



FACILITATION (FAL) DIVISION — TWELFTH SESSION

Cairo, Egypt, 22 March to 2 April 2004

Agenda Item 2: Facilitation and security of travel documents and border control formalities

2.2 Biometrics

BIOMETRIC IDENTIFICATION AND MACHINE READABLE TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

(Presented by Airports Council International)

SUMMARY

MRTDs with Biometric identification will make a substantial contribution to improved facilitation and security at international airports. ACI supports ICAO's MRTD/biometric programme and the action proposed by the Secretariat in WP/4 and proposes certain additional action, including the adoption of a new Recommended Practice encouraging States to introduce travel document and biometric reading systems at their international airports. It also recommends that the authorities concerned consult airport operators to ensure efficient traffic flows in terminal buildings when these systems are used, including automated border control systems.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Air traffic growth, combined with cost pressures, calls for better facilitation and more efficient services for air travellers. Congestion and delays are to be avoided to maximise the use of airport facilities. Automation is an important part of the answer, but its increased use requires greater security in automated services and travel documents to combat fraud, terrorism and illegal immigration.

1.2 Machine readable travel documents (MRTDs) are making a growing contribution to improved facilitation and security at airport border control points around the world. Increased numbers of MRTDs, now exceeding 700 million issued by some 110 States, are supported by reading systems and lookout data bases. Many more of the latter are required with biometric reading systems. Machine reading must not only ensure that MRTDs are not fraudulent, but that their users can be clearly identified as the rightful holders of the documents.

1.3 ICAO's adoption of a blueprint for Biometric ID in MRTDs in May 2003, after extensive work undertaken since 1997, represents an important step forward in machine- assisted identity confirmation. This involved the selection of facial recognition as the globally interoperable biometric

technology, in combination with contactless IC chips for data storage in a logical data structure (LDS), using a modified public key infrastructure (PKI) scheme to prevent unauthorized alteration.

1.4 This combination of four elements in the blueprint assures global interoperability, covering requirements for document issuance, renewal and border control inspection. All of these elements are made more secure by the use of biometric identification.

2. FURTHER PROGRESS REQUIRED

2.1 ACI supports ICAO's MRTD/biometric programme and strategy to improve border clearance processes with MRTDs. Indeed, ACI, together with ISO, IATA and Interpol, have over the years played an active part in the extensive work of the TAG-MRTD and its New Technologies Working Group (NTWG) in developing the ICAO specifications.

2.2 Standardization and global interoperability are essential elements of the MRTD programme. As to biometric ID, further work is being undertaken to refine the specifications in the biometric blueprint's four technical reports, incorporate them in Doc 9303 and adopt them as updated worldwide standards. In the meantime, the four technical reports provide the necessary basis for Contracting States to proceed to implement the blueprint as requested by the ICAO Council.

2.3 States' authorities need additional encouragement to further the process of implementation and standardization. ACI therefore supports the incorporation of new Standards and Recommended Practices in Chapter 3 of Annex 9 as proposed in FAL/12-WP/4. It is important that States be required to incorporate biometric data in their MRTDs in accordance with ICAO specifications; and facial recognition as the primary biometric technology for global interoperability. Those States wishing to supplement facial recognition with a secondary biometric in support of ID confirmation with an MRTD may select fingerprint and/or iris recognition.

2.4 ACI proposes that the Division also recommend the addition of another Recommended Practice in Annex 9 encouraging States to install MRTD and biometric reading systems at their border controls at international airports. This would be consistent with action taken by the last ICAO Assembly in 2001, which in response to a proposal by ACI, agreed that States should be encouraged to introduce automated travel document reading systems at their international airports. This now needs to include biometric reading systems. ACI proposes that the new Recommended Practice read as follows:

Contracting States should introduce automated travel document and biometric reading systems at their international airports.

2.5 ACI notes that the TAG-MRTD will be developing guidance on automated border control systems which is an important border control option. Appropriate consideration also needs to be given to the use of the ICAO MRTD/ biometric specifications for ID 1 size cards in airport access control.

2.6 ACI will continue to participate in the work of the TAG-MRTD, provide input on airport requirements and improve the application of biometric ID. ACI is establishing a Task Force to consider ways of assisting the process by focussing on airport aspects, such as smooth and efficient flow of passengers, in relation to border control and automated border control systems, as well as access control, to ensure maximum overall efficiency. It is important that the authorities concerned consult airport operators to ensure efficient passenger flows through border controls and automated border control systems in terminal buildings.

3. ACTION BY THE DIVISION

3.1 ACI invites the Division to:

- a) note ACI's support for the action recommended in para. 4.1 of WP/4 to adopt new SARPS for Annex 9 to implement Biometric ID for global interoperability;
- b) recommend that a new Recommended Practice be incorporated in Annex 9 urging States to introduce automated travel document and biometric reading systems at their international airports, as indicated in para.8 above;
- c) note ACI's support for ICAO's MRTD/biometric programme and the establishment of a biometrics task force to consider airport- related aspects in the context of its cooperation with the TAG-MRTD;
- d) recommend that Contracting States and the authorities concerned consult airport operators in the introduction of biometric ID, automated border control systems and airport access control arrangements, as appropriate, to ensure maximum overall efficiency.

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