

WRITTEN QUESTION P-3088/07 by Kader Arif (PSE) to the Commission

Subject: Rules for the localisation of 112 calls

In September 2002, the EMTel Group (www.emtel.etsi.org) was set up within the European Telecommunications Standards Institute (ETSI) at the Commission's behest with a view to drafting rules for the localisation of calls to 112, the EU's emergency number.

This point was officially set out in the Commission's recommendation of 25 July 2003 on the subject. The ETSI was also assigned responsibility for the task.

In the light of the statistics produced by the Coordination Group on Access to Location Information by Emergency Services (CGALIES) in 2001 (showing that 5 000 lives could be saved each year in the EU-15 through the localisation of callers alone), can the Commission state when this open standard will be published and when it is expected to be implemented by operators and emergency services?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission

The Honourable Member rightly points out that in Article 10 of the Commission recommendation of 25 July 2003 on the processing of caller location information in electronic communication networks for the purpose of location-enhanced emergency call services(1) it is stipulated that '[...] Member States should encourage the use of a common open interface standard, and in particular for a common data transfer protocol, adopted by the European Telecommunications Standards Institute (ETSI), where available. [...]'].

Standardisation is, however, essentially an industry-led process. Operators and equipment manufacturers sit together in standardisation bodies to work out standards. It has to be noted that this standardisation process is not only limited to ETSI, but takes place also in organisations such as the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF), where work is currently progressing on improving access to emergency services.

Despite the fact that the standardisation work of ETSI has not been totally finalised, caller location is available in most of the Member States. Where this is not the case, the Commission has accordingly opened infringement proceedings against those Member States where availability of caller location information is lacking.