

Carriers Working Group of 5 July 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, carrier associations, European Commission (DG HOME), Member State (MS) experts, Frontex and eu-LISA (altogether 87 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 24th 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. The next Carriers Working Group meeting will take place on 18 September and there will be 2 more meetings until December, respectively, on 24 October and 5 December. Ad hoc meetings can be organised upon request and eu-LISA kindly requested the topics intended to be discussed to be shared in advance.</p> <p>Carriers are welcome to send their questions to the functional mailbox carriers_onboarding@eulisa.europa.eu.</p> <p>eu-LISA informed that the JHA Council meeting of 8 June did not discuss the EES/ETIAS EiO topic; the next meeting is in October, however the agenda is not yet finalised.</p> <p>eu-LISA is in a resolution path with the contractor, in order to stabilise the project plan, so as to be able to offer a stable view of milestones and make available the environments as soon as possible. Simulator issue has not been resolved, and testing will take place in PGD. The environment is not yet available and carriers will be informed for its availability as soon as possible, but in the meanwhile they have been asked to proceed and prepare the forms for connectivity.</p>
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2. Legal updates (European Commission)	<p>The relevant legal texts have been finalised, therefore no legal updates exist at this time</p>
3. Technical updates (eu-LISA)	<p>The Technical Updates presentation by eu-LISA for the Carrier WG covered key aspects of the updates for the travel document exceptions, the configuration and process for the Connectivity with PGD environment and some clarifications regarding the Carrier Interface and EES/ETIAS Variable Geometry. During the presentation, updates on travel document exceptions were discussed. For Belarus Nationals, passports issued without an expiration date created a challenge. To comply with the Regulations, carriers are required to include the expiration date in all queries submitted to the Carrier Interface. In exceptional cases, where the expiration date is missing, eu_LISA proposed that carriers use a fictitious date (1/1/3000) in their queries. Another exception was addressed, regarding the Malaysian citizens who do not have a first name indicated in the passport, using only a generic “name”. Malaysian citizens are visa exempt, and both the surname and first name are mandatory data for ETIAS applications; appropriate instructions exist in the application process for this case. Carriers should handle this exception by submitting the travel document data with the fictitious first name "FNU" in their queries. Connectivity with the Playground (PGD) environment was another topic discussed. Technical details and configurations for Carrier's System-to-System connectivity were shared, including VPN connections, MQ Channel, System to System path and forms exchange. Regarding the Carrier Interface and EES/ETIAS Variable Geometry of the Member States, it was clarified that carriers are required to send queries based on specific criteria. Before ETIAS EiO, queries should be sent for trips from outside the Schengen area to the Schengen area with passengers in scope. After ETIAS EiO, queries should cover trips from “outside the Schengen area with the additional countries which require ETIAS (RO, BG, CY)” into “the Schengen area + RO, BG + CY”, as well as trips from “RO, BG, and CY” to “the Schengen area”.</p>
4. Carriers and Travellers Support – Operational updates (Frontex)	<p>Frontex provided an update to the WG regarding Carriers Support and Operational Updates. In terms of Operational Updates, Frontex reminded of the finalisation and publication of the 4th version of the FAQs in May. This updated version included around 30 additional questions, addressing concerns raised by carriers. The FAQs are divided into public and private sections, with the new and amended Q&A marked in green. The FAQs are available on eu-LISA's website for carriers, and the private document was shared with registered carriers on June 15th. A survey was conducted, gathering feedback from the Sea Carriers community on cruise and ferry</p>

	<p>itineraries. The survey closed on June 9th, with participation from 20 carriers. Looking ahead, specific guidelines on querying the Carrier Interface will be provided for sea carriers, with different approaches for cruise and ferry industries.</p> <p>For any questions related to ACU support, carriers can contact etias.acu1@frontex.europa.eu.</p>
<p>5. Q&A</p>	<p>During the Q&A session, the Commission gave responses to several questions raised by Carriers.</p> <p>In response to questions raised about the restrictions on CRUISE passengers during daily visits, the Commission highlighted that travellers on organised touristic excursion or daytrips during a stopover are not expected to cross external borders, this being the reason why the relaxation of checks was recommended. As for Ceuta/Melilla, Schengen Borders Code includes an Article which stipulates that the special rules on these cities will not be affected, thus it is advised to check with ES authorities.</p> <p>FRONTEX asked if any ferry carrier, participating in the meeting, performs itineraries that comprise Non Schengen → Schengen → Schengen ports, e.g. St Petersburg → Helsinki → Stockholm. Article 3.2.10 of ANNEX VI of Schengen Borders Code requires that TCNs embarking on the ferry, only for the remaining leg in the Schengen area (respectively embarking in Helsinki and disembarking in Stockholm) shall receive an exit stamp in Helsinki and an entry stamp in Stockholm. This aspect may affect the way ferry carriers shall query the CI in the future. For this reason FRONTEX committed to continue investigating this specific case and encouraged Sea Carriers, as well as MSs, to provide their feedback on this matter</p>

Carriers Working Group of 5 July 2023

Summary

Subject: Monthly Carriers Working Group meeting

Air Carriers at 13:00– 16:00 CET

Participants: Carriers representing air industry, carrier associations, European Commission (DG HOME), Member State (MS) experts, Frontex and eu-LISA (altogether 142 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 24th 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. The next Carriers Working Group meeting will take place on 18 September and there will be 2 more meetings until December, respectively, on, 24 October and 5 December. Ad hoc meetings can be organised upon request and eu-LISA kindly requests the topics intended to be discussed to be shared in advance.</p> <p>Carriers are welcome to send their questions to the functional mailbox carriers_onboarding@eulisa.europa.eu.</p> <p>eu-LISA informed that the JHA Council meeting of 8 June did not discuss the EES/ETIAS EiO topic; the next meeting is in October, however the agenda is not yet finalised.</p> <p>eu-LISA is in a resolution path with the contractor, in order to stabilise the project plan, so as to be able to offer a stable view of milestones and make available the environments as soon as possible. Simulator issue has not been resolved, and testing will take place in PGD. The environment is not yet available and carriers will be informed for its availability as soon as possible, but in the meanwhile they have been asked to proceed and prepare the forms for connectivity</p>
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<p>2. Legal updates (European Commission)</p>	<p>The relevant legal texts have been finalised, therefore no legal updates exist at this time</p>
<p>3. Technical updates (eu-LISA)</p>	<p>The Technical Updates presentation by eu-LISA for the Carrier WG covered key aspects of the updates for the travel document exceptions, the configuration and process for the Connectivity with PGD environment and some clarifications regarding the Carrier Interface and EES/ETIAS Variable Geometry. During the presentation, updates on travel document exceptions were discussed. For Belarus Nationals, passports issued without an expiration date created a challenge. To comply with the Regulations, carriers are required to include the expiration date in all queries submitted to the Carrier Interface. In exceptional cases, where the expiration date is missing, eu-LISA proposed that carriers use a fictitious date (1/1/3000) in their queries. Another exception was addressed, regarding the Malaysian citizens who do not have a first name indicated in the passport, using only a generic “name”. Malaysian citizens are visa exempt, and both the surname and first name are mandatory data for ETIAS applications; appropriate instructions exist in the application process for this case. Carriers should handle this exception by submitting the travel document data with the fictitious first name "FNU" in their queries. Connectivity with the Playground (PGD) environment was another topic discussed. Technical details and configurations for Carrier's System-to-System connectivity were shared, including VPN connections, MQ Channel, System to System path and forms exchange. Regarding the Carrier Interface and EES/ETIAS Variable Geometry of the Member States, it was clarified that carriers are required to send queries based on specific criteria. Before ETIAS EiO, queries should be sent for trips from outside the Schengen area to the Schengen area with passengers in scope. . After ETIAS EiO, queries should cover trips from “outside the Schengen area with the additional countries which require ETIAS (RO, BG, CY)” into “the Schengen area + RO, BG + CY”, as well as trips from “RO, BG, and CY” to “the Schengen area”.</p> <p>Carriers raised questions during the session regarding form completion and stakeholder involvement. In response to questions regarding the FO4c and F04d forms, it was clarified that connectivity providers are responsible for completing it. The role of the system SPOC was discussed, explaining that they act as the point of contact for connecting systems and are responsible for form completion and coordination.</p>

<p>4. Carriers and Travellers Support – Operational updates (Frontex)</p>	<p>Frontex provided an update to the WG regarding Carriers Support and Operational Updates. In terms of Operational Updates, Frontex reminded of the finalization and publication of the 4th version of the FAQs in May. This updated version includes around 30 additional questions, addressing concerns raised by carriers. The FAQs are divided into public and private sections, with the new and amended Q&A marked in green. The FAQs are available on eu-LISA's website for carriers, and the private document was shared with registered Carriers on June 15th.</p> <p>For any questions related to ACU support, carriers can contact etias.acu1@frontex.europa.eu.</p>
<p>5. Q&A</p>	<p>During the Q&A session, Carriers inquired about the implications of the work ahead and the unresolved issues with the contractor. It was clarified that although there may be delays in timelines, milestones, and compliance testing as well as staff training, no significant impact is currently anticipated for the carriers. The specific timing of these activities will be communicated and the stakeholders will have adequate time to perform their activities.</p> <p>In response to the questions raised about the travel documents of Malaysian and Belarusian nationals, Carriers provided feedback on potential issues and were requested to provide specific examples for further examination and analysis.</p> <p>Regarding the responsibility for business process-related questions, it was clarified that the question is partially covered in the FAQ, Carriers can contact FRONTEX directly so that the FAQs can also be further improved. However, if the question is not addressed in the FAQ at all, Carriers should reach out to the onboarding team, who will escalate the query to the relevant experts for a comprehensive response.</p>