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WORKING PAPER

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TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP ON MACHINE READABLE TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

Sixteenth Meeting

(Montreal, 26 to 28 September 2005)

Agenda Item 1: Development of specifications for MRTDs

Agenda Item 1.3: Report of the Document Content and Format Working Group

TRAVEL DOCUMENT QUALITY ASSURANCE & TESTING

(Presented by the Document Content and Format Working Group)

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 With all ICAO member States being obliged to issue only MRPs no later than April 2010, and the production of e-passports beginning to start in many member States, quality assurance (QA) of manufacturing is an increasingly important issue to maximise the confidence States have in the appearance, consistency and integrity of documents. It is necessary to make recommended practices for document issuance widely available and to provide information on institutes that can perform relevant tests on e-passports in the name of e-passport issuing States.

1.2 At this early stage of use of e-passports, it is premature to declare any international organization that can recognize, let alone accredit or certify testing institutions, simply due to lack of precedence, leaving aside other legal, financial and political implications of any organization trying to assume such a role. However, a list of potential testing institutes can be established.

2. TERMS OF REFERENCE

2.1 A paper with the title "Guidelines for Dealing With External Passport and Other Travel/Identity Document Fraud - Recommended Standard Practices For the World's Governments" by Mr. John Hotchner has been included in the new DOC 9303, Part 1, Volume 1 in a shortened version. The

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paper contains an excellent description of security concepts applicable for document issuance. The paper shall also be made available to governments in its full length.

2.2 ISO WG3 TF4 compiled a list of tests for e-passports targeting on functionality and durability. The successful completion of these tests are regarded as the basic requirement for States wishing to issue e-passports.

2.3 Many States have competent State-owned test laboratories that are capable of carrying out the tests on their behalf. These laboratories work solely for their own governments. However, a number of (smaller) countries do not have the capability to carry out the tests in their own facilities and seek competent institutes in foreign countries.

2.4 DCFWG proposes a means of support to these countries wishing to test their e-passports but not having the facilities to perform requisite tests, according to ISO WG3 TF4, on their own.

2.5 ICAO would compile a list of test institutes that can perform e-passport tests as specified by ISO WG3 TF4, with DCFWG volunteers doing all the administrative work involved in finding such test institutes, compiling background information (such as long-term viability, competency and independence), generating guidelines and a questionnaire and editing the received information. Since the required tests cover a great variety of methods and equipment, a key aspect would be information on which institute has the ability to carry out what set of tests. This information would assist States choosing the test institute that best satisfies their needs for testing.

2.6 The list of test institutes resulting from this research will be published on the ICAO website as purely informational material without ICAO taking responsibility for the test procedures or results of the tests. It would be supporting information for e-passport issuing countries without any obligation or guarantee by ICAO or TAG/MRTD. There are no costs involved for either, since all costs for testing would be paid directly by the State to the test institute. The list would be updated on a bi-annual basis.

3. ACTION BY THE TAG/MRTD

3.1 The TAG/MRTD is invited to:

- a) recommend that the paper, "Guidelines for Dealing With External Passport and Other Travel/Identity Document Fraud - Recommended Standard Practices For the World's Governments," should be published on the ICAO MRTD web-site as a downloadable file in its full length in order to make it available to a wider public. TAG/MRTD should recommend the application of rules as set down in the paper; and;
- b) approve that DCFWG should compile a non-binding list of test institutes to which States may refer in case they wish to test their e-passports according to ISO WG3 TF4.

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