



**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

**GUIDANCE MATERIAL ON REGIONAL VISAS AND ADVANCE ELECTRONIC
INFORMATION FOR PASSENGER PRE-CLEARANCE**

(Presented by ICBWG)

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Member States planning to implement robust border solutions that incorporate advanced passenger information are increasingly looking to ICAO for guidance. The guidance referred to in this working paper is targeted at ICAO Member States that are considering the use of electronic information for pre-clearance, with an interest in how such systems and tools might fit into a regional approach to border management.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 At TAG 20, a number of States requested that ICAO produce guidance for eBorders and eVisas. Upon discussion with the Chair of the ICBWG, the issue was further refined, and it was agreed that the working group would initiate research on pre-clearance systems, and regional Schengen-type visas.

2.2 At TAG 21 a draft version of the Guidance for Regional Visas and API/PNR was presented, and continuation of the work was endorsed.

3. CURRENT STATUS

3.1 Since TAG 21, the ICAO Secretariat has voiced concerns that the guidance will duplicate existing work in the API/PNR space. The Secretariat also noted that the World Tourism Organisation

(WTO) has taken on visa facilitation as one of its top priorities, and has looked to work with ICAO at a strategic level. The Secretariat requested the work item be placed on hold.

3.2 It has since been suggested that the work item does not fit with the priorities of the TRIP strategy, and that ICBWG resources could be better utilised on more relevant work items.

3.3 ICBWG has continued the work on the basis that it was formally requested by Council Members directly, is an existing work item that pre-dates TRIP, and was endorsed TAG.

3.4 ICBWG has requested clarification from the Secretariat regarding the work item, and whether it is to be formally withdrawn (upon agreement from the Council Member States that initiated the work).

3.5 The ICBWG has communicated with the Secretariat outlining reasons why the group feels that the proposed guidance aligns with TRIP priorities around traveller identification. Proposed topics that would link include:

- validation of travellers when processing through a regional zone
- collective considerations when establishing a regional border zone, to ensure States can undertake robust identity management processes in a secure and interoperable way, and facilitate eligible travellers
- agreed standards of identity establishment and validation that should be in place and agreed between zone members
- policy, legislative, system and data sharing considerations
- key risk areas, and lessons learned from established zones like Schengen
- using the PKD and other validation tools and information such as API and PNR.

3.6 The ICBWG proposes to continue with the work, with an increased focus on the Regional Visa component utilising the existing API/PNR work and specifications.

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

4.1 The TAG/MRTD is invited to:

- a) note the TRIP Strategy and the mandate for traveller identification; and
- b) endorse ICBWG's continuation of the work, with an increased focus on Regional Schengen-type visas; and
- c) endorse ICBWG seeking clarification of ICAO's position in relation to this work, with a request that any withdrawal of this work item should be done formally by the Secretariat.

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