 50% (estimate based on the Field Visit) of the total trucks are cement trucks and they are subject to a simplified regime of registration only.

Below is the description of the clearance procedures for different types of vehicles.

Cars stop after crossing the bridge. There is no Checkpoint with Boom Gates operating here (the so-called *Schlagbaum*). To the right, there is a control cabin, now disused, for reasons unknown. The drivers are required to enter the office building and join the line in front of one of the passport control cabins, marked Foreign Citizens/Domestic Citizens (but this distinction is not observed in practice). During the Field Visits, the traffic generally was of low intensity and lines were never

longer than 5-6 persons. The Border Officer checks the passport or ID card, stamps the passport and enters license plate number and registration number of the vehicle. The processing is completed in 20 seconds to a minute. The only exception are cars with Russian temporary plates, where more documents and more data elements must be entered and checked, doubling and tripling the processing time. **For that reason, such cars need to be separated and processed at the Secondary Clearance/Bus area.**

After passport/documentary control, the vehicle is subject to a physical control by another Officer, working in the control lane. This includes check of the car interiors, the boot, glove compartment and front of the car under the hood. This control is done only in the presence of the driver. Only after this inspection is completed, the car is allowed to leave the control lane, but it will be stopped at the exit – needlessly – by another Border Officer operating the Checkpoint Boom Gate.

Another duplicative operation is stamping a control talon, which will then be surrendered to the Border Officer working at the Checkpoint Boom Gate.

Car passengers – if any – will have left the car at the very beginning, be processed in the same office building, walk through a long, covered hallway and then will wait for their car and driver to pick them up (or vice versa, depending on who is cleared first). This is yet another needless stop in the process.

Trucks are processed in the same way as cars, especially if they are empty. If they are loaded, physical inspection may take a longer time, depending on the Border officer in charge. Passport control and physical inspection are done with every truck.

In addition, there is another cramped office on the inbound processing side, which controls the payment of VAT and indirect taxes. In the office, there is the list of the appropriate Regulation, showing the documents that must be submitted for imports from the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) – this information was copied and translated from the poster:

1. Declaration of Goods Form STI-136
2. Proof of Payment
3. Cargo Document (CMR, Waybill etc.)
4. Information (if needed) – *these first four were marked "For Importation"*
5. Indirect Taxes Form STI-123
6. Annex
7. VAT Proof Form STI-062
8. Annex

There is a desk and two chairs in the waiting area of this office. Truck drivers manage as best they can; the measurement taken show that some took close to an hour (two KG drivers going to Jalal Abad), another was repeatedly and brusquely returned to correct his submission form (11 minutes 36 seconds); a few submitted their documents quickly (1 minute 43 seconds for a KG driver coming from Germany, other two KG drivers took 1 minute and 20 seconds and 1 minute 52 seconds respectively).

The very limited sampling does not reveal the true potential and dimension of the problem. Desperate calls to obtain data do not help when the truck is blocking the traffic outside the office.

This procedure was observed only for inbound trucks and only at Ak-Tilek. The reasons remained unknown.

All these documents should have been prepared, submitted and checked before the truck ever arrived at Ak-Tilek or any other Road BCP, Kyrgyz or Kazakh.

No **buses** were observed during the Field Visits at Ak-Tilek; however, the general description is that the passengers disembark, are processed in the offices as pedestrians, while the bus and the driver are processed as a car.

Cement trucks use a simplified procedure, similar to the US Line Release, subject only to registration. However, inbound trucks need to cross two lanes of traffic from opposite direction, in order to pass behind the office building onto the dirt road area. Outbound trucks park in the lane, then the drivers run on foot across traffic twice in order to register, as this can be done available only on the opposite side of the BCP. This is not efficient and safe. Cement truck registration should be done in the respective inbound and outbound lanes using the ALPR cameras.

In addition, cement trucks create a large amount of dust, which is then sprayed by a water truck every 1-2 hours, thus creating mud.

2.3. Outbound Procedures

Outbound procedure is a mirror image of the inbound procedure and it takes the same amount of time.

Cars – and all other vehicles - stop first at the outbound Checkpoint, waiting for the Border Officer to let them into the covered control area. This creates classical batch processing, for no reason or benefit whatsoever. Border Officers in the control area deal with only 3-4-5 vehicles at a time, regardless of how many are in the lane. However, if all the vehicles crossing the border were in

the control lanes, Border Officers could be deployed towards the end of the queue and check the vehicles in the queue, releasing them and thus speeding up the process.

That is why two additional types of equipment are proposed to be procured and installed:

1) mobile passport readers (with or without fingerprint reading capability), which will multiply the places of simultaneous clearance – not only in front of control cabins - but now the vehicles in the queue could be also checked and released. This is subject also to eliminating the requirement for photographs, or replacing it with fingerprint taking, while in the vehicle;

2) Automated License Plate Reader (ALPR or also ANPR – Automated Number Plate Reader) system, including video cameras in each lane. This will improve the speed and accuracy of entering vehicle data into the system, so the overall control becomes faster.

The actual border check consists of documentary control (identity check plus vehicle documentation check) and physical check of the vehicle (of whatever type).

- Identity check is completed by REGULA passport reader which scans passports and identity cards. Passports are then stamped, identity cards returned.

Border Officers also manually enter registration card number and license plate number of the vehicle, copying it from the vehicle registration document.

Ten measurements of time taken only for this key operation – **entry at Ak-Jol BCP** – but valid also for Ak-Tilek and other Kyrgyz Road BCPs, show the following times:

Driver's Identification Document	Time Taken in seconds
KAZ ID Card	33
KG ID Card	29
KAZ ID Card	27
KG Passport	32
KAZ ID Card	24
KG ID Card	23
KAZ ID Card	23
RUSS Old license plates	32
KG ID card	33

The average time of this sample, which includes most frequently, and commonly used identification and vehicle documents is $256/9=$ **28.44 seconds**. This is in line with the time used in Europe and the US for the same operation. Of course, this segment can and should be improved further, because of the multiplier effect – when millions of ID and Vehicle documents are checked annually, then reducing the time even by 10 seconds translates into a significant improvement.

Looking at the chart of measurement, we notice that the use of ID cards speeds up the process. The reason is that ID cards are made as a single hard plastic card, there are no pages to flip to look for the passport identity page, then scan it, then find a free space to stamp it and then actually stamp it. The choice to submit ID card or passport is, however, made by the traveler.

- The next operation is taking photographs. This can also be streamlined by:
 - ✓ Restricting it only to the non-EEAU citizens or those who are neither KG and KZ citizens
 - ✓ Only require it for entry/inbound control
 - ✓ Simultaneously apply both rules
 - ✓ Abolish photographing at Road and Rail BCPs, keep it only for airports

After that, driver receives his documents back, as well as a stamped control talon (to be surrendered at exit Checkpoint – not applicable for Ak-Tilek outbound control).

- The driver returns to the vehicle. Another Border Officer will complete the physical check of the vehicle, then release it. The driver then leaves, eventually stopping to pick up his passengers (if any).

Conclusions regarding the physical check of the vehicle are the following:

1. Risk Management is not applied, 100% check of all vehicles is performed.
2. The actual check includes too many operations. If this level of risk is suspected/detected, the vehicle should be removed to the Secondary Inspection area.
3. Due to the requirement that the driver must be present during the physical check, additional time is lost, because the Border Officer waits until the driver returns from documentary check, then does the physical inspection. In order to speed up the process, documentary (passport) check and physical check should be done simultaneously, while the driver is in the vehicle.

3. Recommendations

3.1. Trade Facilitation & Border Security

The goal of this section is to propose actions that will achieve, simultaneously, these two goals:

- 1) Optimize the speed of the clearance and maximize **Trade Facilitation** at the BCPs

2) Ensure the quality of border controls is also improved by introducing new technologies, thus also improving **Border Security**

Those two Border Management objectives – Trade Facilitation and Border Security – do not exclude each other; on the contrary, they work hand-in-hand: if advanced technology and modern working methods are introduced, Border Security will be improved, and controls will be completed faster, which will enhance Trade Facilitation as well. In the opposite direction, facilitating legitimate trade enables Border Guards to focus better on the high-risk categories of travelers and achieve better enforcement results. Targeted controls – based on Risk Management – are better both for law enforcement purposes, as well as for the Trade Facilitation.

Efficient border checks are also an excellent anti-corruption measure; if everyone can cross the border within minutes, then bribes cannot be extracted. Efficient and honest border administration is the first “business card” and the first impression a country makes on foreign investors, traders and tourists.

All the recommendations made below can be implemented independently of each other. In other words, they are stand-alone recommendations and as such, are numbered consecutively, across the chapter. That does not mean they are not related; for example, purchasing mobile, hand-held passport readers will have greater effect if they are deployed on the largest scale: for buses, as well as for cars in control lanes.

Please note that the explanations are given in the two senses of directions:

Direction A – from Kyrgyz Republic to Kazakhstan, northbound

Direction B – from Kazakhstan to Kyrgyz Republic, southbound

Recommendations can be divided into two groups:

- 1) One-Stop-Shop (OSS)
- 2) Technical improvements without OSS

They are presented in this order below.

3.2 One-Stop-Shop at Ak Tilek-Karasu BCP

Recommendation 1: Re-design this BCP as a One-Stop-Shop (OSS) Joint Integrated Road BCP

1. Location Selection & Infrastructural Changes Necessary

In this optimal scenario, the two countries would select one site for a Joint BCP. It is possible to build Joint BCP on either side of the border, preferably at the Kazakh (north) side, due to more flat terrain available. If Kyrgyz (south) side were selected, then it would have to set off from the bridge for at least 150 meters. This would allow the appropriate widening, space for the Sorting Area and would also prevent the queues to form at the bridge.

In all cases, the current incomplete bridge would have to be widened into four (4) lanes – 2 per each direction, plus a meter of space on each side for pedestrians. Whether the current structure can be incorporated and thus used for the future bridge will be decided by civil engineers, taken into account costs and safety criteria.

In both cases, current buildings and infrastructure would be re-utilized to the extent possible, in order to minimize construction time and costs.

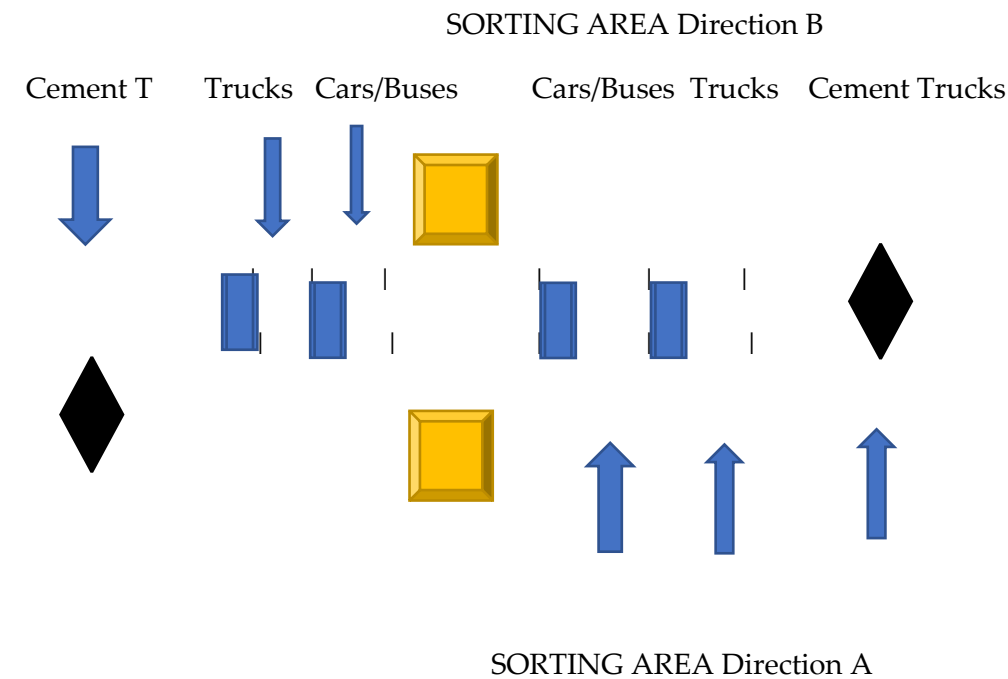
The following infrastructural interventions will be necessary on the Kyrgyz side:

- 1. Remove the boom gates from both ends of BCP, exit and entry.**
- 2. The current first lane on the extreme left side will be used as the inbound lane for cement trucks coming from Kazakhstan.**
- 3. The canopy will be extended eastwards to cover the new outbound lanes.**
- 4. The current dirt road used by cement trucks will be asphalted.**
- 5. The 4 control cabins – 2 per direction - will be put on the left-hand side of control lanes, with the double windows flush with the car window height (inside lane) or flush with the truck/bus window (outside lane). The control cabins for Joint BCP will have space for two officers.**
- 6. ALPR cameras will be installed in all lanes near the control cabins.**
- 7. Radiation controls will be moved in front of the control cabins, at the shortest safe distance.**
- 8. Secondary/Bus Area (one per direction) will be built as per the plan below and equipped with X-rays. Parking spaces will be marked under 45 degrees for cars. This is currently occupied by the building used to process outbound pedestrians (going to Kazakhstan). More precise measurements will show the actual location and space needed for this Secondary/Bus Area. A small office with a toilet will also be retained in order to process time-consuming cases.**

9. Cement trucks will be processed in the lane by an automated gate combined with the ALPR camera.

10. Overhead electronic signs would show green (free) lanes and types of vehicle processes (cars, buses, trucks).

The plan of 4 control lanes (2 per direction) plus special two Cement Truck lanes (1 per direction, at the extreme ends of the BCP), would be as follows:



Legend:

 = One of four Joint Control Cabins

 = Two Areas of Secondary Control, Buses & Special Procedures

 = Two ANPR/ALPR Automated Check Posts for Cement Trucks

Operational Flow by Category

Pedestrians are defined as persons without transport and without a seat in any vehicle, moving only by walking. At Ak Tilek, there were no real pedestrians, even though in the Questionnaires, a significant number of pedestrians were reported. This is probably due to misunderstanding, because passengers in buses and cars should not be considered pedestrians, nor processed as such – which is currently the case.

If real pedestrians walk to Ak Tilek, they will be processed in the car lanes. The same is valid for bicyclists and motorcyclists. They will walk up to the control cabin and present their documents, or the officers operating in control lanes can process them using hand-held passport readers.

Cars will be processed in the following way:

- ✦ Cars will pass by the radiation control.
- ✦ On the approach to the control cabin, ALPR camera will read the vehicle license plate data and deliver it to the Border Officers of both countries simultaneously.
- ✦ Approaching the control cabin, window to window, the driver will hand over his/her passport, as well as all the passports of eventual passengers, to the Border Officer of the exiting country.
- ✦ In case of Japanese-made cars, with the right-hand steering wheel, the driver can hand over the passport to the Border Officer working in the control lane and be checked by the mobile hand-held passport reader.
- ✦ While the Border Officer (Exit Country) in the control cabin is checking the passport or passports, his colleague will check the vehicle booth and the interior.
- ✦ When the Exit Country Border Officer completes his check, he will hand over the passport or ID card to the Entry Country Border Officer.
- ✦ Photographs will be taken of the driver and all the passengers and the images delivered to the databases of both countries simultaneously.
- ✦ During the entire procedure, the driver and the passenger will stay inside the vehicle all the time, except for the time needed to take photographs, unless it can be differently arranged.
- ✦ Upon completion of the entry check, the Border Officer of the entry country will open the automated boom gate.
- ✦ The car will leave the first line of control and no further procedures will be undertaken: no checkpoint gates will hold the traffic.
- ✦ For cars: 1) that require special complex paperwork (for example, temporary imported cars from Russia or similar), as well as for 2) those that are targeted for additional controls and any other that cannot be immediately admitted, there is a special area where they will

park under 45 degrees to the direction of movement and such checks and procedures will be completed there.

Buses will be processed as follows:

- ✦ Pass by the radiation control.
- ✦ ALPR camera will record the license plate number of the bus and send the information to both national databases.
- ✦ Bus will drive to the **Secondary Control, Buses & Special Procedures Area**. Border Officers of both countries will board the bus with hand-held passport readers and will check passengers' documents.
- ✦ At the same time, their luggage will be checked by sniffer dogs and X-rays, mobile and stationery. Whenever necessary, a piece of luggage will be pulled out and opened.
- ✦ Bus passengers and the driver will stay on board the bus during the entire procedure. Only exceptionally, they may be asked to get off the bus to be checked.

After the procedure is completed, the bus will be released without any delay.

Two additional procedures could be considered to be introduced:

- 1) A list of passengers to be sent in advance to the Border Guards of both countries by e-mail or fax
- 2) Bus from Bishkek to Almaty could be **pre-cleared** in Bishkek and/or en route to the BCP (Ak-Tilek or Ak-Jol) by both countries' Border Officers. If pre-cleared in Bishkek, the information would be sent to the BCP by Border Officers. Upon arrival, ALPR camera would read the license plate and the bus would be allowed to continue without additional control. The bus would not be allowed to stop anywhere (at least in the exit country) and this would be controlled by video cameras on the bus, external and internal, and possibly, by the GPS device that measures speed and position.

It is also possible that both Kazakh and Kyrgyz Border Officers would board the bus and control it directly until it crosses the border.

Trucks will be processed by:

- ✦ Radiation check
- ✦ ALPR camera will recognize the license plate and all the associated information and send this information to Border Officers.

- ✦ Passport check will be completed as with the cars. The control cabin should be at the same level as the truck cabin and on the left hand-side.
- ✦ No other documents are to be checked as the BCP is inside the Eurasian Customs Union, not at the external border.
- ✦ Kyrgyz Republic needs to remove complex inbound VAT and indirect tax procedure away from this BCP. In the meantime, this will be done at the Secondary/Bus inbound area. However, the truck must go there and leave the control lane free.

As for other categories of transport, the principles of pre-clearance and advance information are even more applicable to trucks. As the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) Single Window will be mandatory and operational from 1 January 2019, the trucks should become the easiest type of vehicles to clear.

Cement Trucks going with the raw materials from Kazakhstan to the Kant Cement Factory are already week-regulated and facilitated. The improvement proposed would simplify and straiten their itinerary on the Kyrgyz side, No longer would inbound and outbound trucks mix and cross paths of the oncoming traffic; now they just drive straight. That may require to tear down building currently on the extreme left side of the BCP, looking north (versus Kazakhstan); or just using the current inbound lane.

In addition, the dirt roads will be paved and covered by canopy. No need for water truck to come every hour and spray the entire BCP with water.

On Kyrgyz side, cement truck drivers now cross all three lanes to get a stamp, then run back. This will no longer be the case. All processing will be done in the lane, automated and with the ALPR camera, connected to a computer, tracking all movements in both directions.

However, now the directions will be separated. The same plan should be applied at the Kazakh side.

Therefore, the cement trucks will have a two-step process:

- ✦ Radiation control
- ✦ ALPR camera and registration and passport control.

3.3 Recommendations under Current, Separated BCP Facilities

Setting up and operating a Joint BCP is a very advanced step that requires complete trust and harmony between the two neighboring countries. In addition, it is very helpful if the number of Border Agencies from both sides is reduced to one from each side, or to the lowest possible number. Countries must also agree on the location and the type of the Joint BCP, operational and

legal rules. This requires time, and, possibly, outside expert assistance. For those reasons, the number of operational Joint BCP worldwide is not large.

Kyrgyz Republic and Kazakhstan have all pre-conditions to develop Joint BCPs; it is a question of trust and political will. However, in case this undertaking is postponed, improvements can be made, even if two separate facilities continue to be operated.

In the section below, those recommendations are summarized and briefly explained.

Recommendation 2: Remove the both entry and exit boom gates. Remove also any obstacles to movement in the Sorting Area

The BCP should operate in the most efficient, continuous flow mode, instead of artificially created batch-processing mode. Vehicles should be able to approach control cabins in the most direct and fastest way possible. After control is completed, they need to be released and leave the BCP immediately.

Recommendation 3: Introduce a genuine Risk Management system instead of 100% checks, everything, every vehicle

The last time this consultant observed the same type of vehicle check was at Petrzalka, Czechoslovakia in 1982 (today's Slovak Republic). Kyrgyz – but even more the Kazakh- Border Officers check every car, interior of the car, glove compartment, under the hood, the car boot, with a mirror under the car and in hard-to-reach areas. This inevitably takes time. Risk Management means targeting high-risk vehicles, whereas low-risk ones do not require such detailed, time-consuming checks.

Recommendation 4: Complete physical check in parallel with the passport check.

If the presence of the driver is necessary, then his/her staying at the wheel, enables the two checks to be completed simultaneously.

Recommendation 5: Car passengers should stay in the car and be processed together with the driver.

Recommendation 6: Install ALPR (ANPR) cameras and systems for each lane.

This is designed to improve accuracy and speed of checking of vehicle data. For the lanes used by cement trucks only, this ALPR system should be developed into an automated e-gate, so that the driver would never need to leave the truck and the registration and counting would occur automatically. Only one such e-gate/LPR would be needed per direction.

Recommendation 7: Complete bus passenger checks on board the bus, using mobile passport readers

Mobile passport readers can be procured for \$300 to \$800 per piece; higher-end models may cost more but include also fingerprint-reading capability.

Recommendation 8: Border Officers with mobile passport readers should check drivers and passengers further away from control cabins, then signal to the colleagues to release those already checked vehicles.

Recommendation 9: Photographing should be abolished at Road BCPs, or at least for the outbound passengers.

Recommendation 10: For trucks and other high vehicles, install control cabins that are on the same level as is the driver's cabin.

This way, the driver will not have to leave the truck, but will be checked and processed while at the wheel.

Recommendation 11: When the control is finished, the responsible officer will also open the boom gate and release the vehicle.

This makes redundant any exit checkpoint with boom gates as well as control tickets and stamps.

Recommendation 12: All the checks are done and completed while the vehicle is in the control lane, then it is released by raising the boom gate. If this cannot be completed within a very short time, then the vehicle is directed to the Secondary/Bus area, where it will be either: 1) checked additionally and/or 2) special procedures will be completed. **The control lane will always remain free and fluid.**

Recommendation 13: Regulate and publish the maximum time for completion of checks for cars, buses and trucks.

Recommendation 14: Organize study tours for Kyrgyz and Kazakh Border Officers to BCPs with advanced processing abilities, including Joint BCPs.

II. AK-JOL – KORDAY ROAD BORDER CROSSING POINT

1. Topographic and spatial characteristics

1.1. Description and Dimensions

Ak-Jol is the Kyrgyz half of the Ak-Jol-Korday Road BCP, located about 20 km from Bishkek and 200 km from Almaty. It is built at the bridge over Chuy River and is one of most frequently used Road BCPs, due to the proximity to the capital, Dordoy market and location on the road to Almaty.

The area is mostly flat, open, non-wooded and provides great visibility in all directions. The access roads from both sides are dual carriageways and are in reasonably good condition. It runs from southwest (Kyrgyz Republic) to northeast (Kazakhstan) direction, slightly curving to the right, as it approaches the bridge.

On the Kyrgyz side, when looking northwards (Direction A, Kyrgyz Republic to Kazakhstan) the limitations for an eventual expansion are: 1) on the western side (extreme left), there are buildings and parking, located in a depression. This can be considered as a relative obstacle, as the space could be cleared without extreme costs and time incurred; 2) on the opposite side, there are office buildings of the Border Guard and an abandoned building, formerly Duty-Free store almost at the bridge; there is, however, 10 meters and more space that could be obtained by tearing down the fence that separates the operational/control (outbound) area from the office building; 3) southwards, the Control Area could be moved and then the space for widening/expansion would be the largest and available on both sides. On eastern side, there is an irrigation canal, that limits the expansion in that direction to about 80 meters. On the opposite side, the expansion could be even wider.

In addition, the configuration of the Ak-Jol Road BCP is in the form of an island, and if this were to be removed, an additional 17 meters would be gained, so that the new BCP could be set up even using the current location.

The conclusion is that by moving the main BCP Control Facility southwards by 100-150 meters, the spatial conditions would be optimal and the Joint One-Stop-Shop BCP could be set up.

The current bridge is 70 meters long and 38.4 meters wide, according to the satellite maps. The width of the bridge allows 8.53 lanes of 4.5 meters each. This is sufficient for current needs as well as for the foreseeable future.

When looking from the direction of Kyrgyz outbound traffic going towards Kazakhstan, the road slightly curves to the right and, after the Police Road Checkpoint, the road is divided by hard concrete blocks into two directions, except at one point, where vehicles can make the U-turn and return back. This area can hold two parallel lanes of vehicles and is at least 120 meters long; in rush hours – which could not be observed, because the traffic was low during the Field Phase visits – the queue could be twice as long or even longer. The queue stops at the First Checkpoint – Boom Gate, operated by a Border Officer, who allows 3-4 vehicles to go to the Control Facility, as notified via radio by his colleagues (even though it is clearly visible when there is free space available).

In the direction of the movement, the next comes a free, asphalted area, divided by a fence (movable at the last part) in the length of 100 meters.

The main Control Area, from left (west) to the right (east) consists of two inbound lanes, the Administrative Building in the middle, and the two outbound lanes. To the right side of the outbound lanes, there is a covered walkway for pedestrians, used during peak times only. The right edge is fenced and behind the fence, there are Border Guards administrative buildings with additional parking.

Outbound area has two control lanes by 5 meters each; between the lanes, there is 1-meter **high fence**, leftover from the Customs, useless now, but which prevents cars already cleared to bypass those in front still being processed. On the opposite, inbound end, there is one unused (and out of function) boom gate, which is a smaller obstacle, but needs to be removed as well.

Control Area dimensions – both Inbound and Outbound – are: **10 meters** width and **40 meters** length.

The central Administrative Building is used for processing pedestrians from both directions; however, due to its central position, **pedestrians cross the movement of vehicles in four locations**- two per direction.

This can be avoided by redesigning pedestrian flows as two straight lines, using hallways at the extreme left (inbound) and right (outbound) of the Control Area.

Recommendations 1 and 2 below show how the new design would look like.

1.2. Potential Improvements & Expansion

Already the first two Recommendations alone would bring significant improvements:

- ✦ Removal of obstacles, vertical or perpendicular to the direction of movement, particularly the Boom Gates
- ✦ Redesign of the Central Administrative Building into additional control lanes – 4 control lanes per direction, plus the pedestrian processing walkways on either extreme side of the Control Area, would increase the BCP capacity
- ✦ Installation of ALPR cameras and system would improve the speed the quality and accuracy of control of vehicles
- ✦ Pedestrians could be controlled by e-gates and/or combination of traditional control and e-gates. On the occasion of the Kyrgyz Republic Independence Day, a high-ranking Kyrgyz Border Guards official in an interview in the Vecherniy Bishkek, stated that there is a plan to introduce e-gates on Road BCPs. This can only be welcomed and supported.
- ✦ In the straight-line configuration, control cabins will be set up with service windows on both sides – diagonally inside the cabin – in order to ensure **reversibility**, i.e. ability to switch lanes to accommodate changes in traffic and still operate at a full capacity.

The most substantial results and improvements, however, can be expected by operational changes, notably:

- ✦ Organization of Joint Road BCP on the basis of One-Stop-Shop, on either side of the border.
- ✦ Introduction of mobile passport readers and change of work methodology for buses and cars. Now the passengers would be checked while on board. Car passengers would be checked while inside the car, either by the Border Officer in the control cabin, or by another Border Officer, with mobile passport reader, who will operate in the control lane – and who would also check the car boot and the interior.
- ✦ Continuous flow instead of batch processing operations, whereby the vehicles would approach the Control Line in the most direct and shortest possible way, be checked and leave the Control Area immediately.
- ✦ Secondary Area/Bus Area would be immediately to the right of the main direction. All complex and time-consuming operations would be completed in the Secondary Area/Bus Area. Buses, due to their size and number of passengers, could be checked in line, if the Border officer considers this could be done quickly (empty bus, low number of passengers, no other buses and trucks waiting); otherwise, the bus would be sent to the Secondary/Bus area.

- ✦ The only boom gates would be operated by the Border Officers working in Control Cabins. They would open the boom gates upon completion of their controls.

Expansion/widening is possible by removing the Central Administration Building. In addition, it would be advisable to move the Line of Control 100 meters away from the current location, where more space is available.

2. Current Inbound & Outbound Control Operations

2.1. Description of Traffic

The traffic at Ak-Jol BCP consists of cars (mostly), buses and trucks. There are also real pedestrians (those without any means of transport) and rickshaw-type of cargo services, transporting small quantities of cargo only across the BCP. Ak-Jol is astride the main Bishkek to Almaty road and has more traffic than Ak-Tilek. It is also very close to Bishkek, Dordoy market and lies in an area that is populated from both sides of the border. On Kazakh side, after crossing the border, the road enters Korday, which is a mid-size populated center. All that leads to a high percentage of local border crossings, estimated even at 70%. The ADB ABEC Team, during its Field Visits, witnessed that many drivers knew the Border Officers very well, many hugs were exchanged, and the general atmosphere was relaxed. This is a good indication for the future of this BCP.

Out of the total large number of pedestrians, it was not possible to estimate how many were passengers, who were told to leave vehicles and how many pedestrians, crossing only on foot. In any case, the total was impressive and, due to the Ak-Jol suburban location and proximity to towns and villages, it is certain that this category has to be counted on the future (unlike Ak-Tilek).

On the other hand, more buses were noticed, including minibuses Bishkek-Almaty as well as a regular bus line to Krasnoyarsk, Russia. Kyrgyz Border Officers rightly provided priority to the regular bus lines.

Projections of future traffic were not provided; however, clearly, the growth perspectives are positive.

The ADB ABEC Consultants made a point of visiting Ak-Jol on Sunday, where intensive traffic was predicted; however, during all time present, the traffic was low to moderate. Nevertheless, during Monday 27th afternoon, the outbound traffic from Kyrgyz Republic to Kazakhstan was blocked and the waiting time before the First Checkpoint Boom Gate was measured accurately at 48 minutes (31 cars waiting, seven times 3-4 were allowed to go to control). Moreover, an

unknown (apparently) Kyrgyz national offered to the diver of the ADB Consultants to “skip the queue” for KGZ 2.000 (probably per person).

This is yet another proof that the Checkpoint generates artificial and increased waiting and, while not contributing to efficiency nor security, does offer opportunities for corrupt extraction.

The traffic statistics provided by the Kyrgyz and Kazakh Border Guards were quite divergent; using the same rule, to take the higher number of the two, the following chart shows the responses to Question 5, only for 2017:

From Kyrgyz Republic to Kazakhstan, Direction A, 2017, OUTBOUND (*the larger number is highlighted*):

Category	KGZ Statistics	KAZ Statistics
Cars	212.533	251.080
Trucks (all types)	41.745	14.264
Buses	9.310	4.605
TOTAL (highlighted numbers:		302.135

From Kazakhstan to Kyrgyz Republic, Direction B, INBOUND - 2017 (*the larger number is highlighted*):

Category	KGZ Statistics	KAZ Statistics
Cars	103.669	253.569
Trucks (all types)	20.379	14.694
Buses	3.908	5.181
TOTAL (highlighted numbers:		279.129

No analysis of discrepancies can or should be made here; the data are considered sufficiently complete and accurate for the purpose of this report. It is also important to note that the distinction between cars and buses was clearly defined and that it leaves no space for this type of error. Due to variety of vehicles, used for cargo transport, it is likely that this may have caused discrepancies in the truck category.

It is also clear that there is imbalance by direction, whereby Direction A (Northbound, Kyrgyz Republic to Kazakhstan) was consistently more frequented; however, the difference could be handled by reversing the controls – i.e. switching one inbound lanes to outbound traffic, which is possible under Straight-Line configuration illustrated below.

In the analysis below, inbound and outbound processes are quite similar and take about the same time.

The annual capacity for cars is equal to **678 cars outbound per day** (28.6 per hour) and 695 inbound per day (28.9 per hour). That leaves **2.09 minutes** per each car, which is the result at the limit of the current capacity.

In addition, the Kyrgyz Border Guards, must process:

- ✚ 25.5 outbound buses (almost 1 hour available per bus) and 14 inbound buses daily (1,71 hours available) – obviously, buses are not a critical problem, but they are in addition to all the other categories;
- ✚ 114 outbound trucks daily (4.76 per hour or 12.60 minutes per truck), plus 55.8 trucks inbound daily, which corresponds to 2.3 trucks per hour, leaving for each truck 26 minutes to process

The conclusions are that the current traffic can and is processed on time; however, any increase in the near future, will put the strain on the capacity.

Seasonality was reported to include peaks in July and August, due to the summer tourist season at Issyk-Kul Lake. On a weekly basis, Sunday was reported as the busiest day due to the Dordoy market.

None of this was confirmed during the Field Visits and observations, which were deliberately set on a Sunday and during August; the maximum load and waiting were observed on Monday afternoon at exit from Kyrgyz Republic, allegedly due to congestion at Korday (KZ).

Pedestrians were reported in millions and are not forgotten here; however, they are processed in a controlled environment, similar to airports and they are – and will not – present a capacity problem. The processing time is measured in seconds, and, at this rate the limit is measured in millions (One year has **31,536.000** seconds and the capacity of one control cabin can be calculated by dividing this number with the average processing time).

On the contrary, when only true pedestrians are left to process – taking away car and bus passengers - it is expected that some of the Border Guard staff currently processing pedestrians could be moved to car and bus/truck control cabins and lanes.

In responses to another key question about processing times (Question 14), Kyrgyz Border Guards wrote that, both for inbound and outbound processing, the maximum times was 1.5 to 3 minutes, whereas, the maximum time for waiting was 10-15 minutes outbound, and 10 minutes inbound.

The field measurements confirmed the quality and speed of processing¹; however, waiting times reported in the Questionnaire probably refers to the waiting only in the Control Area, but not in front on the Checkpoint Boom Gate, which is much longer.

Therefore, the problem is not so much the length of time to complete the check – even though this can and should be further improved – but to arrive to the control cabin.

2.2 Inbound Procedure

The inbound vehicles coming from Kazakhstan need 31 seconds to arrive to the Control Area. The Sorting Area is 50 meters long and 17 meters wide, then it narrows to 10 meters.

There are two Control Lanes, each 5 meters wide.

Kyrgyz inbound side has two control cabins available and an additional one is used by the Veterinary Agency (The assumption is that the Veterinary will no longer be present at the BCPs and this third control cabin would become available to Border Guards).

The cars stop well in front of the control cabins, or as instructed by the Border Officer operating outside in the control lanes. Drivers then walk to the control cabin with their identity documents (passport or ID) and car registration documents. They join the queue and when their turn comes, they submit documents to the Border Officer inside the cabin. Upon completion of the processing, the Border Officer will return the documents to the driver.

The next step is taking photographs, which is a 100% requirement.

When the photograph is taken, the driver will walk back to his/her car and another Border Officer will be waiting for his/her arrival in order to complete the physical check. This operation will be completed 100% and in detail, for all cars. This is contrary to the Risk Management principles and practice in all OECD countries. While the physical check is not as detailed and long as that on the Kazakh side, it does take time.

At that point, the driver is released. He may stop to let pedestrians pass – as they are crossing his path – or also to pick up his passenger(s).

¹ Please see the measurements' chart in the Ak-Tilek Chapter, page 11.

His last stop will be at the Checkpoint Boom Gate. This completes the inbound processing.

The rule about passengers having to leave the car is enforced uniformly; however, at least two exceptions were noticed: one couple (man and woman) and one mother with a small child.

The current control cabins are too high for the US/European type of processing. In addition, two control cabins are on the wrong side – right side, in the direction of driving; thus, drivers cannot give their documents through the car window.

In order to learn how long is this process, from the moment of the vehicle arrival to the moment Boom Gate was opened and the car allowed on its way, actual measurements with a stopwatch were made. The results are shown in the chart below, for afternoon at 16:25 on Monday 27 August 2018, then also on Tuesday morning.

Vehicle Description	Time Measured (minutes/seconds)
White van, Bishkek plates	3:52
KG SUV, yellow business plates	2:26
KZ Toyota car	3:20
KZ empty Truck, MAN	1:66
Tuesday, 28 August morning 10:10	
KZ Volkswagen 08 plates	1:50
KG Honda van, heavily loaded	4:04
KZ 08 plates, white Mercedes van	3:00
Two KZ small Mercedes truck, returned from KZ for lack of documents	4:53

Many other measurements were done, which only confirm the conclusions below:

- ✚ The documentary control – which is the most important – takes the least time.
- ✚ Most of the time is taken for maneuvering, walking back and forth, physical inspection and boom gates – all of which can and should be eliminated, by introducing in-lane controls.

2.3 Outbound Procedure

Outbound control is similar to the inbound, except that the major loss of time occurs in the front of the Control Area – at the Checkpoint/Boom Gate.

As described earlier, 48 minutes was one actual measured time during one afternoon; this is typical or longer times are also experienced.

The outbound Control Area consists of two Control Lanes, unfortunately separated by a fence, which is a leftover from the times it was operated by the Customs. Currently, Border Officers are using it for rest.

Outbound measurements taken on Sunday, 26th 2018 in the morning hours can be seen in the chart below.

Vehicle Description	Time Measured (minutes/seconds)
White KG van	1:55
KZ Mercedes, Driver error	3:41
Empty Truck	2:53
Black VW car, KG plates	2:56
White Van, KG plates	1:23 (only for control)
Bus Bishkek plates	0:45 (only control)

They are quite similar to the ones from the inbound control. Indeed, the steps are the same as described in the section on inbound control.

After this control, the cars are released, and they are not stopped at any KGZ Boom Gate, but go to the KAZ Fist Checkpoint/Boom Gate.

3. Recommendations

3.1 Introduction – One-Stop Shop Basics

For Ak-Jol-Korday Road BCP, two configurations are proposed; both can be applied as One-Stop-Shop or in the form of the current separate BCP facilities.

The differences between Joint One-Stop-Shop BCP and the current BCP with separated, in terms of infrastructure are not very large.

The main difference will be the size of the control cabin, which will have to accommodate two Border Officers, sitting next to each other, in front of a somewhat larger service window. The car being inspected will be parked in front of the Boom Gate and to the right of the control cabin.

The first to act will be the exiting country Border Officer. He will take the passport or ID card of the driver and passengers and will run them through Regula machine. The feed from this operation can be sent simultaneously to the computers of both Border Officers. When the exiting country Border Officer has completed his/her check, he/she will stamp the document and hand it over to the entry country Border Officer.

In the same time, ALPR camera will have sent the video feed again to both Border Officers.

Photographing, if it cannot be abolished completely or restricted significantly, may require the driver to exit and then return to the car.

Double control cabins are also possible; two pairs of officers would sit in a diagonally opposing locations and process simultaneously cars from two opposite directions.

Misconceptions about Joint BCPs

As Joint BCPs are absolutely unknown in the region, there are objections raised, showing that the concept is misunderstood.

Firstly, Border Officers will continue to operate under the same set of laws and regulations as they are applying currently. Certainly, some laws and regulations will have to be amended in order to allow implementation of this concept; however, the fundamental laws and regulations for checking passengers will NOT be changed.

Secondly, the Border Officers will continue to operate the same equipment and use the same databases, in the same way as used currently. The data will not be shared, unless this is already agreed previously.

The decisions of both Border Officers will remain independent and will not interfere with each other. A good, comprehensive MOU/Bilateral Cooperation Protocol will need to be drafted in order to regulate all the operational details.

3.2. Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Remove all obstacle to free movement of vehicles

This includes, in particular, the fence and concrete blocks, all boom gates (including those not in use), unused Duty-Free building, unused small fence between lanes in the outbound Control

Area and unused boom gate, now roughly in the middle of the Inbound Control Area. The central Administrative Building also needs to be removed and space used for additional control lanes and control cabins. When finished, the Sorting Area must be completely free, flat and marked only by lines on asphalt, similar to the Grzechotki Road BCP (Poland-Russia) shown below.



Recommendation 2: Re-design the traffic flows into four parallel linear streams, and double the control lanes to 4 per direction, as shown below.

There are two recommended configurations:

- 1) Straight-line (control cabins in one – or more – straight lines)*
- 2) Falling-Leaf (45 degrees to the direction of movement)*

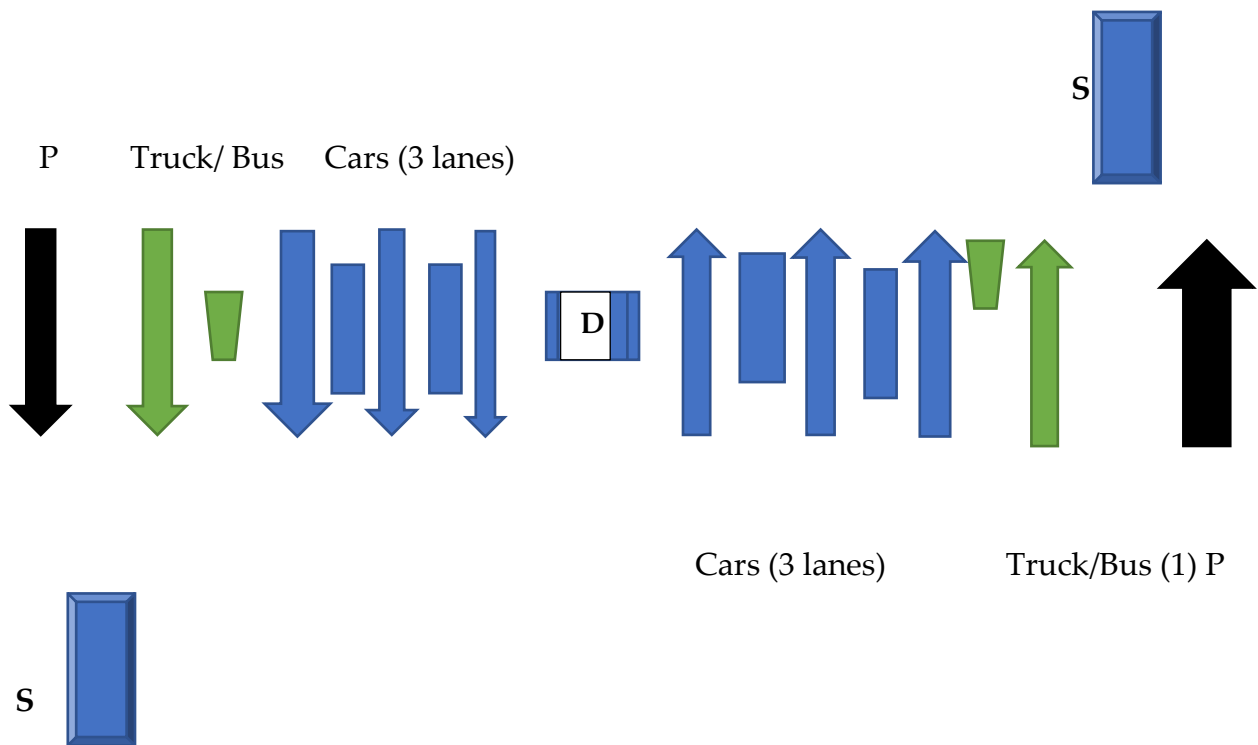
1. Straight -Line Configuration

P=Pedestrians C=Cars B=Buses T=Trucks

NORTH (Kazakhstan)

Inbound (4 lanes + Pedestrians)

Outbound (4 lanes + Pedestrians)



SOUTH (Kyrgyz Republic)

Explanations:

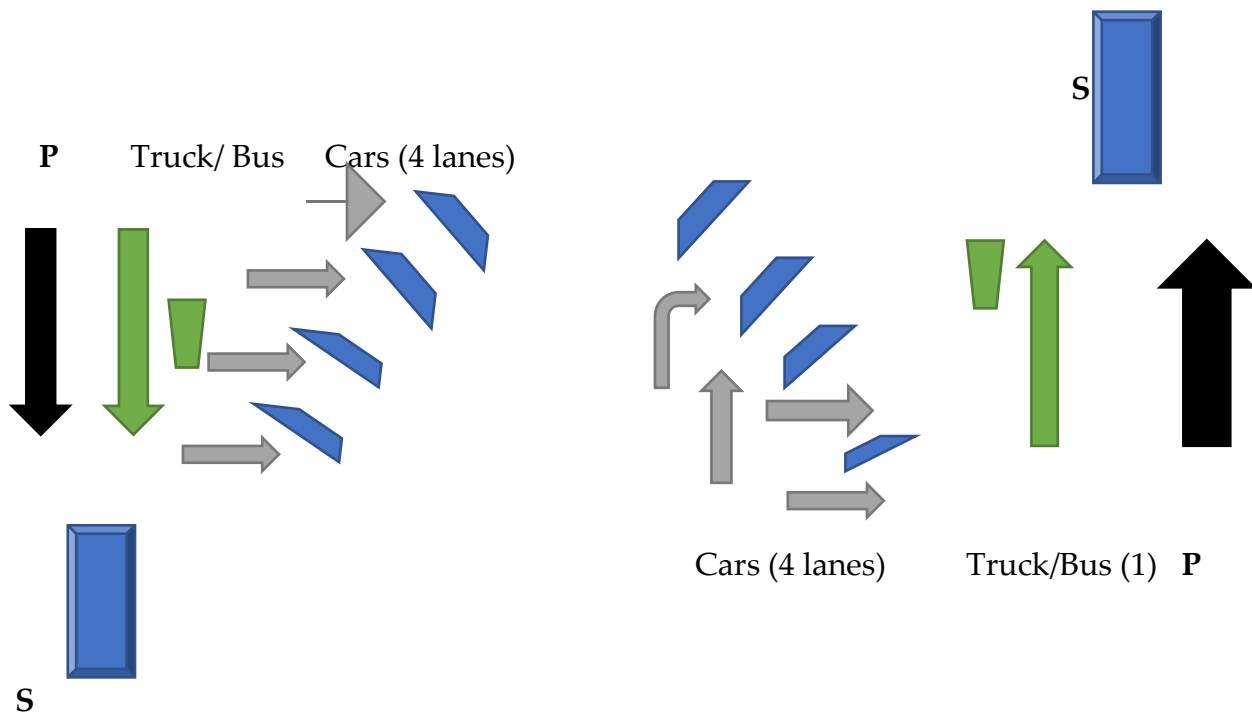
1. Black Arrows mark pedestrian flows. The pedestrians will be checked preferably by automated e-gates or a combination of current control cabins and e-gates.
2. Green Arrows show the flow of buses and trucks; to the left is a green rhomboid, denoting high control cabin.
3. Two blue beveled rectangular marked S denotes the Secondary Check/Buses area. This will also contain offices and toilets.

4. Four narrow blue rectangles are control cabins for cars, with the service window at the level of car window. This enables the control to be done while the driver remains inside the car.
5. (Not marked) there are 8 ALRP cameras in each control lane. It automatically transmits the license plate number and other data to the Border Officer inside the control cabin.
6. The middle, larger, control cabin is marked with D (Double) because it controls cars from both directions – inbound and outbound.
7. (Not marked) Lights for night operations, overhead gantry at 4.5 meters high with traffic lights red/green, plus electronic signs/messages, from both directions.

2. Falling-Leaf Configuration

Inbound (4 lanes + Pedestrians)

Outbound (4 lanes + Pedestrians)



Explanations:

1. Please see the Straight-Line configuration above; the difference relates to the processing of cars, all the rest remains the same (Pedestrians, Buses, Trucks, Secondary Area, ALPR system)
2. Cars coming to the Control Area will have 4 Control Cabins to choose from, selecting the nearest one with green traffic light (or, visually, the one the driver sees as available). Control cabins will be at 45 degrees against the axis of movement, so the car will make a slight right turn and enter the control lane between two cabins, so that its window is nearest to the control cabin window. The documentary control will be completed by handing over passport/ID card to the Border Officer. Passengers will also hand over their identity documents via the driver, or, alternatively, hand them over to another Border Officer, who will operate in that control lane. His main duty will be to check the vehicle interior and the car boot but will also carry a hand-held mobile passport reader and check documents. ALPR cameras will automatically read license plates and deliver this information to the computer of the Border Officer inside the control cabin.

This configuration enables more control cabins and control lanes to be deployed; it saves the width of the Control Area.

The Recommendations below are identical and are reproduced from the Ak-Tilek Chapter.

Recommendation 3: Introduce and implement a genuine Risk Management system instead of 100% checks, everything, every vehicle

Kyrgyz – but even more the Kazakh - Border Officers check every car, interior of the car, glove compartment, under the hood, the car boot, with a mirror under the car and in hard-to-reach areas. This inevitably takes time. Risk Management means targeting high-risk vehicles, whereas low-risk ones do not require such detailed, time-consuming checks.

Recommendation 4: Complete physical check of the vehicle in parallel with the passport check.

If the presence of the driver is necessary, then his/her staying at the wheel, enables the two checks to be completed simultaneously.

Recommendation 5: Car passengers should stay in the car and be processed together with the driver.

Recommendation 6: Install ALPR (ANPR) cameras and systems for each lane.

This is designed to improve accuracy and speed of checking of vehicle data.

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Mobile passport readers can be procured for \$300 to \$800 per piece; higher-end models may cost more but include also fingerprint-reading capability.

Recommendation 8: Border Officers with mobile passport readers should check drivers and passengers further away from control cabins, then signal to the colleagues to release those already checked vehicles.

Recommendation 9: Photographing should be abolished at Road BCPs, or at least for the outbound passengers.

Recommendation 10: For trucks and other high vehicles, install control cabins that are on the same level as is the driver's cabin.

This way, the driver will not have to leave the truck, but will be checked and processed while at the wheel.

Recommendation 11: When the control is finished, the responsible officer will also open the boom gate and release the vehicle.

This makes redundant any exit checkpoint with boom gates as well as control tickets and stamps.

Recommendation 12: All the checks are done and completed while the vehicle is in the control lane, then it is released by raising the boom gate. If this cannot be completed within a very short time, then the vehicle is directed to the Secondary/Bus area, where it will be either: 1) checked additionally and/or 2) special procedures will be completed. The control lane will always remain free and fluid.

Recommendation 13: Regulate and publish the maximum time for completion of checks for cars, buses and trucks.

Recommendation 14: Organize study tours for Kyrgyz and Kazakh Border Officers to BCPs with advanced processing abilities, including Joint BCPs.

This action could be very useful to dispel any doubts about the operations and efficiency of Joint BCP. As the practice is still not widely diffused, it is necessary to select very well, so that the field visit does not become a boomerang.