



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**Brussels, 2 December 2008**

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## **OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS**

Of :	Ad Hoc Group on Information Exchange (vehicle registration data experts)
On :	31 October 2008
Subject :	Summary of discussions

### **1. Adoption of the agenda**

The meeting adopted the agenda set out in document CM 3785/08, with the addition of two points under AOB regarding the collation of statistics and the monitoring of the Eucaris/Prüm application.

### **2. Introduction and update on recent developments**

- Transposal Prüm/VRD in the EU legal framework**
- EUCARIS/Prüm application**
- EUCARIS/Prüm acceptance procedure**

The lead expert on VRD (vehicle registration data) exchange gave a general explanation concerning the legal basis of the VRD exchange, its purpose, the practical implementation, network structure, the way to conduct searches etc. Details were given on installation and configuration, the support provided by Eucaris, hardware specifications as well as the acceptance procedure, which is done on the basis of a test set and concluded by the delivery of a “production certificate”.

It was specified that after this technical acceptance procedure, the agreement of the Council has to be obtained to start the real exchange, in accordance with the procedure set out in Council Decisions 2008/615/JHA and 2008/616/JHA.

### **3. Implementation EUCARIS 2.0: state of play and statistics**

A tour de table was held concerning the national implementation of the VRD exchange. Several Member States (DE, AT, LU, ES, FR) are operational albeit not yet with all of the other Member States. Tests are continuing and increasing operational activities between these States are expected in the coming months. The NL delegation reported that its authority could already receive requests and that in the coming days it would start sending out requests to other Member States.

A number of these States explained that the application was currently implemented at central level and would be integrated in the local police systems later on. The ES delegation would evaluate by the end of November how the application works and what can be improved on the basis of the experience of the 210 officers currently authorised to make searches, with a view to further deployment by February 2009. Some practical improvements had already been suggested, such as a drop-down list with different reasons for the search and the need for translation.

Other Member States (BE, SK, RO, FI, SI, HU) had made or started work on the connection to Eucaris via sTESTA and are at various stages of the test procedure with a view to deployment in (the first half of) 2009 or possibly by the end of 2008 for SI.

Another group of Member States (UK, PL, PT, BG) was awaiting internal legislative and/or policy issues to be settled before starting the technical implementation.

The DK and SE delegations had not yet started preparations but were nonetheless hopeful to start the VRD exchange in 2009.

#### **4. Change to the EUCARIS/Prüm specifications**

Eucaris proposed some detailed amendments to the current XML message specifications:

- it was decided not to make any changes regarding the syntax licence number (concerning the separation by spaces or hyphens or ignoring the hyphens and separators) but to include information in the helpfile for the few cases where this is a problem; these issues would also be examined in the framework of the RAKK system (see point 7);
- as regards the kind of licence numbers to be searched, it was concluded that the national databases as they exist in the different Member States should be made available but not the special registries such as military or diplomatic licenses; however, because of their particular importance for combating vehicle crime, it was agreed that efforts should be made to have export, dealer and transit licences included in the general national database; for reasons of transparency, so that Member States would know what to expect from each other in terms of available VRD, a questionnaire would be submitted to the Member States to get a clear picture of available data, taking into account the definition of mandatory and optional data set out in chapter 3 of the Annex to Council Decision 2008/616/JHA;
- it was agreed that for a search using a reference date beyond the end registration, the last owner/holder before the reference date should be shown;
- it was concluded that AT and DE should as soon as possible adapt their implementation so that information can be provided on the most recent registration of a vehicle that is available in case of a “not found” on an inquiry without reference date;
- it was accepted that the house number and street name can be included in the same attribute;
- it was concluded that NL should adapt as soon as possible its application so that on an inquiry by reference date/time only the signal(s) relevant at the reference date are provided;
- the experts urged the FR delegation to negotiate at national level for a legal amendment so that the indication that a vehicle is stolen is included in the vehicle registration data as this is of utmost operational value for law enforcement authorities.

#### **5. EUCARIS/Prüm financial matters: feedback EUCARIS Participants’ Board 1-2 October 2008**

The representatives of Eucaris explained how the contribution to the budget was calculated and presented a proposal, which should be in place as of 2010, for a clearer and more transparent distribution of the contributions on the basis of a fee per individual service that is used.

Furthermore, this meeting confirmed the official consent of the Member States regarding the Prüm-part (i.e. Application Personal Data) of the EUCARIS budget proposal 2009, following the Ad Hoc Group on Information Exchange meeting of 23 September 2008 and the EUCARIS Participants Board of 1-2 October 2008.

## **6. UK input/request**

- Scope of Article 12 of Council Decision 2008/615/JHA**
- Access by authorities to EUCARIS/Prüm-application**
- Estimated InfoEx-volumes**

When questioned about the most frequent reasons for the searches, it was clarified that these reasons are logged by the requesting State and are not transmitted to the requested State. The latter has therefore no possibility to verify the reason for the request, as the Prüm data exchange is based on the trust between Member States to abide by the rules as laid down in the Council Decisions. The data protection provisions in these Decisions provide for the necessary verifications of these logs in the requesting State so as to prevent, detect and sanction any possible abuse. For information purposes, it was mentioned that both prevention and criminal investigation (mostly on vehicle crime) purposes were among the most frequent reasons for searches.

No information was available on the estimated volume of the searches but delegations that would have national data on this were invited to provide them to the UK delegation.

## **7. Vehicles country of origin: RAKK**

The DE delegation presented the “RAKK” system developed by the authorities of the Bavarian police and now used throughout Germany that assists officers in determining in which State a car could be registered, on the basis of the combination of letters, numbers and colours of the number plate. Containing information from 55 countries and on 1500 kinds of plates, it allows the officer to limit the number of requests with the Prüm exchange to those Member States where the concerned type of number plate exists.

Experts found this a very useful system, even though it was stressed that its use should not be mandatory before sending a Prüm request.

The leading expert, the DE delegation and Eucaris would meet to research if and how “RAKK” could be integrated in the Prüm application or otherwise put at the disposal of the officers on the field doing the Prüm searches and what the requirements would be to do this and keep it up-to-date.

## **8. EUCARIS User management**

The ES delegation presented its decentralised system for managing its national Eucaris/Prüm users, expected to be 5 000 divided over several police forces.

The representative of Eucaris would study the offer of the ES delegation that this user management system be integrated into the Eucaris management system and have it distributed as soon as possible.

## **9. Any Other Business**

The representative of Eucaris presented a proposal for the development of a tool for the collation of statistics. Delegations were invited to comment on this proposal once it would be submitted in writing.

Eucaris was also invited to submit a document on its proposal to execute monitoring on the Eucaris/Prüm application via a dummy license plate and whereby Member States could be warned immediately if the application was down. Delegations would be invited to comment upon the written proposal.

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At the meeting the following working document was made available:

- Change Requests EUCARIS Specifics