WORKING PAPER

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

TWENTY-SECOND MEETING

Montréal, 21 to 23 May 2014

Agenda Item 3: Activities of the ICBWG

UPDATE ON NON-COMPLIANT MACHINE READABLE PASSPORTS (MRPs)

(Presented by the Implementation and Capacity Building Working Group (ICBWG))

1. **INTRODUCTION**

1.1   This paper is intended to summarise the ICBWG's current activities regarding non-compliant MRPs.

2. **BACKGROUND**

2.1   As stated in Annex 9 Standard 3.10, Contracting States should have begun issuing only MRPs in accordance with the specifications of Doc 9303, Part 1, no later than 1 April 2010.

2.2   A key role of the ICBWG is to monitor the status of States in relation to MRP issuance and Doc 9303 compliance, in order to provide advice and assistance where appropriate.

2.3   The ICBWG, through the Secretariat, previously made written contact with five (5) States, drawing attention to the issues with their MRPs, and offered assistance. The ICBWG previously conducted MRP compliance assessments for two (2) States.

3. **UPDATE ON NON-COMPLIANT MRPS**

3.1   In 2012/2013, the ICBWG identified four (4) new cases of suspected compliance issues.

3.2   Each case pertained to the incorrect formatting of the machine readable zone (MRZ), as observed on specimen MRPs and/or 'live' MRPs in circulation.

3.3   In January 2014, letters were sent via the Secretariat to three (3) States in regards to potential compliance issues and assistance was offered. Those States were: Georgia, Indonesia, and Zimbabwe.

3.4   In March 2014, the ICBWG sent a fourth letter to the Secretariat for review and distribution, in regards to potential compliance issues with Vietnam's MRP.

3.5   The ICBWG continues to respond the new cases of suspected non-compliant MRPs with an increasing focus on ePassports. For cases involving ePassports, specimens are required in order to properly assess the document's compliance with Doc 9303 Volume 1, Part 2.

4.   **TWO DIMENSIONAL (2D) BARCODES ON MRPS**

4.1   The 6th Edition of Doc 9303 Part 1, Volume 1 permitted the discretionary inclusion of 2D barcodes on the MRP's data page, as detailed under Section IV-5, 6.3.12.

4.2   The draft 7th Edition of Doc 9303 restructures and updates the technical requirements for MRPs. The new 'Part 4 - Specifications specific to ID3 size Machine Readable Passports (MRP)' eliminates any reference or allowance for the discretionary use of 2D barcodes within the MRP's data page.

4.3   As a proactive measure, the ICBWG has conducted a preliminary survey to assess the current usage of 2D barcodes within MRP data pages. Data was collected through the ICBWG community, government databases including EDISON and PRADO, and commercial databases.

4.4   Research indicates that twenty five (25) States are presently issuing MRPs with a 2D barcode on their data page. Of that figure, six (6) States have signalled their intention to eliminate the inclusion of the 2D barcode in 2014/2015.

4.5   Once the 7th Edition is ratified, the ICBWG propose to send advisory notices through the Secretariat to each State who is still issuing MRPs with a 2D barcode on their data page. The scope of the letter is to advise the State of the changes to the technical standards, raise awareness of the release of the 7th Edition, and provide assistance when requested.

5.   **UPDATES TO THE ICAO COMPLIANCE MATRIX**

5.1   The ICBWG developed a compliance matrix of Doc 9303 Part 1, Volume 1 (6th Edition). The purpose of this initiative was to provide a simplified framework for States to assess their MRP's compliance with mandatory and discretionary technical requirements.

5.2   Recent reformatting of Doc 9303 (7th Edition) will necessitate changes to the compliance matrix. This will be future work item for the ICBWG upon release of the 7th Edition of Doc. 9303.

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

6.1   The TAG/MRTD is invited to:

a)   Note the information provided and the approach the ICBWG has taken.

b)   Advise the ICBWG of new cases of suspected non-compliant MRPs including ePassports. States are encouraged to provide supporting specimens and/or images of questionable MRPs including ePassports.

c)   Approve in principle ICBWG continuing to identify and communicate issues of non-compliance.

d)   Approve the ICBWG to distribute advisory letters to those States who are currently issuing MRPs with 2D barcodes on their data page, immediately following the ratification of Doc 9303 7th Edition.

e)   Approve the ICBWG to continue updating the compliance matrix to reflect Doc 9303 7th Edition.

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