International Civil Aviation Organization

WORKING PAPER

TAG-MRTD/16
WP/20
13/9/05
English only

TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP ON
MACHINE READABLE TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

Sixteenth Meeting

(Montreal, 26 to 28 September 2005)

Agenda Item 2:   Implementation of e-passports
Agenda Item 2.2: Report of the NTWG

2004/05 NTWG REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI)

(Presented by the New Technologies Working Group)

1.   **INTRODUCTION**

1.1   This paper is intended to provide the final report on the 2004/05 New Technologies Working Group (NTWG) Request for Information (RFI) initiative.

1.2   At TAG/MRTD-15 (Montreal 18-21 May 2004) the NTWG presented an interim report *2004/05 NTWG Request for Information (RFI)* on the planned RFI presentations (Information Paper No 1). As the RFI presentations were carried out after the TAG, this paper was limited to an outline of the background to the RFI program and the proposed RFI strategy undertaken during the 2004/05 initiatives.

1.3   International publication of the RFI document attracted 97 proposals in eight technology categories: Biometrics (33 proposals); Data storage media (5); E-Commerce (13); RF technologies (4); Self-service facilitation (12); Travel document printers (2); Travel document readers (12); and Travel document security concepts (16). The NTWG review committee selected 45 proposals from 28 vendors to be presented to member state officials. The oral presentations also fell into all eight categories: Biometrics (14 proposals); Data storage media (2); E-Commerce (5); RF technologies (2); Self-service facilitation (2); Travel document printers (2); Travel document readers (8); and Travel document security concepts (10). The oral presentations occurred in Geneva, Switzerland at the International Air Transport Association Headquarters May 23 through May 27, 2005. A Commercial-in-Confidence document was prepared for all attending member state representative as well as government members of the New

Technologies Work Group. This document contained all summary papers submitted by presenting vendors. These 3 page summary papers provide, by RFI category, an outline of each of the vendor products and are available to ICAO member states for use as a reference tool.

2.   **KEY FINDINGS**

2.1   The most pressing issues facing the vendor community include the requirement for additional interoperability and standardization across multiple systems, platforms, applications, devices and biometrics.

2.2   Member States must continue the pressure for the industry to advance and deliver highly accurate, systems and products that are capable of interoperating with exiting issuing and border management systems, delivering proven scalability, verifying and identifying diverse populations in real-time with enhancements to business processes.

2.3   The vendor community has to aggressively maximize efficiency and increase value by providing solutions that support numerous environments such as multiple systems, applications and devices.

2.4   Affordability continues to be a pressing issue. Prices for authentication devices need to be reduced which may occur by increases in the volume of purchases. However, prices still need to come down.

3.   **CONCLUSION**

3.1   There has been a steady improvement in the understanding of the needs of the border management community by the various vendors. Since the last RFI, there has been noteworthy development in most of the technologies presented. It was evident that many vendors have participated with member States in refining the emerging interoperability standards. Although, several products were suitable for implementation it was apparent that many more would be available in the near future.

3.2   The sense that interoperability with regard to MRTD processing, proved to be the most interesting point of the RFI. It seemed the normal 'defacto' standardization methods did not play out in this particular scenario. The need to get new products out the gate that are already geared toward interoperability proved to be worthwhile, initially anyway.

3.3   Additionally, vendors continue to develop their understanding of the MRTD environment and the further development of industry standards has provided needed guidance in relation to the biometric recognition and reader systems. The RFI process continues to provide ICAO a valuable tool that provides member states insight into products and concepts that may be implemented in their national MRTD programs.

3.4   However, a stronger showing by ICAO member state representatives is needed in the future to make the ICAO RFI worthwhile to the vendor community. It clearly was evident that the vendor community put a considerable more amount of effort into this RFI compared to the number of States represented during the RFI.

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

4.1   The TAG/MRTD is invited to:

a) note the findings and conclusions of the RFI report; and

b) approve the continuation of the RFI program and note that the next RFI initiative should occur in 2007/08.

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