DETA

Position Paper June 2011

1. Reference Documents

- DETA-03-02 r1e[1] terms of reference
- WP.29-139-08 feasibility study
- DETA 05-04e[1] questionnaire results
- DETA-06-04 approval document circulation list
- DETA-11-03 example approval record front page

2. Objectives

WP.29 directed the DETA group to consider the viability of a database to manage UNECE approvals and allow access to approval information by various users. Also WP.29 asked DETA to consider improving the type approval process and to foster world-wide collaboration.

In the context of improving the type approval process a primary driver for this work was the desire in GTB to simplify the current complex lamp marking requirements that result in a mark that is costly for industry to place on a product but is of little value in an enforcement situation.

3. Stakeholders

- Manufacturers
- Approval Authorities
- Governments
- UNECE Secretariat
- Enforcement bodies (Police, trading inspectors, Periodic Technical Inspection authorities)

4. Progress to date

- The existing EU ETAES database has been reviewed.
- A mock-up UNECE database has been demonstrated on the ETAES platform.
- Other electronic approval systems have been studied.
- The concept of a unique product identifier has been considered that would give access to copies of all approvals held by the product globally.

5. Approval Marking

The group considers it viable to have one simple unique identifier per product, which could be a numeric code or a bar code, to replace all the current markings. Whilst not providing any information in itself (unlike the intention of current markings), this identifier would be the key to the record for the product in the database from which all other approval data could be found.

Also the unique identifier opens the possibility of the database holding all the approvals held by the device globally, whether UNECE or other. This would respond to WP.29's desire to foster world-wide participation.

It would be possible for the database to issue this unique identifier automatically on first entry of data for a new product.

Amendments to Regulations would be required in order to permit the use of this unique identifier as an approval mark. Contracting Parties might have to change their national law to recognise the identifier as an approval mark. The 1958 Agreement appears to refer to markings as specified in Regulations, so would appear to not need amendment to allow the identifier as a mark.

The identifier may need to be styled to make it recognisable as an approval mark in order to avoid confusion with other marks on the product. The current E mark is well known and understood in the enforcement environment.

Further action required
Agree on the format of the identifier.
Establish the legal status of the identifier.

6. Benefits

The benefits of the database will accrue to:

- Manufacturers
  - reduction in the complexity and cost of product approval markings
  - reduction in product queries from enforcement bodies
- Approval Authorities
  - easy circulation of approvals and access to other Authorities' approvals
- Governments
  - oversight of approvals and the approval process
- UNECE Secretariat
  - oversight of approvals and the approval process
- Enforcement bodies
  - easy validation of the legality of a product
  - access to approval information

However, it is not clear what value the enforcement bodies would place on these benefits. Previous studies have suggested that enforcement bodies are interested but would wish to see a database in order to judge its value to them. Hence the DETA group has used its knowledge of possible enforcement scenarios to suggest suitable outputs.

Further action required
Before significant investment is made in making the database accessible to enforcement bodies, the benefit of these suggested outputs should be tested with those enforcement bodies.

7. Legal Basis

There is currently no obligation on contracting party Approval Authorities to use electronic communication for circulation of approvals. If the database is adopted and is to be fully effective then there may need to be amendments to the 1958 and 1998 Agreements to require use of the database.

Further action required
Seek WP29 guidance on its intentions in this respect.

8. Financing

The cost of developing and running the database will have to be funded, either centrally (for instance by the UNECE Secretariat), or by users. If by users then the proper allocation of costs will depend upon benefits accrued, and benefits will depend upon the functionality of the database.

In its simplest and cheapest form the database would merely facilitate the exchange of type approval information between type approval authorities (as does the active EU ETAES system). In this case it may be appropriate for the approval authorities to fund the costs. It should be noted, however, that approval authorities do not circulate UNECE approvals now, except on demand. So the actual benefit to approval authorities is minimal. That situation would change if the International Whole Vehicle Approval

concept reaches fruition - the current EU ETAES database is used solely for the circulation of EU whole vehicle approvals.

If, however, the cost of the system is much greater in order to facilitate the generation of the unique identifier and hence simplify the marking system, and to allow the entry of information about other non-UNECE approvals, then the manufacturer may reap the most benefit, not the Authorities, and the manufacturers may have to bear an appropriate share of the costs.

If the system has to be designed to enable enforcement bodies to access data readily, especially if at the roadside though smart devices where a normal web page would not be legible, then the additional costs of designing and running dedicated user interfaces ought to fall on those enforcement bodies.

It may be that a "pay to use" system, for both input and output, would be most equitable. But it is likely to be costly to administer, may discourage use, and may not provide full cost recovery.

Further action required
Conduct a full cost/benefit analysis and financing options review.

9. Database design

The basic system requirements are set out in document WP.29-139-08 Feasibility Study by T Systems. However, this was published in June 2006 and so does not take into account the DETA group's idea of the unique identifier. It does not specify the details of user interfaces, which are crucial to the end value of the database, and seems to assume that access will be by UNECE type approval authorities only and in the same manner as is the case with ETAES, and only via conventional computers.

9.1. Access

Type approval Authorities and manufacturers are likely to need access only via standard (but secure) web links. User interfaces can be designed on the assumption of access via conventional desk top or lap top computers.

Enforcement bodies may require access via hand held smart phones or similar devices. This will require user interfaces specifically designed for presentation on such devices.

If a "pay to use" financing system is adopted then mechanisms to identify users, track use, and calculate charges will need to be incorporated into the design.

9.2. User interfaces

9.2.1. Inputs

If the database is to be solely for UNECE approvals then it will be easy for approval authorities to upload copies. However, if it is to contain copies of approvals from other regions then it is probably only feasible for the manufacturers to upload those documents. If manufacturers were to enter details of approvals held then some audit checking by the responsible Approval Authorities might be required to give confidence in the integrity of the data.

The unique identifier could be generated by the database on first entry of any data for that product. If the database contains only UNECE approvals then a UNECE approval authority could make that first entry and generate the identifier. But if the database is to contain global approvals then it may be easier for the manufacturer to make that first entry, especially if the product is first launched in a non-UNECE (and non-EU) territory.

9.2.2. Outputs

Outputs need to be designed to meet the needs of the various stakeholders. It is suggested that outputs be tiered so that enquirers who seek only minimal information can quickly see that information in simple form. But enquirers who wish to check detailed information can access that information quickly too.

The DETA group represents all stakeholders apart from enforcement bodies, but it is thought probable that some of those bodies will require simple approved/not approved information, rather than a copy of the approval. Further consultation is needed in order to confirm what those enforcement bodies would

require from the database. This could be done by presenting to them sample screen views of what would be seen on screen if the database was operational (a “clay model”).

In the meantime, the concept proposed by the group is made up of a front page, a list of approvals held, and the approval documents.

Front page
The front page could give the unique identifier for the product, essential details of the manufacturer, essential details of the product, and a pictorial representation of the product (drawing or photograph) to aid confirmation that the record matches the product in question in an enforcement situation. An example was shown in document DETA-11-03.

The DETA group has yet to agree on the layout of this page. It may be crucial to the value of the database to enforcement bodies. It could be designed to be compatible with hand-held smart devices but this will influence the suitability of including drawings and photographs.

List of approvals held
Either on the front page or on a second page would be a list of all approvals held for the product. The unique identifier opens the possibility of listing all approvals held globally including test reports for regions where there is not a type approval certification regime, as the unique identifier will be independent of any one approval process numbering system. Each approval number could have a link to the documentation for that approval or report.

This page could be designed to be compatible with hand-held smart devices but may become too complex if the product holds many approvals. Complexity may dictate whether or not the list of approval is included on the front page.

Approval documents
The ownership of approval documentation is unclear and hence the possibilities for making approval information public have yet to be resolved. Guidance has been sought from WP.29. In the short term this can be circumvented by loading onto the database only the documents that are specified for circulation in the applicable Regulation (see DETA-06-04).

These documents would not need to be compatible with hand-held smart devices

Further action required
Confirm the output needs of enforcement bodies.
Agree the format of the front page and the approvals list page.

10. Database Administration
It is understood that the UNECE Secretariat has offered to provide administration services for the database.

However, in addition there is likely to be a need for a management group to direct development and use of the database. It is suggested that this group should include representatives from all the stakeholder groups.

Contractual arrangements may be required depending upon the use of the database. If it used simply as an information exchange then contracts need only cover terms of use, access, maintenance, and costs. But if the database is used for enforcement then there may be issues of liability for the accuracy of the information and for the admissibility of that information in legal proceedings.

Further action required
Confirm the role of the UNECE Secretariat.
Develop terms of reference for management group.
Develop key contract issues.

VCA
United Kingdom
June 2011