International Civil Aviation Organization

WORKING PAPER

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

TWENTY-FIRST MEETING

Montréal, 10 to 12 December 2012

Agenda Item 3:   Activities of ICBWG

Implementation and Capacity Building Working Group (ICBWG) Update

(Presented by Chair, ICBWG)

1.   **INTRODUCTION**

1.1   This paper summarises the work of the ICBWG since TAG/20, and outlines the planned future activities of the ICBWG. The paper asks the TAG to note the work of ICBWG and seeks endorsement of the group's planned activities and direction.

2.   **CURRENT STATUS**

2.1   Since TAG/20, the ICBWG has met once: Vienna (March 2012). It was decided that until there was clarity and high level endorsement of ICAO's strategic direction in relation to the MRTD Program, the Group would progress key work items without meeting formally.

2.2   The Guide for Assessing Security for Handling and Issuance of Travel Documents (Part 1), and the accompanying Assessment Template (Part 2) is now available in English, Spanish and French from the ICAO website. The Guide provides information on best practice, and a means to assess States' current policy/operational environment in relation to travel document issuance.

2.3   The Group has continued to monitor and record the status of States in relation to travel document issuance – specifically in non-MRP issuing States, and States that are issuing non-compliant MRPs.

2.4   Since TAG 20, some of the States identified as non-MRP have begun issuing MRPs. Algeria and Mauritania now issue ePassports, and Afghanistan issues diplomatic and official MRPs.

ICBWG understands that Djibouti continues to issue Diplomatic and Official MRPs only. Although the new CEMAC (Economic Community for Central African States) passport implementation was scheduled for July 2010, it appears this has not yet occurred, leaving two CEMAC States still yet to issue MRPs (Central African Republic and Equatorial Guinea). Kiribati is in the process of implementing a new passport system (with the assistance of Australia), and is expected to be issuing MRPs in March 2013.

2.5   An ICBWG sub-group on non-compliance had been proactively identifying and contacting States known to be issuing MRPs that do not comply with Doc. 9303 specifications. Since working with the Secretary General to officially notify five States of the issues identified with their MRPs (Benin; Congo; Guinea-Bissau; Iran; Tajikistan), the ICBWG has shifted focus to identifying other non-compliant documents. To date, only Congo has acknowledged receipt of the letter, and none have requested assistance from the ICBWG.

2.6   Based on intelligence from border authorities, anecdotal reports, and visual inspections using resources such as Keesing Document Checker, the ICBWG has identified Laos, East Timor, Guinea Conakry, Somalia and Zimbabwe as potentially issuing non-compliant documents. The Group intends to undertake further investigation with regard to these States at the earliest opportunity.

2.7   ICBWG Chair and members contributed to the development of a long term strategy for the MRTD Programme, and representatives from a number of ICBWG member States supported the Strategy at the High Level Security Conference.

2.8   The ICBWG continued its contribution to ICAO Regional Seminars, with members attending and presenting in Qatar, Zimbabwe other ICAO regional events, and also the MRTD Symposium.

2.9   A number of ICBWG members have continued to contribute to the NTWG's Evidence of Identity Guidance (See WP/4), and it is expected that the Group will continue assisting with this important work.

2.10   The ICBWG worked in conjunction with UNHCR to develop guidance material for the issuance of Doc. 9303 compliant machine-readable Convention Travel Documents. See WP/9. The ICBWG Chair also presented to State representatives prior to the UNHCR Standing Committee meeting in June. The Group is seeking opportunities to promote the Guide, and draw attention to the CTD non-compliance issue.

2.11   The Group contributed to, and supported, Canada's submission to the Facilitation Panel on changes to Annex 9, which proposed the inclusion of a standard to ensure the establishment of controls over the entire travel document application, adjudication and issuance process to ensure a high level of integrity and security.

2.12   The ICBWG has continued to develop the Doc. 9303 Compliance scheme, as agreed at TAG 20. The revised working paper introduces additional detail, and clarifies information and queries raised at TAG 20. See WP/10

2.13   The Group has developed a first draft high-level guidance material for States on Advanced Passenger Information (API) and Passenger Name Record (PNR) information. The guidance also covers regional Schengen-type border arrangements. The guidance is intended to complement existing information, such as ICAO's Guidelines on API. If the direction of this work is endorsed by the TAG, a sub-group with wider membership is likely to be required. See WP/11

2.14   Following the success of presentations and discussions on procurement at the ICAO Regional Seminars and Symposiums, the ICAO Secretariat approached ICBWG to investigate developing guidance material related to improving knowledge and capability in the area of procurement. A collaborative approach with the Procurement Section of ICAO's Technical Cooperation bureau had been proposed. The ICBWG is currently waiting for advice from the Secretariat on strategy and direction, and how the work of the ICBWG relates to the work and function of the TCB. In the interim, more targeted piece of guidance related to ePassports procurement has been proposed by the Secretariat, and is outlined in this WP in the 'New Work for the ICBWG' section.

2.15   The ICBWG wishes to again draw TAG/MRTD's attention to the approaching November 2015 deadline for all non-MRPs to be out of circulation. The communication of this date, and the implications for States, is a key consideration for the ICBWG. As yet the Secretariat has not communicated any policy or guidance, or developed any communications to draw attention to the date and its significance for borders, and citizens in possession of non-MRPs. The ICBWG acknowledges it has not adequately assisted ICAO to drive this work forward – however, the group is looking for clear guidance on the Secretariat's proposed approach on this matter.

2.16   The ICBWG is continuing to maintain a contact list for passport and border control authorities throughout the world. The list is intended to assist the Secretariat to distribute MRTD-related material and questionnaires to targeted offices and/or individuals. The list was recently used by the Secretariat to supplement existing contacts, to circulate information to States on the PKD.

3.   NEW WORK FOR THE ICBWG

3.1   The Secretariat has noted there is a great deal of interest in how to link technical travel document requirements to a procedure/contract, to ensure the vendor delivers the required compliant product.   The Secretariat has received feedback that a guide specifically targeted at procuring and implementing ePassports would be useful.

3.2   States have not been asking ICAO whether they should move to ePassports – but rather, presuming benefits will outweigh cost, seemingly without considering elements like PKI, the cost of a secure IT infrastructure, and a secure issuance process including identity evidence of identity procedures and safeguards. ICAO guidance material could address the business case scenario for the ePassport, and how to work through the investment logic. The State can then consider why it might move to an ePassport, and whether the ePassport will be the best use of State funds, particularly if it does not improve acceptance/facilitation for their citizens. The Secretariat will lead this initiative, supported by the ICBWG.

3.3   The ICBWG is exploring whether or how to continue the IF4TD site, which holds shared information about various' States' travel documents. The legacy IF4TD website has been migrated to the ICAO Sharepoint site, and renamed IFTDBC (ICAO Forum for Travel Documents and Border Control). Some States have supported the continuation of the site – however keeping the content up to date has proved challenging in the past, as States themselves need to be committed to keeping the information current. The Secretariat noted that AVSEC run a similar site for States, and it has been suggested that the site could fall under their administration. The ICBWG will continue to work with the Secretariat on this item.

4. **FUTURE ACTIVITIES OF THE ICBWG**

4.1   In order to achieve clarity around the role and function of the ICBWG, the Group will be working closely with the Secretariat in the coming months to:

4.1.1   develop a clear position regarding the direction and role of the ICBWG in light of ICAO's strategic vision for the MRTD programme

4.1.2   develop a Business Plan 2013-16 based on the direction of the MRTD programme.

4.2   The ICBWG will continue to make a contribution to the ICAO MRTD Symposium and Regional Seminars, the NTWG work on Evidence of Identity, and the development of the strategic direction of ICAO's MRTD-related programmes.

4.3   Pending TAG/MRTD approval, ICBWG will continue to work on the development of an MRTD certification programme.

4.4   As the Guide for Assessing the Security and Handling of the Issuance of Travel Documents has now been in circulation for two years, it will be assessed and reviewed by the ICBWG over the coming year, as agreed previously with TAG/MRTD.

4.5   Assist ICAO to develop Guidance on the Procurement of ePassports.

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

5.1   The TAG/MRTD is invited to:

a) Note the activities and outputs of the ICBWG to date and the approach it has taken.

b) Approve the ICBWG's ongoing work.

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