

**TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP ON
MACHINE READABLE TRAVEL DOCUMENTS**

Fifteenth Meeting

(Montreal, 17 to 21 May 2004)

Agenda Item 2: Report of the Document Content and Format Working Group

Agenda Item 2.2: Document format and durability issues

THREE-LETTER CODES

(Presented by the Document Content and Format Working Group (DCFWG))

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 Doc 9303 specifies the use of three letter codes for identifying the issuing State or organization and the nationality of the holder in the machine readable zone. These codes are based on the Alpha-3 codes from ISO 3166.

1.2 ISO has a Maintenance Agency, ISO 3166/MA, to assign these codes and maintain the list. Issuing States or organizations may request amended or additional three letter codes to the TAG-MRTD, which is to request these changes through ISO JTC-1, SC17 Working Group 3, the liaison with ISO 3166.

1.3 In practice ISO 3166/MA updates its list based on new names received from the United Nations Technical Bulletin Country Names on in the Country and Region Code for Statistical Use published by the United Nations Statistical Division. (www.unstats.un.org/unsd/methods/m49/m49a/pha.htm)

2. CODE ACCESS AND UPDATES

2.1 The three-letter country code list current at the time of publication is published in Appendix 1 to Section III of each part of Doc 9303.

2.2 ISO 3166/MA supports a Web site, www.iso.ch/iso/en/prods-services/iso3166ma This site may also be reached by typing in "ISO 3166" or "Three-Letter Country Codes" on a search engine such as Google.

2.3 This Web site provides lists of codes that are available, prices for the codes that are for sale, and an excellent FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) section. Newsletters are published whenever there are changes to the standard and automatic electronic notification is possible via hotlink.

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

3.1 The DCFWG invites the TAG/MRTD to:

- a) be informed of the updated access to ISO 3166 three-letter codes;
- b) post the ISO 3166/MA Web site as a hot link on the ICAO.int/MRTD Web site for current code information; and
- c) inform States that they should begin using the 3-letter country codes as soon as they are posted.

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