



International Civil Aviation Organization

A38-WP/4
EX/2
6/05/13

WORKING PAPER

ASSEMBLY — 38TH SESSION

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 16: Facilitation and Machine Readable Travel Documents

**DEVELOPMENTS PERTAINING TO THE MACHINE
READABLE TRAVEL DOCUMENTS (MRTD) PROGRAMME AND THE PUBLIC KEY
DIRECTORY (PKD)**

(Presented by the Council of ICAO)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper presents a report on developments pertaining to the Machine Readable Travel Document (MRTD) Programme and the ICAO Public Key Directory (PKD) since the 37th Session of the ICAO Assembly.

Action: The Assembly is invited to note the developments and activities of the MRTD Programme.

<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	This working paper relates to Strategic Objectives B — <i>Security</i> and C — <i>Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development of Air Transport</i> .
<i>Financial implications:</i>	None.
<i>References:</i>	Doc 9958, <i>Assembly Resolutions in Force (as of 8 October 2010)</i>

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 For nearly 45 years, ICAO has been developing technical specifications for machine readable passports, visas and identity cards used as official travel documents. These specifications are published in Doc 9303, *Machine Readable Travel Documents*, and its Supplement. Since 1986, this technical work has been accomplished through the Technical Advisory Group on Machine Readable Travel Documents (TAG/MRTD), composed of experts nominated by States and the travel document industry. The TAG/MRTD's New Technologies Working Group (NTWG) develops and updates the specifications, conducts research and reports on new available technologies, as well as technologies expected to be available for use in the future. The TAG/MRTD's Implementation and Capacity Building Working Group (ICBWG) assists the Secretariat in providing Member States with assistance through education and promotion activities.

1.2 More recently, the scope of the TAG/MRTD agenda has expanded to include assuring the integrity of MRTDs by securing the basis on which such MRTDs are issued, and the MRTDs and related applications' contribution to enhancing border control effectiveness. Emphasis on the systems that issue secure travel documents is intended to build worldwide confidence in the validity of such documents.

1.3 The 37th Session of the ICAO Assembly requested the Council to continue ongoing work aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of combatting passport fraud, including the development of necessary Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) and guidance material, to assist Member States in maintaining the integrity and security of passports and other travel documents. In particular, the Assembly recognized the importance of ensuring a robust identification management system as the foundation of travel document security and urged the development of guidance material related to evidence of identification, i.e. breeder documents.

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF ANNEX 9 – FACILITATION

2.1 Annex 9 – *Facilitation* SARPs, and related specifications for passports and other travel documents aim to ensure interoperability, enhance facilitation, increase confidence in the reliability of travel documents, and contribute to national and international security. In this regard, Standard 3.10 of Annex 9 requires that all Contracting States begin issuing only Machine Readable Passports (MRPs) in accordance with the specifications of Doc 9303, Part 1 – *Machine Readable Passports*, no later than 1 April 2010.

2.2 According to information collected by the ICBWG, almost all ICAO Member States currently implement Standard 3.10. Two States have arrangements underway with a view to implementation in the near future. This represents considerable progress, taking into consideration that the 1 April 2010 deadline for MRPs was not met by 17 Member States. However, there is a view among MRTD experts that some Member States may not be issuing MRTDs that are fully compliant with the specifications in Doc 9303; accordingly, the TAG/MRTD is considering the establishment of objective means to verify such compliance and to identify ways to encourage and assist States to achieve and maintain compliance with Doc 9303.

2.3 Another implementation matter of considerable importance is the approaching deadline of 24 November 2015. In accordance with Annex 9, Standard 3.10.1 requires that “[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. The TAG/MRTD/21 Meeting endorsed a Communications Plan with regard to the 24 November 2015 deadline, to be implemented by the

Secretariat in coordination with the ICBWG. The purpose of the Communications Plan is twofold: to encourage the compliance of States with the 24 November 2015 deadline for the expiration of non-compliant passports; and to minimize possible inconvenience it may cause to the travelling public. The Communications Plan encompasses intensified advocacy and communication efforts to raise Member States' awareness about the deadline requirements, as well as producing and disseminating guidance materials on Standard 3.10.1 implementation challenges and practices.

2.4 According to the information presented at the TAG/MRTD/21 Meeting by the NTWG, approximately 100 States issue ePassports, an estimated 484 million ePassports are in circulation, 23 States currently use an Automated Border Control (ABC) system with the ePassport as the required token, and 56 States use biometrics as part of border management processes. To assist States in ePassport implementation initiatives, the development of an ICAO model roadmap is anticipated.

3. **IMPLEMENTATION OF ePASSPORTS AND THE ICAO PKD**

3.1 An ePassport is only as good as the biometric and biographic information contained on its chip. Information on the chip, in turn, is only useful if it can be validated quickly and securely. In response, and at the request of Member States, an ePassport inspection tool was created under the aegis of ICAO to facilitate the sharing of public key information between States; i.e. the ICAO PKD. The PKD acts as a central broker, managing the multilateral exchange of certificates and certificate revocation lists, which are used to validate the digital signature on the chip. Any attempt to alter or add to data on the chip is immediately detected when checks are made against the certificates and revocation lists provided by the PKD. The PKD is recognized as a valuable instrument, currently without a viable alternative, for implementing the specifications contained in Doc 9303. It also ensures interoperability and adherence to technical standards while minimizing the volume of digital information being exchanged.

3.2 In order to derive the maximum benefits offered by the implementation and use of ePassports, States issuing or intending to issue ePassports should participate in the ICAO PKD. Since the last Assembly, 14 States and 3 non-State entities joined the PKD, bringing the total number of PKD participants to 35. A complete list of participants is provided in paragraph 1 of the Appendix. There remains a significant gap between the number of ePassport-issuing States and the number of PKD participants and those States using the PKD in day-to-day border control operations. The major challenge facing the PKD is to expand participation so that States can be confident they are joining a future-oriented global travel security and facilitation solution. The NTWG is exploring possible enhancements that may expand the scope and use of the PKD, making participation more attractive.

4. **ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES**

4.1 *Developing up-to-date specifications on the issuance of modern and secure travel and identification documents.* The NTWG assisted the Secretariat in developing and maintaining the currency of the specifications contained in Doc 9303 and related guidance material. Regular updates were provided through Supplements, the contents of which are incorporated into Doc 9303. As of 31 December 2012, 11 Supplements had been issued, the latest one released in February 2013. A major activity of the NTWG has been the development of evidence of identification guidance material on securing the sources that generate and confirm identity. All MRTD guidance material is available free of charge on the ICAO MRTD Programme website.

4.2 *MRTD-related capacity-building assistance to Member States.* The Secretariat, in conjunction with the ICBWG and international and regional partners, continued to provide assistance to States with a view to ensuring universal compliance with Standards 3.10 and 3.10.1. Requests for MRP technical assistance increased considerably. Additional resources in terms of expertise and funding are therefore being sought. In particular, ICAO has been consolidating its working partnerships with several United Nations agencies, other international and regional organizations and the donor community to explore more effective ways in providing assistance to Member States on travel document compliance, secure issuance enhancement and effective use in border controls.

4.3 The Secretariat, in coordination with the ICBWG, provided assistance to 70 Member States and international organizations on matters related to MRTDs, ranging from clarifying MRTD specifications and interpreting requirements, to full-scale assessments, consultations and training sessions. A number of technical assistance missions and projects were organized and implemented (refer to paragraph 2 of the Appendix).

4.4 *MRTD Symposium and Exhibition.* For the last eight years, ICAO has successfully organized annual MRTD Symposia and Exhibitions at ICAO Headquarters. The Symposium is a premier global event that brings together the travel document, border security and aviation community to exchange information on key developments related to MRTD SARPs, best practices, and related security and facilitation challenges that Member States face along with respective solutions.

4.5 *Regional seminars on MRTDs and biometrics.* Since the last Assembly, the Secretariat, with the generous support of host-State authorities, organized five Regional seminars on MRTDs, Biometrics and Security Standards in Brazil, Mozambique, Qatar, Singapore and Zimbabwe. These seminars promoted best practices related to secure passport issuance and border control systems, while emphasizing the importance of issuing ICAO-compliant machine readable passports and participation in the ICAO PKD. The events also served to highlight the relevance of the MRTD Programme in reinforcing national and international security and combating trans-border crime and terrorism.

4.6 *Regional project.* The Inter-American Committee against Terrorism of the Organization of American States (OAS/CICTE) and ICAO project for capacity building in Travel Document Security and Identity Management is a three-year technical assistance initiative that provides advocacy, technical consultations and capacity-building activities for government authorities on MRTD SARPs and best practices in border controls. Project workshops and gap assessment missions were conducted with a strong problem-solving component, focused on the practical use of the *ICAO Guide for Assessing Security of Handling and Issuance of Travel Documents*. In the framework of this Canada-funded capacity-building project in the Americas, four workshops on Travel Document Security and Identification Management were conducted between 2011 to 2012. The workshops consolidated and enhanced the technical expertise and skills of participant government agencies (refer to paragraph 3 of the Appendix). This project also supported other assistance activities in the region as reported in paragraph 4.2.

4.7 *MRTD Report.* The MRTD Report magazine continued to be published by ICAO to serve the MRTD community interested in ICAO's work on MRTD specifications, biometrics, and related technology. The MRTD Report was published three times a year and is available free of charge both in printed copy and downloadable format.

4.8 *MRTD website.* The MRTD Programme has developed and updated its website, providing Member States, working groups and other users with the latest relevant information on universal travel document specifications and related border security matters. An online directory of MRTD service and product vendors is available on the website.

APPENDIX

MRTD PROGRAMME ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED SINCE THE 37TH SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY

1. **Public Key Directory (PKD) Participants as of 31 December 2012 (35):** Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Hong Kong (China SAR), Macao (China SAR), Czech Republic, France, Germany, Hungary, India, Japan, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Singapore, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States, United Nations.

2. **Technical Assistance Missions and Projects**

MRTD technical assistance was provided to Antigua and Barbuda, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Lebanon, Lesotho, Mexico, Myanmar, Nepal, Tajikistan, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, as well as to the United Nations for implementing the new electronic Laissez-Passer.

3. **Workshops on Travel Document Security and Identification Management**

3.1 *Trinidad and Tobago, December 2012*, 54 participants from: Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago.

3.2 *Antigua and Barbuda, September 2012*, 43 participants from: Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Jamaica and Saint Lucia.

3.3 *Panama, February 2012*, 41 participants from: Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama.

3.4 *Mexico, December 2011*, 31 participants from: Dominican Republic and Mexico.