



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

TWENTY-FIRST MEETING

Montréal, 10 to 12 October 2012

Agenda Item 1: ICAO Secretariat Updates and MRTD Programme Strategy

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN FOR THE NOVEMBER 2015 DEADLINE

(Presented by the ICAO Secretariat)

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The purpose of this working paper is to outline a Communications Plan for the approaching 24 November 2015 deadline for non-machine readable passports (non-MRPs). The paper outlines a number of measures to encourage the compliance of States with the deadline and minimise possible inconvenience it may cause to the travelling public.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 In accordance with Annex 9 — *Facilitation*, Standard 3.10.1, “[f]or passports issued after 24 November 2005 and which are not machine readable, Contracting States shall ensure the expiration date falls before 24 November 2015”. This effectively means that all non-machine readable passports should be out of circulation by this date, unless a difference is filed by a State with Standard 3.10.1.

2.2 The Secretariat has no formal knowledge about the state of play of likely compliance with the 24 November 2015 deadline. However, anecdotal evidence suggests that a number of States may not be aware of the deadline and the implication for their citizens holding non-MRPs which will expire after 24 November 2015, i.e. persons not holding MRPs might find it more difficult to obtain visas for entry to many other States.

2.3 Anecdotal evidence also suggests that some States mistakenly believe the 2015 date is a deadline for the introduction of ePassports.

2.4 This challenge was highlighted by the ICBWG in TAG/MRTD/20-WP/9, bringing the matter to the Secretariat's attention and calling for a communications campaign to disseminate information on compliance with Standard 3.10.1.

2.5 The original recommendation by the TAG was to address the matter as part of the overall MRTD Communications Strategy, which, being a sub-set of the MRTD Programme Strategy under development, has not evolved swiftly enough to be of much use to promote the implementation of Standard 3.10.1. Given the pressures of time, the Secretariat proposes a stand-alone Communications Plan with regard to the 24 November 2015 deadline, as outlined below.

3. COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

3.1 The purpose of the Communications Plan is twofold:

- a) to encourage the compliance of States with the 24 November 2015 deadline for the expiration of non-compliant passports; and
- b) to minimize possible inconvenience it may cause to the travelling public.

3.2 The components of the Communication Plan include:

- a) sending ICAO Member States a State Letter on the implementation of Standard 3.10.1; and
- b) designing a dedicated 2015 Deadline webpage on the ICAO MRTD website, which focuses on providing information for stakeholders on the requirement of Standard 3.10.1, any good practices and points to consider in its implementation (targeting primarily States and their relevant government agencies).
- c) Disseminating information of the implementation of Standard 3.10.1 at capacity-building events organised by ICAO or ICBWG partners (the symposium, regional seminars, workshops, technical consultations, study visits, needs assessments and similar).
- d) Disseminating information on the implementation of Standard 3.10.1 in articles published in magazines (such as MRTD Report, Keesing Journal of Documents and Identity, and similar).
- e) Disseminating information on the implementation of Standard 3.10.1 on the ICAO MRTD secure platform for inter-agency information sharing (under construction), including a secure discussions forum between government agencies on Standard 3.10.1 implementation challenges and good practices.
- f) Disseminating information on the implementation of Standard 3.10.1 in the talking points for ICAO senior management's meetings with Member States.
- g) Producing an info-sheet on the Standard 3.10.1 requirement, implementation issues and good practices, to be shared with relevant stakeholders online and as a hard copy handout at MRTD events.

- h) In close cooperation with ICBWG, the Secretariat maintaining a roster of the deadline-compliance status of Member States, including implementation issues.

4. **ACTION BY THE TAG/MRTD**

4.1 The TAG/MRTD is invited to:

- a) note the content of the working paper;
- b) approve, in principle, the proposed Communications Plan; and
- c) approve a work item for the ICBWG for supporting the Secretariat in implementing the Communications Plan, subject to elaborated division of tasks between implementing partners.

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