WORKING PAPER

ASSEMBLY — 37TH SESSION

ECONOMIC COMMISSION

Agenda Item 52: Facilitation

UPDATE ON THE ICAO FACILITATION PROGRAMME AND MACHINE READABLE TRAVEL DOCUMENT PROGRAMME

(Presented by the Council of ICAO)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
This paper reports on developments in the ICAO Facilitation and Machine Readable Travel Document (MRTD) Programmes since the last Assembly. It describes the work accomplished by the Facilitation Panel (FALP) and its existing Working Groups during the triennium. It also describes the activities undertaken under the MRTD Programme, and continuing need to provide additional assistance to States in light of tighter security standards, increased technical complexities and greater international focus on security and counterterrorism. The conclusion presents a plan addressed at assisting States in implementing the provisions of Annex 9 — *Facilitation*, and proposes additional means by which Member States might continue to enhance travel document security.
Action: The Assembly is invited to: a) agree that the FAL Programme should enhance the worldwide implementation of Annex 9 SARPs relating to API and PNR passenger data exchange programmes, inadmissible persons and deportees as well as the work of the national and airport FAL programmes;   b) agree that the MRTD Programme should expand its work to cover relevant identity management issues, including development of guidance material on breeder documents, and continue to assist States on MRTD-related issues, particularly with regard to the issuance of biometric passports (ePassports);   c) agree that the Secretariat would carry out the activities described in a) and b) above, depending on available resources, primarily through regional seminars/symposia/workshops on a cost recovery basis, increased cooperation with relevant international organizations and the publication of theme-specific guidance material; and,   d) request the Council and Member States to continue their work in protecting the integrity of passports as a matter of high priority.

Strategic Objectives:	This working paper relates to Strategic Objective B, Security.
Financial implications:	The activities referred to in this paper will be undertaken subject to the resources available in the 2011 – 2013 Programme Budget and/or from extra budgetary contributions.
References:	Annex 9 — *Facilitation* Doc 9303, *Machine Readable Travel Documents* (Parts 1, 2 and 3)

1.   **INTRODUCTION**

1.1   Through the Facilitation Programme, ICAO pursues multi-disciplinary, evolving strategies to strengthen and modernize border control processes (immigration, customs, health, quarantine), and reduce landside congestion. Some of The Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) relating to Annex 9 may be termed "dual use" as they aim to streamline airport clearance processes while serving to strengthen border security. Primarily among these are the SARPs that relate to the issuance and the security of Machine Readable Travel Documents (MRTDs), especially Machine Readable Passports (MRPs). The implementation of the MRTD-related SARPs, and assistance to States thereof, provide the basis of ICAO's MRTD Programme.

1.2   Annex 9 has undergone twenty-one amendments to date. These have assisted States and the aviation community in responding to changing challenges relating to border control and airport processes. Uniform implementation of Annex 9 SARPs contributes to maintaining an efficient, orderly and sustainable international air transport system.

1.3   Machine Readable Travel Documents, although perceived within the context of facilitation, with an emphasis on speed and efficiency on passenger processing, have also emerged as powerful tools for combating terrorism and trans-border crimes.

2.   **DEVELOPMENTS IN THE FACILITATION PROGRAMME**

2.1   Since the last Assembly, Annex 9 has been revised substantially. In 2008, the fifth meeting of the FALP (FALP/5) undertook a comprehensive review of Chapter 6 of the Annex (International airports ─ facilities and services for traffic). FALP/5 also recommended strengthening provisions relating to Advance Passenger Information (API) systems, found in Chapter 3 (Entry and departure of persons and their baggage). This was aimed at aligning existing and emerging passenger data exchange regimes with existing global best practices. Finally, the Panel recommended, for inclusion in Chapter 4 (Entry and departure of cargo and other articles), new SARPs seeking to promote international uniformity in the transport of radioactive material by air, particularly material used in medical applications.

2.2   In 2009, the Council approved the FAL Panel's recommendations and adopted Amendment 21 to Annex 9. Also in 2009, the FAL Panel's Working Groups, established to examine specific issues relating to the Facilitation Programme, began their work. The API/PNR Working Group completed an initial review of the *Guidelines on Passenger Name Record (PNR) data* (Circ 309). Circ 309 provides a useful set of principles for States to adhere to when requesting PNR data from air carriers. However, due to a growing interest in the use of PNR data worldwide for anti-terrorism and law enforcement purposes, newly emerging requirements from several States highlighted the need to include several new points in the guidelines.

2.3   The Persons with Disabilities (PWD) Working Group began a review of the *Access to Air Transport by Persons with Disabilities* (Circ 274) guidelines, published in 1999. Its mandate was to update the guidelines and harmonize them with guidance material on the subject developed by other bodies such as the European Civil Aviation Conference (ECAC).

2.4   A Secretariat Study Group, composed of subject-matter experts representing both the aviation security and facilitation disciplines, was also set up to examine matters relating to the security and facilitation of the international supply chain. The recommendations of the first meeting of the Study

Group (Malta, December 2009) were presented to the twenty-first meeting of the Aviation Security Panel, held in March 2010. One of those recommendations was the need to bring together, where appropriate, the requirements of aviation security and customs security into a single set. This proposal will be developed further with the aim of presenting the results at future meetings of the Aviation Security and Facilitation Panels.

2.5   Finally, the sixth meeting of the FALP (FALP/6) was held in May 2010. The results of its deliberations and recommendations, including *inter alia* the reports of the API/PNR and PWD Working Groups, proposals to amend Annex 9 and a detailed review of the health-related provisions of the Annex, were presented to the Air Transport Committee of the Council during the 190th Session.

2.5.1   The Panel has recommended the addition of new text and/or the amendment of existing provisions in Annex 9 to, *inter alia*: assist States to prepare for an international outbreak of a communicable disease posing a public health risk or public health emergency of international concern; promote global implementation of uniform, internationally agreed API systems; enhance measures to facilitate assistance to air travellers whose flights are disrupted as a result of *force majeure*; and, include new facilitation measures that would enable Customs and other State departments to adapt to the new security requirements that were being introduced globally following the 9/11 attacks. In accordance with established practice, these recommendations have been referred to Contracting States for comment. Upon receipt of the comments, formal proposals for the amendment of Annex 9 will be presented to the Committee for final review and subsequent recommendation to the Council, during the 192nd Session (1st Quarter, 2011).

3.   DEVELOPMENTS IN THE MRTD PROGRAMME

3.1   In 2008, the third edition of Doc 9303, Part 3, *Machine Readable Official Travel Documents*, was published. It consists of two volumes. Volume 1 is an updated version of the second edition containing all the specifications required for a State wishing to issue a machine readable official travel document without the incorporation of machine-assisted biometric identification. Volume 2 contains the specifications for enhancing the machine readable official travel document with the globally interoperable system of biometric identification and its associated data storage utilizing a contactless integrated circuit.

3.2   Regular updates of Doc 9303 specifications are provided through Supplements, developed with the assistance of the New Technology Working Group (NTWG) of the Technical Advisory Group on Machine Readable Travel Documents (TAG/MRTD). Eight Supplements have been issued since the last Assembly. All MRTD-documents are available for free on the MRTD Programme website at www2.icao.int/en/MRTD. The website also provides an online directory of service and product vendors.

3.3   In 2009, the nineteenth TAG/MRTD meeting concluded that the group's work should be expanded to include establishing standards and specifications on all identity management issues, and should not be limited solely to the development of MRTD specifications. This expansion is reflected in Section II of Appendix D of the Assembly Resolution on a consolidated statement of continuing ICAO policies in the air transport field, to be presented for approval at this session (A37-WP/20 refers).

3.4   The Secretariat continues to provide, upon request, assistance on MRTD-related matters to States and international organizations. In this regard, ICAO works closely with other United Nations and non-UN bodies such as the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), INTERPOL, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the International Organization for

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Standardization (ISO) and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). Since the last Assembly, assistance has been provided to over sixty States.

3.5   The Secretariat has initiated a strategy to develop and implement an MRTD training initiative. A vocational training programme, with standardized training packages, is envisaged to be fully deployed by early 2011.

3.6   Over ten workshops and training sessions were organized in collaboration with international organizations, and similar events are being planned for each region, for the next triennium. In April 2009, a Regional Seminar on MRTDs, Biometrics and Security Standards was held in Abuja, Nigeria. A second seminar for the African regions is scheduled to be held in November 2010, in Mozambique. A similar event was held in July 2010 in Asuncion, Paraguay.

3.7   ICAO continues to organize annually a global MRTD Symposium and Exhibition. This non-Regular Programme event has become a leading international event in the field of travel documents.

3.8   The MRTD Report magazine, published thrice annually, is yet another non-Regular Programme initiative that, along with the MRTD symposia, serves to bring the latest technical and other aspects of MRTDs to the attention of Member States.

3.9   Finally, the ICAO Public Key Directory (PKD) membership has grown since the last Assembly. It now consists of eighteen participants. The Directory has gained worldwide institutional recognition as the mechanism to improve security in electronic passports and as the means of choice for enabling fast and reliable electronic exchange of certificates and their revocation lists on a daily basis, which are required to verify and authenticate electronic passports.

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