

Schengen: second generation information system SIS II, development. Initiative Belgium and Sweden

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This is a progress report on the work carried out by the Commission in the second half of 2004 on the development of the second generation Schengen Information System (SIS II). It also sets out the timetable for future activities. It is the fifth report presented by the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament in accordance with Article 6 of Regulation 2424/2001/EC.

Achievements in the period under review (June to December 2004): On 13 September 2004, Commission services decided to award the SIS II/VIS contract to a consortium led by Steria France and Hewlett Packard Belgium and the contract was signed on 22 October 2004. On 15 November, Commission services were informed that Capgemini (Nederland NV), who was second in the tendering procedure, had applied for the annulment of the decisions to reject their offer and to award the contract to another tenderer (principal case), together with judicial interim relief, in particular to suspend the execution of the contract (procedure for interim measures) to the Court of First Instance. The Court ordered the suspension of the contract until further notice and decided on an expedited procedure in the court case. Commission Services have worked intensively on this court case and on taking all measures to minimise the risk of not delivering SIS II by the final date (March 2007). The measures taken by the Commission Services during the relatively short period of interruption due to the court case have made it possible to keep the final project completion date unaffected.

SIS II Project – Detailed Design (Phase 1): The SIS II Project is divided into three phases. Phase 1 - Detailed Design - will deliver all the necessary documents to fully describe the SIS II from a technical perspective. The system will be developed and deployed during phase 2 – Development. Finally, during phase 3 – Migration and Integration – Member States will connect their national systems to the new SIS

II central database. The contractor's first task has been to develop a master project plan - a timeframe for the whole SIS II project. A key element for the drafting of this master plan was the approach to migration and integration of existing and new Member States. Member States have agreed, in principle, on a four-step migration and integration scenario. In the first step, the new central SIS II database will be implemented and loaded with data from the current database. Member States currently using SIS, will remain connected to the old database. During the second step, each Member State, currently using

SIS, will connect to the new database via a device called an "adaptor", which will allow the new database to be used without any modification of the national systems. This will permit each Member State to adapt its national systems at its own pace. During the third step, all Member States currently using SIS, will stop using the adaptor at the same time and connect their own national system to the new central SIS II database. Finally, the fourth step, foresees those Member States using the SIS for the first time connecting their national system to the new central SIS II database.

This four-step scenario is both workable for Member States and the Commission and reduces risk of failure. It is planned to obtain the formal opinion of the SIS II Committee on the migration and integration scenario in 2005 under the management procedure. On the basis of this scenario, a draft version of the master project plan was quickly delivered by the contractor. However the suspension of the contract has stopped the Commission services from further reviewing this document, which had not yet reached a level of completeness to make it suitable for planning purposes.

SIS II Functions: The functions to be available in SIS II are defined in the conclusions of the Council of 14 June 2004. These functions are the basis for the detailed specifications and design of SIS II.

Further discussions on functions have continued in the Council working groups. Commission services have repeatedly pointed out that in order to keep the deadline for the start of operations (March 2007), new functions will be treated as change requests to be implemented after the go-live date of SIS II.

Feasibility Study on stolen cultural goods in SIS II: the study undertaken indicated that the additional work might negatively impact the SIS II development schedule if an attempt is made to include it from the outset. Commission services have recommended not to include the alerts on stolen cultural goods in SIS II.

National planning and coordination: In October 2004, Commission services also formally invited each Member State to appoint a full time project manager for the SIS II project. The nomination of a project manager in each Member State is a fundamental condition for progressing with national preparations. Not all Member States have yet been able to indicate that such an appointment has taken place.

Call for Tender for Assistance: A call for tender was launched for the selection of a contractor who will assist the Commission with the acceptance procedures and in-depth quality checks of SIS II project deliverables. The contract signature is currently scheduled for January 2005.

Results expected in the next reporting period (January until June 2005): All necessary measures will be taken in order to compensate for the delays that were incurred due to the Court Case on the delivery of some key deliverables.

Risk Analysis: The major risks for the moment are (1) delays in project progress due to the suspension of the contract and (2) the delays on the Member State side as regards the preparation of the adopted migration scenario.

SIS II Committee Meetings: As a result of the Agreement between the EU, the EC and the Swiss Confederation on the latter's association with the Schengen acquis signed on 26 October 2004, Switzerland will be fully associated with the work of the SIS II Committee.