



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

**INFORMATION FOR TRAVEL DOCUMENTS AND BORDER CONTROL
(IFTBC)**

(Presented by the ICBWG)

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The purpose of this Working Paper is to inform the TAG about the progress concerning the portal on Information for Travel Documents and Border Control (IFTBC). The IFTBC is an portal (database under construction) with information on travel documents and related technology, only accessible for authorised authorities of the public sector and International Organization, originally named IT4TD (International Forum for Travel Documents).

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 At TAG-MRTD/21 held in Montréal from 10 to 12 December 2012, the TAG recognized the importance of reliable information on travel document processes and techniques and approved the Implementation and Capacity Building Working Group (ICBWG) to research the opportunities of the development and implementation of a website. That website is restricted to authorised Government experts and authorised experts of International Organizations and contains specific information about travel documents. Issuing authorities are responsible for filling the database and for the maintenance of the information.

2.2 In 2005 the International Forum for Travel Documents (IF4TD) was established by a group of countries with similar goals as IFTBC. Over 50 countries participated in the IF4TD but it was recognized that the exploitation of such forum was more in line with the tasks and goal of ICAO and therefore the responsibility for IF4TD was handed over to ICAO. Due to technical limitations and conversions the content of this IF4TD is no longer up to date and accessible.

3 VALUE FOR STATES

3.1 The exchange of (i) basic travel document information (e.g., types, numbers, features), (ii) some details of the system by which documents are issued and (iii) contact details for appropriate officials is an essential basic resource for travel document issuing authorities. This is because our business is not domestic, it is global.

3.2 We all expend great effort and deploy significant resources to adhere to international standards and make our documents and the circumstances under which they are issued as secure as possible. The different systems of government, legal procedures, limitations and social norms that we work under mean that every state or entity has unique answers to meet these challenges. In allowing others to understand how our organizations function we allow others to better appreciate the efforts we all make to issue the right document to the right person. To stay ahead of organised criminals and others who wish us to fail in our task, it is vital for document issuing authorities to the furthest extent possible to work together, share best practices and understand how other states meet the evolving challenges that we all endure.

3.3 Each of us has something to contribute to this arena and while regional arrangements can go a long way in this regard, a resource such as this under the leadership of ICAO can widen each of our horizons for our mutual benefit. No one state or entity has all of the answers; perhaps this ICAO resource can help us each to fill in some of the gaps.

4 CURRENT STATUS

4.1 The ICBWG recognizes the importance of the IFTBC website. There is however no accurate and valuable information and longer available within the ICAO organization. The development of IFTBC requires the design of a website structure and technical implementation. The most important aspect is collecting, storing and sharing of information. This information is currently not available at ICAO. Governments and International Organizations responsible for the issuing of travel documents are the only parties who can make that information available on the IFTBC.

4.2 The ICBWG wants to verify whether Governments and International Organizations are:

- recognising the importance of a website like IFTBC;
- willing to provide the ICBWG with input on their information needs (what is expected be stored in the IFTBC by Governments and International Organizations) so that the ICBWG can draft a structure for the IFTBC;
- willing to share information concerning their documents, the issuing- and verification processes;
- prepared to upload information into the system and to maintain the information on a regular base;
- recognizing the role of the ICBWG and the ICAO secretariat as editorial board responsible for the quality of the content of the IFTBC;
- recognizing the technical IT infrastructure of ICAO is the place where the IFTBC is hosted and that the costs for hosting are of ICAO.

5 ACTION BY THE TAG/MRTD

5.1 The TAG/MRTD is invited to:

- a) Note the work;
- b) Provide additional comments on an ongoing basis, and
- c) Authorize the ICBWG to continue work on development and implementation of the IFTBC portal.