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The DTA Explained in Brief

Visas and Travel Authorizations

ICAO Doc 9303 and Annex 9 set the framework for visas and authorizations to travel, and related verification processes:

Credentials
- Machine Readable Visas (MRV)
- Digital Travel Authorizations (DTA)

Process
- Electronic Travel Systems (ETS)

Machine Readable Visa (MRV)

- Physical visa
- Designed for <u>consular issuance</u>
- Counterfoil sticker issued into a passport
- May contain physical security features, integrated photo and a Machine Readable Zone (MRZ)
- Data content and format according to Doc 9303, Part 7
- As additional security feature may also contain a 2D barcode with a verifiable digital signature

Digital Travel Authorization (DTA)

- Non-physical visa
- Designed for <u>online application</u> and <u>issuance</u> in <u>digital format</u>, with paper printing possible
- ICAO has standardized the "eVisa" with prescribed data content and format according to Doc 9303, Part 7
- 2D barcode with a verifiable digital signature

Why issue a DTA?

- Globalization and standardization of "eVisa" system

- To facilitate international travel of citizens, <u>especially for States with Batch API</u>

- Use existing State-owned PKI infrastructure to save costs when issuing and inspecting DTA

- Use the ICAO Public Key Directory (PKD) as a multilateral distribution mechanism for PKI certificates

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Electronic Travel Systems (ETS)

- ETS is not a visa or a credential
- ETS describes a validation process
- Aircraft operator transfers passport data <u>via interactive API</u> to the receiving State, which conducts system-based checks against records they hold in their databases
- ETS falls within Annex 9 RPs for Passenger Data Systems (Ch. 9)

- Primary use case is granting Electronic Travel Authorizations (ETA) to visa waiver nationals
- ETA is designed for online application and <u>notification of approval</u>
- In this scenario no barcode is issued

Verification Environments

Advance Passenger Information (API)

ICAO Annex 9 has set an obligation for States to establish API systems.

There are two modes of API systems and States have a choice to implement one or both:
1. Batch API
2. Interactive API

Batch API and interactive API create different verification environments for visas and authorizations to travel.

Batch API environment

- Electronic Travel Systems (ETS) are not an option.

- Standardized MRVs and DTAs can be verified using standardized means before departure.

- Non-standardized "eVisas" pose a challenge because their barcodes are not globally interoperable.
- If States use different trust frameworks to issue "eVisas", it makes verification difficult, time consuming and expensive.
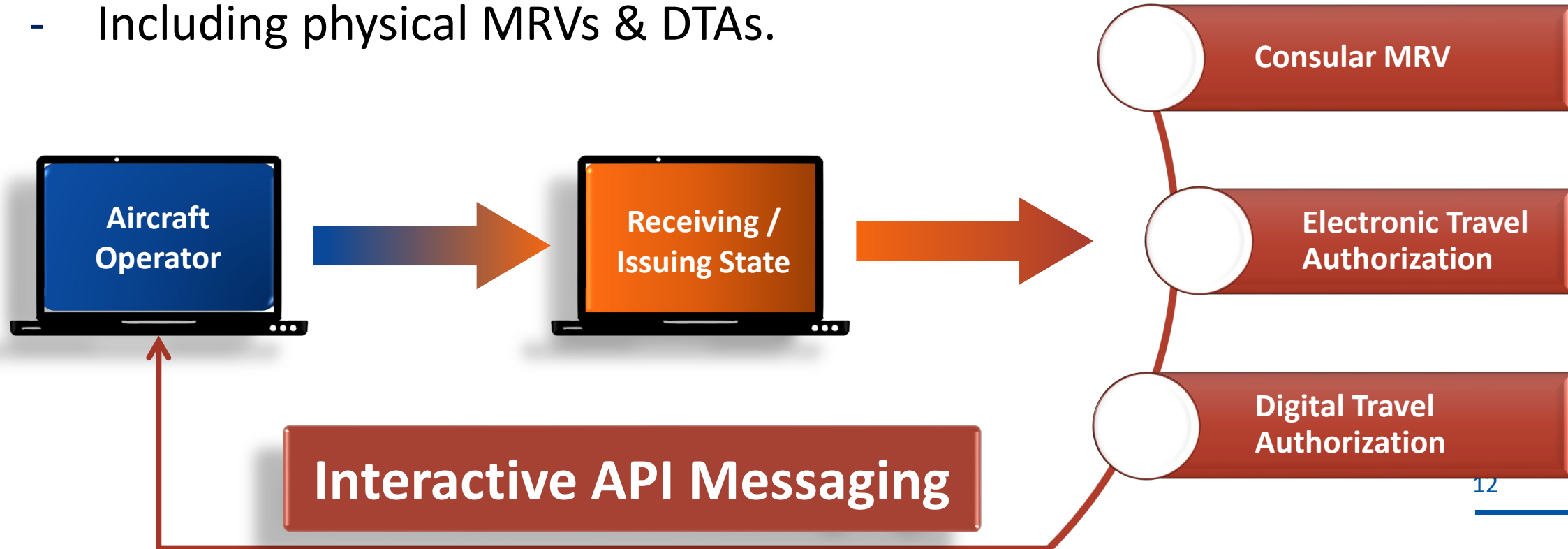 - ➢ Implementation of the standardized DTA is the solution.

Interactive API environment

- Provides States with a framework to conduct pre-travel verification of their records, the Electronic Travel System (ETS).
- ETA use case – there is a systems-based check of the record in the State's database using the passport sent by iAPI.

Aircraft Operator → **Receiving / Issuing State** → **Electronic Travel Authorization**

Interactive API Messaging
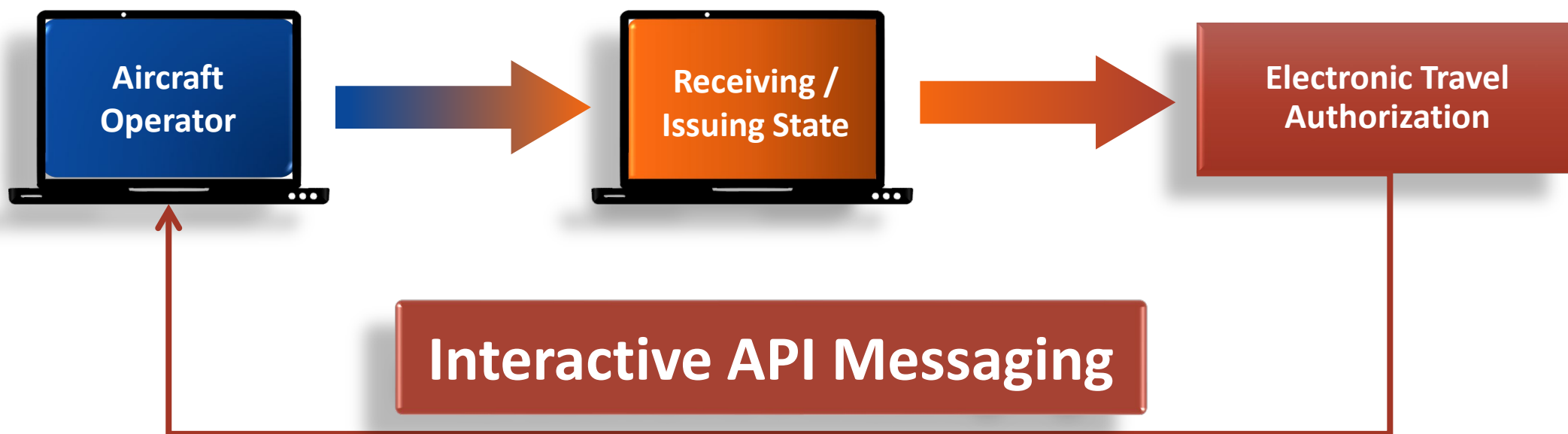
Interactive API environment – expanded ETS capability

- States can also use their iAPI systems to check other records they hold, as part of pre-travel verification checks.
- Including physical MRVs & DTAs.

Aircraft Operator → Receiving / Issuing State → Consular MRV / Electronic Travel Authorization / Digital Travel Authorization

Interactive API Messaging

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