

Carriers Working Group of 18 September 2023

Summary

Subject: Monthly Carriers Working Group meeting

Sea and Land Carriers at 10:00– 12:00 CET

Participants: Carriers representing sea and land industry, their declared service providers, carrier associations, European Commission (DG HOME), Member State (MS) experts, Frontex and eu-LISA (altogether 90 participants).

<p>1. Introduction</p> <p>a. Agenda</p> <p>b. Carriers meeting calendar</p> <p>c.Planning updates</p>	<p>eu-LISA presented the agenda of the 25th Carriers Working Group and the calendar of the upcoming meetings to the participants.</p> <p>The WG took note of the Carriers meeting calendar with the dates of upcoming meetings until December 2023. The next Carriers Working Group meeting is scheduled for 24 October, followed by another meeting on 5 December, which will be the last of the year. Ad hoc meetings can be organised upon request, however eu-LISA kindly requested the topics to be discussed, to be shared in advance.</p> <p>eu-LISA provided updates about the ongoing planning of the different aspects of the Interoperability (IO) Roadmap. Although no information could be shared about the exact planning stages, the WG was informed of the adoption of a resolution strategy based on three pivotal elements: remobilise, resolve, and renew. The first test version of EES, the Minimum Viable Product 1 (MVP 1), has been launched with resolved issues, and testing environments are available for Member States. A new intermediate EES release has also been deployed. For ETIAS, the activities focus on re-prioritising the implementation of the associated IO components, so as to align with the new 'wave' approach. The primary focus for webservices is on preparing the system-to-system connection, which is vital for allowing Carriers opting for this method to test and prepare for subsequent activities. The next priority is the web application that enables access to the carrier interface to all remaining carriers. The new overall timeline approach is</p>
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	<p>being finalised, so that the Carrier industry and stakeholders can plan their relevant activities. While there is expectation for detailed planning, the consensus is to disseminate information after discussions at the eu-LISA Governance Bodies have been concluded, and the approach has been agreed at ministerial level. These discussions, which began at the EES, ETIAS, ECRIS-TCN and IO Advisory Groups in the middle of September, will progress to the PMB and MB soon, culminating at the JHA Council meeting in mid-October. After obtaining political endorsement there, the focus will be placed on completing the detailed planning. Updates will then be shared through the Carriers WG. All carriers are kindly encouraged to attend the next WGs, as more information regarding planning and testing activities is expected to become available and be shared by eu-LISA.</p>
<p>2. Legal updates (European Commission)</p>	<p>No legal updates were given by the Commission as there were none to report on.</p>
<p>3. Technical updates (eu-LISA)</p>	<p>The presentation on technical updates by eu-LISA covered the configuration and process for the connectivity with the Playground (PGD) environment. There was also a detailed presentation on the carrier's connection figures: there have been 507 registrations for the System to System connection and 553 for the Web Portal/Mobile Application connection. Notably, 96% of air carriers, while indicating interest in the System to System connection to the PGD environment for compliance tests, had not provided one or several essential onboarding forms, including F07, F03, F04, F04c, or F04d. Regarding the figures for the System to System connection implementation for sea and land carriers, urgency was expressed for carriers to complete the onboarding process and submit all the necessary forms. Carriers were advised to begin preparations for connectivity and duly complete forms F04d or F04c. Once the test environment is set, carriers can commence their compliance tests.</p> <p>The Carrier WG took note of the additional measures eu-LISA has introduced to accelerate the implementation of the carrier onboarding process. These measures particularly concerned registered carriers who had yet to sign off on the Security Convention (F07 form) or those selecting the System to System connection but failing to declare a system. These carriers would be reminded twice in intervals and could face potential deregistration if non-compliant. It was explained how eu-LISA would provide the private certificates and two primary cases were explained: the procedure</p>

	<p>for a new carrier and a new system connecting for the first time, and the procedure for a new carrier with an already connected system.</p>
<p>4. Carriers and Travellers Support - Operational updates and sea scenarios (Frontex)</p>	<p>The CWG took note of details concerning sea Carrier activities, specifically those related to cruise ships. FRONTEX provided a presentation detailing various cruise ship scenarios, with emphasis on the "passenger itinerary" aspect from the Practical Handbook for Border Guards. For cruise carriers querying the Carrier Interface (CI), there is a stipulated process: passengers need to have an ETIAS travel authorisation valid for all Member States in their itinerary. They should also avoid visas or ETIAS Travel authorisations with Limited Territorial Validity. Cruise carriers must query the CI at least 48 hours before each passenger's departure, detailing the last port and expected arrival following the EES and ETIAS requirements. For queries related to the Entry/Exit System (EES) and concerning visa holders, carriers need to provide details of the last port of the last country using EES included in a passenger's itinerary and the expected date of their arrival. If a passenger's itinerary has two entries, it should be specified that a double entry visa is required. In cases where the itinerary has more than two entries, manual verification is essential to ensure compliance with visa or other permit requirements. For ETIAS queries concerning visa exempt passengers, similar details need to be provided, focusing on the last port of the last country that requires ETIAS. A distinction was drawn between ferry and cruise industries, where ferries, unlike cruises, don't have multiple stops and must adhere to Article 8 of the Schengen Borders Code. Ferries must also query the Carrier Interface (CI) 48 hours before every port departure. Moving forward, scenarios for land carriers might be introduced after finalizing the sea scenarios exercise</p>
<p>5. AoB - Misinformation and fake websites (Frontex)</p>	<p>Frontex raised awareness within the WG about the concerns related to the spreading of misinformation and the increase in unofficial and fake websites. Key misunderstandings include the misconception of ETIAS as a new visa type, a lack of knowledge about the official website and confusion about its January 2024 operational start. There are also misconceptions about its application in countries, age restrictions, and medical requirements. The existence of 58 fake ETIAS websites exacerbates the misinformation problem. Frontex is aware of these websites proactively reaching out to carriers encouraging them to publish the link to their websites which is happening. Additionally, outdated information from Chat GPT was flagged, showing the incorrect ETIAS website from 2021 data. Given these challenges, the support is sought to amplify the official ETIAS website and to combat misinformation. This entails spreading the correct website link,</p>

	<p>alerting of fake sites and efficiently using the monthly ETIAS press pack. The official website to be noted is: Europa.eu/etias</p> <p>Communication teams are encouraged to liaise with etias.outreach@frontex.europa.eu for the latest official updates.</p>
<p>6. Q&A</p>	<p>During the Q&A session, eu-LISA gave responses to several questions raised by the carriers.</p> <p>The WG was informed that an update on the EES mobile application for the travellers to pre-register, is scheduled to be presented in the forthcoming Carrier WG sessions. This application aims to streamline border crossings for third country nationals by allowing them to pre-register specific data. While carriers will use a web interface for checks, the application is tailored for TCNs, ultimately reducing the workload on border guards and making border processes more efficient. Additional information will be provided in upcoming WG meetings.</p>

Carriers Working Group of 18 September 2023

Summary

Subject: Monthly Carriers Working Group meeting

Air Carriers at 15:00– 17:30 CET

Participants: Carriers representing air industry, their declared service providers, carrier associations, European Commission (DG HOME), Member State (MS) experts, Frontex and eu-LISA (altogether 172 participants).

<p>1. Introduction</p> <p>a. Agenda</p> <p>b. Carriers meeting calendar</p> <p>c.Planning Updates</p>	<p>eu-LISA presented the agenda of the 25th Carriers Working Group and the calendar of the upcoming meetings to the participants.</p> <p>The WG took note of the Carriers meeting calendar with the dates of upcoming meetings until December 2023. The next Carriers Working Group meeting is scheduled for 24 October, followed by another meeting on 5 December, which will be the last of the year. Ad hoc meetings can be organised upon request, however eu-LISA kindly requested the topics to be discussed to be shared in advance.</p> <p>eu-LISA provided updates about the ongoing planning of the different aspects of the Interoperability (IO) Roadmap. Although no information could be shared about the exact planning stages, the WG was informed of the adoption of a resolution strategy based on three pivotal elements: remobilise, resolve, and renew. The first test version of EES, the Minimum Viable Product 1 (MVP 1), has been launched with resolved issues, and testing environments are available for Member States. A new intermediate EES release has also been deployed. For ETIAS, the activities focus on re-prioritising the implementation of the associated IO components, so as to align with the new 'wave approach. The primary focus for webservices is on preparing the system-to-system connection, which is vital for allowing Carriers opting for this method to test and prepare for subsequent activities. The next priority is the web application that enables access to the carrier</p>
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	<p>interface to all remaining carriers. The new overall timeline approach is being finalised, so that the Carrier industry and stakeholders can plan their relevant activities. While there is expectation for detailed planning, the consensus is to disseminate information after discussions at the eu-LISA Governance Bodies have been concluded, and the approach has been agreed at ministerial level. These discussions, which began at the EES, ETIAS, ECRIS-TCN and IO Advisory Groups in the middle of September, will progress to the PMB and MB soon, culminating at the JHA Council meeting in mid-October. After obtaining political endorsement there, the focus will be placed on completing the detailed planning. Updates will then be shared through the Carriers WG. All carriers are kindly encouraged to attend the next WGs, as more information regarding planning and testing activities is expected to become available and be shared by eu-LISA.</p> <p>Carriers are welcome to send their questions to the functional mailbox carriers_onboarding@eulisa.europa.eu.</p>
<p>2. Legal updates (European Commission)</p>	<p>No legal updates were given by the Commission as there were none to report on. The Commission confirmed the plan to receive endorsement to the new IO Roadmap along with the “wave approach” from the Council in October.</p> <p>The Commission informed the WG that they were in contact with third countries (mostly Latin American countries concerned by ETIAS) to invite TCs to remind local carriers about their obligations; in addition they also contacted EU delegations in Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia on the first name/last name use case.</p>
<p>3. Technical updates (eu-LISA)</p>	<p>The presentation on technical updates by eu-LISA covered the configuration and process for the connectivity with the Playground (PGD) environment. There was also a detailed presentation on the carrier’s connection figures: there have been 507 registrations for the System to System connection and 553 for the Web Portal/Mobile Application connection. Notably, 96% of air carriers, while indicating interest in the System to System connection to the PGD environment for compliance tests, had not provided one or several essential onboarding forms, including F07, F03, F04, F04c, or F04d. Carriers were advised to begin preparations for connectivity and duly complete forms F04d or F04c. Once the test environment is set, carriers can commence their compliance tests.</p> <p>The Carrier WG took note of the additional measures eu-LISA has introduced to accelerate the implementation of the carrier onboarding process. These measures particularly concerned registered carriers who had yet to sign off on the Security Convention (F07 form) or those selecting the System to System connection but failing to declare a system. These</p>

	<p>carriers would be reminded twice in intervals and could face potential deregistration if non-compliant. It was explained how eu-LISA would provide the private certificates and two primary cases were explained: the procedure for a new Carrier and a new system connecting for the first time, and the procedure for a new Carrier with an already connected system.</p> <p>An update was also given on the IATA Ad-hoc Technical Meeting held on the 5th of September. Complexities surrounding the flagging of “in-transit” statuses in the PAXLST for particular itineraries were also addressed. Recommendations were made for air carriers concerning the PAXLST; discussions remain ongoing with additional meetings planned. Lastly, a reminder on the Carriers Onboarding Process was provided. It was concluded to address questions and complexities raised by the carriers regarding the management of complex itineraries with transit in the PAXLST by sending comments to the functional mailbox and in the upcoming WG meeting.</p>
<p>4. Carriers and Travellers Support - Operational updates (Frontex)</p>	<p>FRONTEX informed the Carrier WG that, currently, efforts are underway to expand the scope of the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) document. A significant addition concerns questions related to the trade agreement between the EU and the UK. Carriers were kindly requested to send their questions via email to etias.acu1@frontex.europa.eu. The aim is to incorporate as many questions as possible in the upcoming version, which is anticipated to be available by the next Working Group meeting. On the other hand, the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) document is being reviewed. Currently, discussions are ongoing to refine certain components, and updates will be shared shortly.</p>
<p>5. AoB - Misinformation and fake websites (Frontex)</p>	<p>Frontex raised awareness within the WG about the massive spread of misinformation and the increase in unofficial and fake websites. Key misunderstandings include the misconception of ETIAS as a new type of visa, the lack of knowledge about the official website, and confusion about the time of its operational start. There are also misconceptions about its application to countries, age restrictions and medical requirements. The existence of 58 fake ETIAS websites exacerbates the misinformation problem. Frontex is aware of these websites proactively reaching out to carriers encouraging them to publish the link to their websites which is happening. Additionally, outdated information from Chat GPT was flagged, showing the incorrect ETIAS website based on data from 2021. Given these challenges, support is sought to amplify the official ETIAS website and combat misinformation. This entails spreading the correct website link, alerting of fake sites, and efficiently using the monthly ETIAS press pack. Communication teams are encouraged to liaise with</p>

	etias.outreach@frontex.europa.eu for the latest official updates. The official website to be noted is: Europa.eu/etias
6. Q&A	Finally, carriers were encouraged to direct their questions to the functional mailbox carriers_onboarding@eulisa.europa.eu.