



WORKING PAPER

**TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP ON MACHINE READABLE
TRAVEL DOCUMENTS (TAG/MRTD)**

TWENTIETH MEETING

Montréal, 7 to 9 September 2011

Agenda Item 2: Activities of the NTWG

**Agenda Item 2.11: Issuance of Three-letter Codes to Intergovernmental
International Organizations**

**ISSUANCE OF THREE-LETTER CODES TO INTERGOVERNMENTAL
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

(Presented by the ICAO Secretariat)

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The ICAO Secretariat issues unique three-letter codes to intergovernmental international organizations. The scope of this paper is limited to ascertain the criteria for issuing three-letter codes to these intergovernmental international organizations.

1.2 The ICAO Secretariat has received requests from a number of international entities to provide them with a unique three-letter code to be used for the issuance of ICAO-compliant machine readable travel documents (i.e laissez-passer) for their staff. Some of the arguments concerning the applicant agencies' eligibility to be granted such three-letter codes were open to interpretation and raised doubts about their entitlement to issue travel documents. This, in turn, highlighted the fact that the ICAO Secretariat has been lacking policy guidelines and criteria for assessing an applicant agency's eligibility for having a unique three-letter code.

1.3 Of particular consideration is the fact that international organizations, if refused a three-letter code, may still go ahead with producing and issuing their laissez-passer without the code, thus adding to the proliferation of non-compliant travel documents.

1.4 In this context, there is an urgent need to develop policy guidelines and criteria to guide the ICAO Secretariat in determining the eligibility of applicant international organizations for three-letter codes.

2. PROPOSED CRITERIA

2.1 For the purposes of this paper, an inter-governmental international organization is a non-state entity with international legal personality, separate from that of the states which established it. In order to be eligible for the issuance of a three-letter code, the founding treaty of the applicant international organization must be regulated in accordance with the provisions of the *1969 Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties*.

2.2 In particular, to be eligible for a three-letter code, the applicant international organization must satisfy the following criteria:

- a) the organization was established by states by means of a multilateral founding treaty.
- b) the founding treaty of the organization has entered into force and continues to be valid.
- c) the member states of the organization have made explicit provisions for issuing travel documents in its founding treaty or related protocols in force, and are accepting them, or have expressed consent to accept them as valid travel documents.
- d) the organization has governing bodies (e.g., Assembly, Council).

2.3 It is the applicant organization's responsibility to demonstrate that they satisfy the above criteria, including the provision of relevant evidence.

3. ACTION BY THE TAG/MRTD

3.1 The TAG/MRTD is invited to consider and provide advice on this matter and the criteria outlined in the working paper for further consideration by the Secretariat and the Air Transport Committee.

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