



FAL/12-WP/110
30/3/04

FACILITATION (FAL) DIVISION — TWELFTH SESSION

Cairo, Egypt, 22 March to 2 April 2004

**REPORT OF COMMITTEE 2 TO THE PLENARY
ON AGENDA ITEM 2.1**

Agenda Item 2: Facilitation and security of travel documents and border control formalities
2.1: Machine readable travel documents (MRTDs)

2.1.1 The following Working Papers were presented under this agenda item: WPs/3, 10 and 14 (Secretariat), WP/50 (AFCAC) and WP/76 (India).

2.1.2 Presentations were made by Malaysia on its electronic passport and by IATA on its Simplifying Passenger Travel (SPT) project.

2.1.3 The Secretariat presented WP/10, on the validity of Machine Readable Travel Documents (MRTDs). As the technical specifications of Machine Readable Passports (MRPs) do not permit the alteration of data in the machine readable zone, it is not technically practicable to manually renew MRPs. The paper proposed the adoption of a new standard in Chapter 3 of Annex 9 enjoining States from trying to attempt to extend the validity of their machine readable travel documents. The proposal included the Note currently under the Standard, indicating that the technical specifications for MRPs (ICAO Doc 9303, Part 1) do not permit alteration of data in the machine readable zone (MRZ) of MRPs.

2.1.4 The proposal was agreed to by the Division, with one amendment, which deleted reference to the manual extension of MRPs. However, a number of States indicated that their national legislation that currently allow for the extension of the period of validity of some kinds of machine readable travel documents, and that they needed time to amend their laws, the Division agreed that a second note to this effect be inserted below the Standard.

2.1.5 The Division therefore adopted the following Recommendation:

Recommendation A/ xx —

Add a new Standard and Note to Chapter 3 of Annex 9 as follows:

3.4 (3.11 Note 1) Contracting States shall not extend the validity of their machine readable travel documents.

Note 1.— Specifications for machine readable travel documents (Doc 9303, Series) do not permit alteration of the expiration date and other data in the machine readable zone.

Note 2. — States whose national legislation or regulation currently allow for the extension of the period of validity shall undertake to amend in a reasonable period the appropriate text of legislation.

2.1.6 In WP/14, the Secretariat, pointed out that the MRP specifications, found in ICAO Doc 9303, Part 1, are a global standard, that MRPs offer a high degree of document security, that MRPs are globally interoperable and that they offer added protection against identity theft to holders. Close to 90 States now issue MRPs, and this number is increasing as most States regard MRPs as a necessary tool in facilitating passenger clearance and improving security. The paper therefore proposed the adoption of a Standard requiring States to start issuing MRPs no later than 1 April 2006.

2.1.7 WP/50 presented by the African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC) on behalf of the 53 African States supported the ICAO proposal that the Machine Readable Passport issuance be made a standard. However the African States had strong reservations with respect to their ability to comply by 1 April 2006 and suggested 1 April 2014 as a more reasonable date to better adjust to this new standard.

It also requested ICAO and States having the means to implement the standard to provide the necessary assistance to States in need.

2.1.8 With some Delegations supporting the proposal set out in WP/14, and others the proposal of WP/50, some other Delegations proposed a compromise date of 1 April 2010, which was accepted by a majority of the Division.

2.1.9 The Division therefore adopted the following Recommendation, with a small amendment to the text proposed in WP/14:

Recommendation A/ xx —

Add a new Standard to Chapter 3 of Annex 9 as follows:

3.10 Contracting States shall begin issuing only Machine Readable Passports in accordance with the specifications of Doc 9303, Part 1, no later than 1 April 2010.

2.1.10 The Division also agreed to adopt the following B-type recommendation, to complement Standard 3.10:

Recommendation B/ xx —

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT:

ICAO should identify ways and means of providing technical assistance to those States which may require such assistance with a view to enabling them to commence issuing Machine Readable Passports within the time frame specified in new Standard 3.10.

— END —