FACILITATION (FAL) DIVISION — TWELFTH SESSION

Cairo, Egypt, 22 March to 2 April 2004

Agenda Item 1:   Developments since the Eleventh Session of the Division

REPORT ON ACTIVITIES OF THE FAL PROGRAMME

(Presented by the Secretariat)

1.   **INTRODUCTION**

1.1   This paper presents a report of some activities of the FAL Programme since the Eleventh Session of the Facilitation Division, 1995 (FAL/11), in addition to the work of the FAL Panel and the TAG/MRTD (FAL/12-WPs 19 and 20

2.   **FAL CONTACT LIST**

2.1   In order to improve interaction of States and ICAO in various aspects of the FAL Programme, FAL/11 recommended that ICAO should request each Contracting State to nominate a specific contact to be responsible for all communications to and from ICAO and amongst relevant authorities with the State concerned on facilitation issues.

2.2   In 1998, ICAO established a FAL Contact Network which now encompasses 144 Contracting States. The Secretariat has occasionally tapped the network to obtain responses from Governments to ICAO surveys and State letters, and conversely has used it to keep interested officials apprised of important developments.

3.   **PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

3.1   The first meeting of the Facilitation Panel (1997) completed the task assigned to it by FAL/11 to finalize guidance material on persons with disabilities. Subsequently ICAO Circular 274, *Access to air transport by persons with disabilities*, was published in 1999. The guidance material elaborates on the related Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) that appear in Chapter 8 of Annex 9, and is aimed at assisting the civil aviation community in the implementation of the SARPs.

4.   **FAL AREA MEETINGS**

4.1   FAL area meetings were held in Chile, Tunisia and Macau in 1996, 1997 and 1999, respectively. These meetings served to promote understanding and implementation of Annex 9 SARPs and to provide guidance to Contracting States on the ICAO FAL Programme. The meetings resulted in recommendations for implementation of Annex 9 as well as policy recommendations in matters of regional interest.

5.   **FAL/AVSEC SEMINARS**

5.1   Beginning in June 2001, joint Facilitation/Aviation Security seminars have been held in various regions around the world. To date, four such seminars have been held: Paraguay (2001), China (Hong Kong SAR) (May 2002), Jordan (September 2002) and Mauritius (June-July 2003). The fifth is planned for the Caribbean/South American Region for October 2004. The seminars emphasize that facilitation of formalities and measures to strengthen security are two inseparable risk management functions. They also promote the development of common AVSEC/FAL policies for implementation at the regional level.

6.   **COOPERATION WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS**

6.1   ICAO maintains close cooperative ties with other international organizations on matters of mutual interest. For example, both the International Air Transport Association (IATA) and the Airports Council International (ACI) have been actively involved in the recent Annex 9 revision process, and in the work of the Technical Advisory Group on Machine Readable Travel Documents. ICAO is a participant in IATA's Simplifying Passenger Travel (SPT) project.

6.2   ICAO contributed substantially to the World Customs Organization's revised Guidelines on Advance Passenger Information (API), which were released in 2003, and actively participated in the work on revising the Kyoto Convention. This modernization of the Convention enabled ICAO to align appropriately the cargo-related definitions and SARPs of Annex 9 with the corresponding provisions of the Kyoto Convention.

6.3   ICAO worked with the World Health Organization on a study on aircraft disinsection and on matters relating to the revision of policies concerning international action to be taken during health emergencies.

6.4   The important role ICAO Doc 9303 specifications play in enhancing the security of national travel documents, and in the international fight against terrorism and transnational crime, has attracted the interest of other international organizations. As a consequence, ICAO has provided information, assistance and advice on its MRTD Programme to the following organizations, for example:

      a) INTERPOL, which, in a conference in 2002 examined how contemporary developments in technology will improve future security of travel documents. ICAO's particular interest in the Conference was based on the growing need to develop partnerships between States and their border control and enforcement agencies (e.g. the police) and the private industry involved in producing travel documents. The conference concluded with recommendations calling upon States to increase the security of their travel documents;

      b) the International Labour Organization (ILO) which, in 2003, adopted a standard format for the Seafarers' Identity Document, based on ICAO Doc 9303, one reason

being to improve the security features of the document. ILO drew heavily on ICAO's work in putting it together. ICAO's interests in the seafarer's document include the harmonization of crew identity concepts across modal lines, the promotion of Doc 9303 specifications to enable interoperability of inspection systems, and the improvement of aviation security (since many seamen travel internationally by air to and from their ships);

c) the UN Security Council, which, through Resolution 1373 (2001) obliges all States to prevent the movement of terrorists by effective border controls and controls on the issuance of travel documents, and through measures for preventing counterfeiting, forgery or fraudulent use of travel documents;

d) the Inter-American Committee Against Terrorism (CICTE) of the Organization of American States (OAS), which calls for action by member States on the quality of identity and travel documents;

e) the European Commission (EC), which amended its 1995 regulation laying down a uniform format for visas, adopting specifications to integrate a photograph and the name of the holder in order to upgrade the security of the European Union visa and harmonize it with the ICAO format set forth in Doc 9303, Part 2;

f) the EC, which has adopted a legal framework for integration of biometrics into its uniform formats for visas and for residence permits for third-country nationals. The EC approach follows very closely the ICAO biometrics blueprint; and

g) the Ministerial Council of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), which, in November 2003, decided that all OSCE participating States should implement ICAO's MRTD specifications and travel document security measures.

7. **ACTION BY THE DIVISION**

7.1 The Division is invited to note this report.

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