

Carriers Working Group of 1 October 2024

Summary

Subject: Monthly Carriers Working Group meeting

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

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 104 participants).

<p>1. Introduction</p> <p>a. Agenda</p> <p>b. Carriers meeting calendar</p>	<p>eu-LISA presented the agenda of the 36th Carriers Working Group (CWG) and the calendar of the upcoming meetings to the participants.</p> <p>The CWG reviewed the schedule for upcoming meetings, noting the dates through December 2024. The next scheduled session is set for November 5th. Updates on meeting dates for 2025 will be provided when available.</p>
<p>2. Legal updates (European Commission)</p>	<p>The European Commission updated the CWG on the latest developments regarding the EES Entry into Operation (EiO). The scheduled date of 10 November 2024 was re-confirmed as per the announcement of the Commissioner in August. The Commission received a declaration of readiness from eu-LISA and 26 out of 29 Member States (MS), and the Commission continues to stay in close contact with those 3 MS to identify solutions for the timely launch of EES. The Commission is also assessing the conditions and parameters for a flexible, phased approach to the EES launch, as requested by the MB (Management Board) of eu-LISA allowing MS more flexibility to limit the use of EES at certain border crossing points. The Commission will share the results of this assessment when finalised.</p> <p>The Commission also noted that the EES information campaign has not yet been given a launch date, but the materials will be shared before the official campaign starts.</p> <p>The European Commission indicated having reminded MS during the September Smart Borders Committee, that before the revised VIS EiO,</p>

	<p>Carriers will not receive information on the remaining days when receiving replies through the Carrier interface.</p> <p>Regarding multi-entry visa checks, these will eventually be accounted for in the system when revised VIS enters into operation. Until then, Carriers must manually check their expiration dates.</p> <p>Sea industry expressed concerns about seafarers in transit who enter by plane and embark on ships within the Schengen area. Currently, these crew members receive an entry stamp upon arrival by plane and an exit stamp when embarking on the ship. However, with the EES in operation, this flexibility might be lost due to automatic system checks.</p> <p>The Commission clarified that once EES is in operation, exit checks will only occur at the actual point of departure from the Schengen area. If the crew member arrives by plane, there will be an entry check and an exit check if the exit actually took place. In the scenario of the vessel staying in Schengen area, there will be no exit check. The Commission advised the carriers to ensure that the staff are in possession of the correct visa to cover their entire stay.</p>
<p>3. Technical updates (eu-LISA)</p>	<p>eu-LISA updated the CWG on Carrier Implementation Figures as of October 2024. There are 639 Carriers registered for System-to-System and 515 for the Mobile App and Web Portal.</p> <p>The Carriers were reminded that readiness for EES via the Web Portal or Mobile app requires them to send confirmation to the Carrier Onboarding Team that their staff has completed training before being granted access to the live environment.</p> <p>The CWG was informed that the Mobile Application for Training, named the EU Carrier Interface Training, is available on the Google Play Store and Apple App Store. The backend for the training is the Playground (PGD) environment, and the same credentials are used as for the Carrier Web Portal.</p> <p>A reminder was given about the In-Scope and Out-of-Scope handling for travellers under EES and ETIAS Regulations. In-scope travellers for carriers' EES verifications are third-country nationals holding single or double-entry visas. Out-of-scope travellers include holders of residence cards, long-stay visas, diplomatic passports, or those exempted under Article 6a(3) of Regulation (EU) 2016/399. Similarly, for ETIAS, travellers in scope are those from visa-exempt countries unless they fall under specific exemptions outlined in Article 2(2) of the ETIAS Regulation, such as holders of long-stay visas or residence permits. Carrier interface replies before ETIAS EiO are designed to distinguish between in-scope EES travellers, with a response of OK or NOK, and ETIAS-exempt travellers with NA response. After ETIAS is in operation, responses will remain the same for EES travellers, while visa-exempt nationals will receive an OK or NOK ETIAS response. The CWG was presented with visual illustrations for both</p>

	<p>ferry lines and international coaches, depicting two use cases of passengers with valid single or double-entry visas. These use cases were visually explained to illustrate the handling of such passengers under the EES and ETIAS Regulations.</p> <p>Finally, as the process for connection to the production environment will run in October, the CWG was invited to cooperate closely with eu-LISA towards the EES EiO and to contact the Agency with regard to any questions.</p>
<p>4. Carriers and Travellers Support - Operational updates and sea scenarios (Frontex)</p>	<p>Frontex updated the CWG regarding the Carrier Support and Assistance Procedures as of October 2024. The presentation covered the roles and responsibilities of Carriers, focusing on key areas, such as registration, deregistration, connectivity, technical impossibility notifications, operational/technical requests and user management. Carriers are required to submit requests for registration or deregistration, as well as for S2S connectivity or access to the web portal and mobile applications. User management, including requests for adding or removing users, was also discussed.</p> <p>Additionally, operational and technical requests were highlighted, with Carriers needing to notify Frontex and eu-LISA of any technical impossibilities or security incidents. An Emergency phone line is established for both operational and technical issues, ensuring a reliable backup channel when COBST (Carrier Onboarding and Support Tool) is unavailable. It was emphasised that Carriers must follow specific procedures when submitting operational or technical requests, with replies provided via the FAQs section or through direct assistance from the ETIAS Assistance Centre Unit (ACU).</p> <p>The process for handling tickets includes creating the ticket, acknowledging receipt, resolving the issue and closing the ticket after a 14-day period unless it is reopened by the Carrier. Security incidents and technical impossibility notifications, such as failures detected by eu-LISA or the Carrier, require close coordination between Carriers, Frontex, and MS. The presentation detailed the steps in notifying relevant authorities, updating them on the progress of resolutions, and confirming the resolution of failures.</p> <p>Carriers were reminded on their obligation to send verification queries through the CI at the earliest 48 hours before scheduled departure time, for passengers holding short stay visas or ETIAS TA, highlighting the possibility to request assistance through the process. Carriers are required to ensure that their systems are capable of handling these queries and maintaining compliance with the EES and ETIAS Regulations.</p> <p>Lastly, Frontex reiterated the importance of using the tools and communication channels provided, such as the FAQs, COBST, and the Emergency Phone Line, to ensure that Carriers receive the necessary support and can operate smoothly within the new regulatory framework.</p> <p>For operational queries, Carriers were invited to contact Frontex at etias.acu1@frontex.europa.eu.</p>

6. Q&A	<p>During the Q&A session, eu-LISA, the Commission and Frontex addressed several topics and responded to questions posed by Carriers on various operational and technical topics, such as the point in time where queries to the Carrier Interface will become mandatory, on the meaning of a potential adoption of a phased approach of EES, on the verification query up to 99 passengers, and the availability of users for the mobile application.</p> <p>Regarding the latter, eu-LISA clarified there are no strict limitations on the number of users; initially, Carriers will receive 10 anonymous users that can be shared among their staff. If additional users are needed, Carriers can submit a request to eu-LISA, and more users will be provided accordingly. Carriers were reminded to register through the web portal by completing the security convention and signing all required documents. Once this process is completed, the Carrier's Single Point of Contact (SPOC) will receive access to the 10 users for staff training. After the training is completed, Carriers are required to inform eu-LISA, and the same process will be repeated for the production environment. New credentials will then be issued to provide access to the live environment.</p>
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Carriers Working Group of 1 October 2024

Summary

Subject: Monthly Carriers Working Group meeting

Air Carriers at 13:30– 16:00 CEST

Participants: Carriers representing air industry, their declared service providers, Carrier associations, European Commission (DG HOME), Member State (MS) experts, Frontex and eu-LISA (altogether 238 participants).

<p>1. Introduction</p> <p>a. Agenda</p> <p>b. Carriers meeting calendar</p>	<p>eu-LISA presented the agenda of the 36th Carriers Working Group (CWG) and the calendar of the upcoming meetings to the participants.</p> <p>The CWG reviewed the schedule for upcoming meetings, noting the dates through December 2024. The next scheduled session is set for November 5th. Updates on meeting dates for 2025 will be provided when available. In response to the CWG’s request for an earlier meeting to discuss the EES EiO, eu-LISA and the Commission will examine the possibility of organising an additional session before that date.</p>
<p>2. Legal updates (European Commission)</p>	<p>The European Commission updated the CWG on the latest developments regarding the EES Entry into Operation (EiO). The scheduled date of 10 November 2024 was re-confirmed as per the announcement of the Commissioner in August. The Commission received a declaration of readiness from eu-LISA and 26 out of 29 Member States (MS), and the Commission continues to stay in close contact with those 3 MS to identify solutions for the timely launch of EES. The Commission is also assessing the conditions and parameters for a flexible, phased approach to the EES launch, as requested by the MB (Management Board) of eu-LISA allowing MS more flexibility to limit the use of EES at certain border crossing points. The Commission will share the results of this assessment when finalised.</p>

	<p>The Commission also noted that the EES information campaign has not yet been given a launch date, but the materials will be shared before the official campaign starts.</p> <p>The European Commission indicated having reminded MS during the September Smart Borders Committee, that before the revised VIS EiO, Carriers will not receive information on the remaining days when receiving replies through the Carrier interface.</p> <p>Regarding multi-entry visa checks, these will eventually be accounted for in the system when revised VIS enters into operation. Until then, Carriers must manually check their expiration dates.</p> <p>Concerns were raised by the carriers regarding airports' readiness to capture biometric data and ensure smooth implementation of the EES. The European Commission indicated assessing the phased approach and explore, among others, the possibility of limiting biometric data capture at certain border crossing points. The Commission assured Carriers that it is closely monitoring the situation and will provide updates as the assessment progresses.</p> <p>Finally, on the topic of crew handling in case they are not holders of a Crew Member Certificate, the Commission informed that different practices are currently implemented, creating complexities that need to be further investigated with experts in the transport industry.</p>
<p>3. Technical updates (eu-LISA)</p>	<p>eu-LISA updated the CWG on Carrier Implementation Figures as of October 2024. There are 639 Carriers registered for System-to-System and 515 for the Mobile App and Web Portal.</p> <p>The Carriers were reminded that readiness for EES via the Web Portal or Mobile app requires them to send confirmation to the Carrier Onboarding Team that their staff has completed training before being granted access to the live environment.</p> <p>The CWG was informed that the Mobile Application for Training, named the EU Carrier Interface Training, is available on the Google Play Store and Apple App Store. The backend for the training is the Playground (PGD) environment, and the same credentials are used as for the Carrier Web Portal.</p> <p>A reminder was given about the In-Scope and Out-of-Scope handling for travellers under EES and ETIAS Regulations. In-scope travellers for carrier's EES verifications are third-country nationals holding single or double-entry visas -. Out-of-scope travellers include holders of residence cards, long-stay visas, diplomatic passports, or those exempted under Article 6a(3) of Regulation (EU) 2016/399. Similarly, for ETIAS, travellers in scope are those from visa-exempt countries unless they fall under specific exemptions outlined in Article 2(2) of the ETIAS Regulation, such as holders</p>

	<p>of long-stay visas or residence permits. Carrier interface replies before ETIAS entry into operation are designed to distinguish between in-scope EES travellers, with a response of OK or NOK, and ETIAS-exempt travellers, with an NA response. After ETIAS enters into operation, responses will remain the same for EES travellers, while visa-exempt nationals will receive an OK or NOK ETIAS response. The CWG was presented with visual illustrations of several use cases concerning air regular flights, business aviation operators and charter airlines. These use cases were visually explained to illustrate the handling of such passengers under the EES and ETIAS Regulations.</p> <p>As the process for connection to the production environment will run in October, the CWG was invited to cooperate closely with eu-LISA towards the EES EiO and to contact the Agency with regard to any questions.</p> <p>Regarding the mobile application, it was clarified that, Carriers will receive 10 anonymous users that can be shared among their staff. If additional users are needed, Carriers can submit a request, and more users will be provided accordingly. For carriers having already the access to the Carrier Web Portal, they can reuse the same credentials to connect to the mobile application. All user management aspects are only managed in the Carrier Web portal version for dedicated carrier's SPOCs. Carriers were reminded to register through the web portal by completing the security convention and signing all required documents. Once this process is completed, the Carrier's Single Point of Contact (SPOC) will receive access to the 10 users for staff training. After the training is completed, Carriers are required to inform eu-LISA, and the same process will be repeated for the production environment. New credentials will then be issued to provide access to the live environment.</p> <p>A question was raised regarding passengers from countries that are visa-exempt only if they hold a biometric passport, such as Georgia and Ukraine. Currently, the Carrier interface cannot distinguish the type of passport from the information provided. As a result, the system will return a "Not Applicable" response for now, considering them visa-exempt.</p>
<p>4. Carriers and Travellers Support - Operational updates (Frontex)</p>	<p>Frontex updated the CWG regarding the Carrier Support and Assistance Procedures as of October 2024. The presentation covered the roles and responsibilities of Carriers, focusing on key areas, such as registration, deregistration, connectivity, technical impossibility notifications, operational/technical requests and user management. Carriers are required to submit requests for registration or deregistration, as well as for S2S connectivity or access to the web portal and mobile applications. User management, including requests for adding or removing users, was also discussed. Additionally, operational and technical requests were highlighted, with Carriers needing to notify Frontex and eu-LISA of any technical impossibilities or security incidents. An Emergency phone line was established for both operational and technical issues, ensuring a reliable</p>

	<p>backup channel when the COBST (Carrier Onboarding and Support Tool) is unavailable. It was emphasised that Carriers must follow specific procedures when submitting operational or technical requests, with replies provided via the FAQs section or through direct assistance from the ETIAS Assistance Centre Unit (ACU). The process for handling tickets includes creating the ticket, acknowledging receipt, resolving the issue and closing the ticket after a 14-day period unless it is reopened by the Carrier. Security incidents and technical impossibility notifications, such as failures detected by eu-LISA or the Carrier, require close coordination between Carriers, Frontex, and MS. The presentation detailed the steps in notifying relevant authorities, updating them on the progress of resolutions, and confirming the resolution of failures. Carriers were reminded on their obligation to send verification queries through the CI at the earliest 48 hours before scheduled departure time, for passengers holding short stay visas or ETIAS TA, highlighting the possibility to request assistance through the process. Carriers are required to ensure that their systems are capable of handling these queries and maintaining compliance with the EES and ETIAS Regulations.</p> <p>Lastly, Frontex reiterated the importance of using the tools and communication channels provided, such as the FAQs, COBST, and the Emergency Phone Line, to ensure that Carriers receive the necessary support and can operate smoothly within the new regulatory framework.</p> <p>For operational queries, Carriers were invited to contact Frontex at etias.acu1@frontex.europa.eu.</p>
<p>5. Q&A</p>	<p>During the Q&A session, eu-LISA, the Commission and Frontex addressed several topics and responded to further questions posed by Carriers on various operational and technical topics, such as crew members without CMC, the meaning of a potential adoption of a phased approach, state of preparedness of BCPs in each MS.</p>