



FACILITATION (FAL) DIVISION — TWELFTH SESSION

Cairo, Egypt, 22 March to 2 April 2004

Agenda Item 6: International Health Regulations (IHRs)

AIRPORTS AND THE REVISION OF THE WHO INTERNATIONAL HEALTH REGULATIONS (IHRs)

(Presented by the Airports Council International)

SUMMARY

ACI shares the view of the Secretariat and many States that security measures should be harmonized internationally, and that such harmonization can be beneficial to the level of security. New security measures should be designed so as to minimize their negative impact on facilitation, using appropriate technologies to ensure that an effective level of facilitation is built in. Governments should also accept the burden of additional costs for new measures, to avoid the air transport industry becoming overburdened by cost and no longer economically viable.

Action by the Division as in paragraph 3.1.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The facilitation of air transport, in conjunction with a high level of passenger services at airports, have always been among the major priorities of ACI. Since the last session of the Facilitation Division, aircraft and airport operators have had to face the challenge of massively increased security requirements and costs.

1.2 In the same period, airports have also had to deal with new fields of government regulatory interest, such as the European Commitments on Passenger Rights and other rules and regulations, while also trying to improve the facilities for passenger transport at airports.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 Since the tragic events in September 2001, there has been a strong desire by States to strengthen security measures. To reconcile facilitation with these new and strengthened security standards, airport managements have been forced to define practical procedures, tools and best practices in order to meet their operational and facilitation requirements, to avoid reductions in airport capacity, to provide efficient resource management, and to satisfy the demands of customers with respect to standards of service and procedures.

2.2 ACI therefore supports ICAO's Facilitation Programme, which enables the industry partners to achieve maximum efficiency in their operations and at the same time attaining and maintaining high-quality security and law enforcement. Worldwide cooperation on security requirements, through ICAO, is vital to keep international aviation operational and to keep costs and complications within manageable limits.

2.3 Facilitation and security controls should be complementary elements, to ensure a steady flow of passengers through airport control processes, and avoid the risk of international air transport being severely impeded, or unable to operate at a level which satisfies its need for profitability.

2.4 The provision of security services at airports should meet both customer expectations and political requirements. ACI therefore supports initiatives to implement harmonized procedures such as:

- biometrically-assisted control measures which are globally inter-operable;
- the introduction of latest-generation Machine Readable Travel Documents (MRTD) according to ICAO standards;
- the continuation by States of exemption for many passengers from the need to obtain a Visa (through mutual Visa Waiver Programmes); and
- other tools in order to achieve fluid, comfortable and secure travel of passengers, baggage and goods.

3. ACTION BY THE DIVISION

3.1 The Division is invited to agree that security measures should be harmonized internationally and designed so as to minimize their negative impact on facilitation, using appropriate technologies to ensure that international travel is both secure and easy for passengers. Governments should accept the burden of additional costs for new measures, to avoid the air transport industry becoming overburdened by costs outside its control, and no longer economically viable.

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