International Civil Aviation Organization

WORKING PAPER

TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP ON MACHINE READABLE TRAVEL DOCUMENTS (TAG-MRTD)

SEVENTEENTH MEETING

Montréal, 20 to 22 March 2007

Agenda Item 1:   Development of Specifications for MRTDs
Agenda Item 1.2: Updates on 2nd Edition, Doc. 9202, Part 2

PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS TO THE THIRD EDITION OF ICAO DOC 9303 PART 2 – MACHINE READABLE VISAS

Presented jointly by the New Technologies Working Group (NTWG) and
the Document Content & Format Working Group (DCFWG)

1.   **INTRODUCTION**

1.1   The Third Edition of ICAO Doc 9303 Part 2 – Machine Readable Visas was published in 2005, but the editing of the document took place some time earlier. The bulk of the editing took place before the decision was made to standardise on Contactless Integrated Circuits for data storage and facial image optionally supported by finger and/or iris images as the standard input to biometric identification systems. The Third Edition of Part 2, in fact, forms the last of a previous suite of 9303 Documents. This previous suite mentioned several different data storage media and biometric technologies which are no longer supported by ICAO, though there is no objection to their use by a State for its own purposes. If a State does decide to use one or more of these technologies it cannot expect other States or airlines to be able to read the data, except where a special arrangement has been made.

1.2   The Third Edition of Doc 9303 Part 2 makes reference to the use of contactless integrated circuits contained within a visa label. Since the introduction of the ePassport, it has become clear that the presence of one (or more) contactless integrated circuits in visa(s) placed within an ePassport may adversely affect the readability of the data contained in the integrated circuit of the ePassport. As a result, both NTWG and DCFWG have determined that the use of a contactless integrated circuit in a visa should not be permitted. The NTWG is now of the view that, even if a solution is found, the likely ICAO standard method of incorporating biometrics in visas will not involve the use of contactless integrated circuits.

1.3   Both Working Groups are of the opinion that the time is not yet right for the publication of a new Edition of Part 2; the time for this is when the NTWG has formulated a final policy on the various options available for storing and accessing visa data. There is, however, a need to make changes to the existing edition of Part 2 to make clear that contactless integrated circuits in visas are not currently permitted and that data storage media and biometrics other than face optionally supported by finger and iris are not globally interoperable.

1.4   This paper therefore seeks the approval of the TAG for the issue of amendments to the Third Edition of Doc 9303 Part 2 as summarised herein.

2.   **PROPOSED AMENDMENTS**

2.1   The proposed amendments involve the replacement of two pages and the removal of some Annexes. In consequence, modification to the contents pages may be desirable.

3.   **ACTION BY THE TAG**

3.1   The TAG is requested to approve these amendments to the Third edition of Doc 9303 Part 2 and to ask the Secretariat to issue the amendments as a matter of urgency.

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