Carriers Working Group
26 January 2022, video conference meeting

Summary

Participants: Carriers for the air, sea and coach industry, Carrier associations, European Commission (COM - DG HOME), Member State (MS) experts, Frontex and eu-LISA.

Opening of the meeting	Representatives of carriers and carrier associations, MS experts, Frontex and COM were welcomed to the 8th Carriers WG. The agenda of the meeting was presented; no AOB points were requested. The importance of the 2022 activities were underlined, in particular the ones related to the carrier's preparations to meet the obligations stemming from the applicable EU legislation. The Carrier Working Group will coordinate these matters and report status at Governance level.
New Carrier Working Group Principles	The background was provided to the WG, as well as a reminder of important milestones, in particular the ones for the registration process and the Entry into Operation (EiO) dates of EES and ETIAS. It was underlined that, since September 2021, all carriers from all business areas (air, sea, land) have been invited to register with eu-LISA to be able to receive technical documentation and thus timely prepare for querying the carrier interface in order to comply with the EES and ETIAS regulations. As from September 2022 carriers will need to verify whether a third country national (TCN) travelling to the Schengen area carrying a single or a double entry visa have already used the number of entries authorised by their visa. Furthermore, from May 2023 carriers will have to verify prior to boarding that visa exempt passengers from third countries have a valid travel authorisation from ETIAS to enter the Schengen area.
	The WG took note of the new Carrier Working Group Principles. All registered Carriers and their declared Service Providers, as well as the Carriers Associations will be invited to the Carrier Working Group; The Carrier Working Group will be split into 3 sessions in one full day: two sessions in the morning for Sea and Land Carriers, one session in the afternoon for Air Carriers; Fixed Working Group calendar of meetings was communicated; ad-hoc Technical Meetings can be envisaged and will be organized upon request; additional one hour Informal Awareness Sessions could be planned every two weeks in case required.
	The indicative calendar for the Carriers WG was presented, with the proposed dates for the monthly meetings until July 2022. The scheduled meeting dates are 26 January, 28 February, 30 March, 27 April, 25 May, 29 June and 26 July 2022.

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	Concerns regarding the registration process and the difficulty in receiving the technical documentation were raised by participants. The importance that all carriers are registered by February 2022 was reminded in order to ensure the support from eu-LISA; so far, very low number of registrations have been occurred.
	According to the regulation, eu-LISA will be collaborating with the registered Carriers; Service Providers indicated in the Registration Form will be invited and receive technical documentation. There are technical guidelines and predefined test cases that will be shared with registered carriers, in particular for those using the system-to-system communication, to allow them proceed with the associated development activities. It was highlighted that, as only the registered Carriers and their declared Service Providers will be invited to the Carriers WG meetings, synchronization between them is required.
	The start of EES during a busy summer season was mentioned; it was clarified that the decision was taken at political level, taking into account the request from the carriers to have more time for their preparation; the right window for the EiO will be assessed at Governance level.
	The WG expressed concerns that small air operators that do not belong to any association may be forgotten. The Commission assured that the list of recipients will be checked to make sure they are kept in the loop.
Carrier Implementation Indicative Timeline and Milestones	The Implementation Timeline and associated Milestones were presented, depicting the respective dates for carriers (that intend to use a System to System connection) to query the Carrier Interface. The most important milestones were highlighted – registration, pre-compliance phase, compliance phase and the EES EiO.
	The Carrier WG was provided with implementation recommendations for Carriers to get ready for the EiO. All carriers are advised to conclude their registration no later than February 2022 to ensure timely preparation for the connection to EES. Registration after February will be possible, however, eu-LISA cannot guarantee that all the required tasks would be completed prior to launch of the system; this may imply potential negative effects on carriers preparations at least. Registration will enable connection to the simulator environment where free testing can be done to verify whether the development at a carrier´s side is working correctly. This phase may take some time. Thus, in order to get ready for the go-live, each carrier needs to execute the Test Cases during the Compliance phase before 31st July 2022. It was noted that, in case of late registration, it is possible to go directly to the compliance phase skipping the tests on the simulator, but this approach is not advised neither support can be guaranteed.
	COM reinforced the fact that Carriers will not be able to manually verify visas after the EiO of EES in September 2022, i.e. whether a single or a double entry visa has been used. If Carriers do not have access to the carrier interface, they would not be able to perform such a check.
	Questions from the WG regarding the Registration Form, the total number of already registered Carriers and the technical documentation were answered. A discussion related to the timeline took place. The

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	importance to keep focus on the completion of the project was reinforced and it was assured that there are no delays to report from the implementation of MS.
Technical Guidelines and registration forms – New version	The updates to the new Carrier Technical Guidelines version were provided to the Carrier WG. Additional clarifications were shared on Response Data section, New Message Considerations, Additional clarifications on Query and Response Messages, Updates on Message Samples and clarifications on Limited Territorial Validity travellers' verifications. A list of the technical responses was also presented.
	The updates on the F01 - Carrier Registration Form, to consider the "Industry Tag" and the enhancement to the F04- Connection Information Form were explained.
	The new version of the Pre-Defined Carriers Test Cases (TDD) was also depicted:
	• Detailed Technical expected reply result added to each test case;
	• Limited Territorial Validity (LTV) test cases updated;
	• New test case added;
	• Test data updated.
Standard Operational Procedures	The Carrier WG took note of the State of Play of the Standard Operational Procedures, provided by Frontex. The WG was informed that the first consultation with eu-LISA has been completed, the document being amended accordingly; that the discussion on the requirements and processes for the Carrier Support Tool is ongoing; that new operators of the ETIAS Central Unit are being on- boarded and involved in project activities.
	Furthermore, the updated Table of Contents was presented and the updates were explained to the WG. Examples on the business processes for Operational Assistance Request, Technical Assistance Request and for the Use of the Emergency Phone Line were shared.
	The next steps for the Standard Operational Procedures (SOP) were outlined: sharing the revised version of the SOP with eu-LISA, organising dedicated working sessions and continuing the discussions on the requirements and processes for the Carrier Support Tool.
End of the meeting	The Agency informed the Carrier WG that some of the questions were noted and will be addressed in upcoming meetings. The key message of the meeting was reinforced: **Carriers shall register with eu-LISA as soon as possible until the end of February 2022 at the latest.** For further details please contact eu-LISA at carriers_onboarding@eulisa.europa.eu.

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