



EU Watch 2005 – 2007
Final Report

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TRL



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Approvals	
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Executive Summary

The HA has an interest in becoming more integrated with Europe, and has a desire to inform and be informed about developments in Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) in Europe to help meet its business targets and improve services to travellers on the HA network. ITS in Europe is complex, involving a wide variety of stakeholders, projects and initiatives, which are moving forward rapidly. The work of the European Commission affects national activities, and along with European ITS projects, influences activities and projects in the UK; the European Commission provides substantial funding in areas relevant to the HA.

To assist the Highways Agency (HA) with becoming more involved in European ITS developments, EU Watch has been providing the HA with a service to identify ITS opportunities in Europe. This report evaluates the achievements of EU Watch over the two year period from August 2005 and makes recommendations for the future of the service.

The objectives of EU Watch are to:

- improve information about ITS in Europe within the HA
- increase HA involvement in ITS activities in Europe
- communicate information about activities and opportunities effectively within the HA.

Intelligent Transport Systems are increasingly being used to improve the efficiency, reliability, convenience and safety of travel on the strategic road network.

By ensuring that the HA is well informed about ITS developments in Europe, the HA is in a better position to take advantage of these developments. This knowledge enables the HA to provide input to European programmes, take advantage of opportunities for working with European partners and become more integrated with Europe, thereby improving services for travellers on the HA network. The work is designed to support the overall aims of the Highways Agency: Safe Roads, Reliable Journeys and Informed Travellers, and to support the HA in meeting some of its key business targets.

EU Watch has focussed on four specific themes: European Commission Policy, ITS Research, Standards and Galileo. EU Watch has disseminated a large volume of information through 22 monthly email 'Newswires', 76 Newsletters, 7 Fact Sheets, 12 Conference Reports and a web site (www.haeuwatchits.info) containing over 700 news articles.

Opportunities have been identified and reported systematically and recorded in an Opportunity Tracker, which contains details of almost 100 opportunities in the form of conferences, potential projects, consultation exercises and European Working Groups.

A total of 263 individuals are registered users of the service, receiving the monthly email Newswires; 95 of these are HA staff and most of the rest are HA contractors.

Users have been consulted about their views on the service and suggestions for improvements by means of two surveys and a workshop, and the feedback received has been positive, supporting both the topics covered and the methods of information delivery.

Use of the web site has been monitored regularly and the report provides some key statistics to demonstrate the value of the site.

EU Watch has worked closely with ITS Radar, a similar project which has provided the HA with information about ITS pilots around the world, and the email Newswires have contained the news headlines for both EU Watch and ITS Radar.

The evaluation of the achievements against the objectives shows that EU Watch has been successful in improving information about ITS in Europe within the HA. While many of opportunities have been identified for the HA to be involved in Europe, the extent to which this has led to an increase in HA involvement is not clear from the information available. Several indicators point to the success of EU Watch in communicating relevant information effectively within the HA, but there are others which suggest that more could be done to improve the service.

The report concludes that on balance, the indications are that EU Watch has been successful in meeting its objectives, and that support from within the HA and the value for money provided suggest that it should continue in a similar form.

The report presents recommendations for the future of the service which concern links with ITS Radar, continuing promotion within the HA, reviews in consultation with users of the service provided and the themes covered, and some specific enhancements affecting the scope for developing opportunities and the presentation of information on the web site.

The report suggests that EU Watch provides a model for communication on other issues and topics within the HA, and recommends a feasibility study on how the concept could be applied across the HA business.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

The Highways Agency (HA) has an interest in becoming more integrated with Europe, and has a desire to inform and be informed about developments in Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) in Europe to help meet its business targets. ITS in Europe is complex, involving a wide variety of stakeholders, projects and initiatives, which are moving forward rapidly. The work of the European Commission affects national activities, and along with European ITS projects, influences activities and projects in the UK.

Opportunities for the HA in Europe can involve participating in European projects, attending meetings and conferences, responding to consultation exercises or requests for comments on European initiatives and documents, or joining European working groups and standards groups.

The scale of the opportunities for involvement in European projects is indicated by the European Commission funding available in some of the areas relevant to ITS:

- €9.1 billion - Information and Communication Technologies R & D in the 7th Framework Programme
- €4.1 billion Transport R & D in the 7th Framework Programme
- €300 million - ITS road projects under the 2007-2013 Multi-Annual Indicative Programme for investment in the Trans-European Transport Network.

To assist the HA with becoming more involved in European ITS developments, EU Watch has been providing the HA with a service to identify ITS opportunities in Europe since 2003. In the first phase, electronic newsletters and reports were delivered to key HA staff on a regular basis and a compendium of all of the documents was provided on CD at the end of the project.

This report concerns the second phase, for the two year period from August 2005. In this phase, the service has been based around an internet site (www.haeuwatchits.info) with a dedicated email address for contact with registered users. Regular electronic newsletters and monthly updates to the web site have enabled current information on ITS in Europe to be made available to all those in the HA who have an interest in this area, and to their contractors.

1.2 Objectives

The objectives of EU Watch are to:

- improve information about ITS in Europe within the HA
- increase HA involvement in ITS activities in Europe
- communicate information about activities and opportunities effectively within the HA.

Intelligent Transport Systems are increasingly being used to improve the efficiency, reliability, convenience and safety of travel on the strategic road network.

By ensuring that the HA is well informed about ITS developments in Europe, the HA is in a better position to take advantage of these developments. This knowledge enables the HA to provide input to European programmes, take advantage of opportunities for working with European partners and become more integrated with Europe, thereby improving services for travellers on the HA network. The work is

designed to support the overall aims of the Highways Agency: Safe Roads, Reliable Journeys and Informed Travellers, and to support the HA in meeting some of its key business targets:

- reducing congestion and improving reliability
- improving journeys by making information available to influence travel behaviour and inform decisions
- improving road safety, including contributing to the national road casualty reduction target
- delivering a high level of road user satisfaction.

With these objectives in mind, EU Watch information-gathering has been focused around four specific themes of interest to the HA:

- European ITS research
- European Commission
- ITS standards
- Galileo.

1.3 Links with ITS Radar

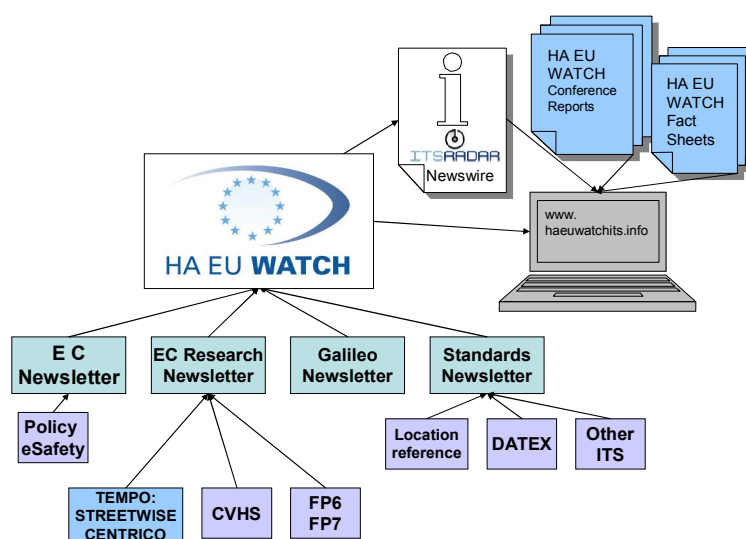
Shortly before this second phase of EU Watch started, the HA commissioned another project gathering intelligence on ITS pilots and other ITS developments around the world, known as the ITS Radar project. This is also a web-site based project.

ITS Radar and EU Watch have worked closely together to produce information to HA staff in a co-ordinated way. Each web site includes a link to the other site and the 'search' facilities are linked together so that a search initiated on one site will provide search results from both sites.

A joint circulation list for the two projects has been maintained by ITS Radar, and monthly emails containing the 'headline news' from both projects have been disseminated by ITS Radar.

1.4 Overview of the service

The diagram below depicts the topics covered and the service provided.



2 Achievements

This section provides an overview of the achievements under three headings which are linked to the project objectives: disseminating dissemination, identifying opportunities and involving users.

2.1 Disseminating information

The following information has been provided by EU Watch:

- 22 Monthly Newswires containing key headlines, brief information and links to articles on the web site; these are emailed to registered users and are clearly branded as HA documents.
- 76 Newsletters in a standard format containing more detailed articles: 18 on each of the four topics: Policy, Research, Galileo and Standards; these are posted on the web site
- Fact Sheets in a standard format covering:
 - eCall (2006 and 2007 versions)
 - DATEX II (2006 and 2007 versions)
 - Standards and Standardisation
 - ITS Metadata Registry
 - MESA
- Conference reports:
 - Royal Institute of Navigation 2005: 1-3 November 2005
 - European Round Table on Intelligent Roads: 26 January 2006
 - European Experiences – HA meeting: 31 March 2006
 - eSafety Forum 5th Plenary meeting: 2 – 3 May 2006
 - ITS – European and UK initiatives: 20 July 2006
 - CVIS project open workshop: 18 – 19 October 2006
 - eSafety Forum 6th Plenary meeting: 8 November 2006
 - RFID and Electronic Vehicle Identification in road transport: 29 November 2006
 - Global challenges and global opportunities – launch of 7th Framework in the UK: 6 February 2007
 - IP Multimedia Subsystem for the transport industry: 27 February 2007
 - CVIS Symposium organised by TNO in The Netherlands: 28 March 2007
 - Vehicle Safety Summit Europe: 14 -15 May 2007
- Standards tracking spreadsheet indexing ITS standards and tracking the progress of their development
- Opportunity tracking spreadsheet listing the opportunities identified, classified according to the type of opportunity and with hyperlinks to the details contained in news articles on the web site

- EU Watch public web site containing:
 - over 700 news articles, indexed by keywords and arranged under the four main themes
 - the Fact Sheets, Newsletters and Conference reports listed above
 - Project overview, glossary and index of keywords
 - EU Watch email address for user enquiry service
 - Standards tracker
 - Opportunity tracker
 - Web site statistics reports
- The EU Watch web site was demonstrated on the HA stand at the 2007 'Traffex' exhibition
- Results of ad hoc investigations on a variety of topics for HA staff including:
 - MOTIS proposal
 - EC Directive on transport of live animals
 - Mare Nostrum project documentation
 - Contribution to a workshop on the HA Technology Manual
 - Briefings on status of eCall, eSafety and the European Commission's 7th Framework Programme for R & D.

2.2 Identifying opportunities

The process of identifying opportunities has involved monitoring a large number of internet sites, technical journals and other sources on a monthly basis. The opportunities which are relevant to the HA are highlighted in the Newsletters with a recommendation for the HA. Details are also outlined in headlines in the monthly Newswire. Some which have a short deadline have been emailed immediately to the Project Sponsor. Key achievements are:

- The Opportunity Tracker contains details of almost 100 opportunities; a summary (updated each month) is provided on the web site and a full working version is provided to the project sponsor with the ability to sort opportunities and to track how they are followed up
- Members of the EU Watch team have attended 12 of the conferences identified on behalf of the HA and reported them in conference reports, posted on the web site
- HA staff have attended some of the other events identified.

2.3 Involving users

For most of the users, involvement in EU Watch is through receiving monthly email newswires. A few have initiated direct contact with EU Watch to make requests and suggestions.

EU Watch has also carried out two feedback surveys to obtain user opinions and elicit suggestions for additional work.

A workshop was held jointly with ITS Radar, to which the HA users were invited.

Key achievements can be summarised as follows:

- The current circulation list for receiving Newswires totals 263; of these 95 are HA staff and most of the remainder are contractors. The list includes 9 representatives of other UK authorities, and a few from other countries, including the European Commission.
- The circulation list for Newswires includes several senior members of staff in the HA: 7 at Director level
- The workshop held jointly with ITS Radar in March 2006 was attended by 8 HA staff and provided positive feedback and suggestions for additional services and facilities which were incorporated into the EU Watch service
- EU Watch and ITS Radar also met with the HA Research and International team to promote the projects further within the HA
- Liaison with the project sponsor took place on a regular basis and provided opportunities for suggestions and feedback
- Feedback from users received in the surveys was positive; it showed that all of the four ‘themes’ covered are useful and highlighted a few specific additional topics to cover (including eSafety, traffic engineering on motorways, integrated demand management and EC regulations).
- Feedback from users also indicates that the combination of delivery methods between email headlines and more detailed information on the web site is helpful in reaching users with different requirements for information
- Some quotes from responses to one of the survey questions demonstrate its value; EU Watch has enabled users to:
 - “monitor EC activities”
 - “catch the latest on Galileo”
 - “network with more facts at my fingertips”
 - “scan developments quickly”
 - “have simple access to EU activities”
- Use of the web site has been monitored and reported regularly during the project. The following key statistics for the year ending in May 2007 indicate the value of the site:
 - The average number of visits¹ per day was 59
 - Visits from HA ‘addresses’ averaged 15 per month
 - The average time per visit was just under 5 minutes
 - The number of page views per visit averaged 3.3
 - The number of visits to downloadable documents was:
 - Fact Sheets: 756
 - Conference reports: 680
 - EC Policy Newsletters: 586

¹ A visit is defined as one person visiting and interacting with the web site (e.g. by clicking on a link within a page)

- ITS Research Newsletters: 810
- Standards Newsletters: 705
- Galileo Newsletters: 725

3 Evaluation of achievements against objectives

This section of the report discusses the way in which the project has achieved its three objectives.

3.1 Improve information about ITS in Europe within the HA

The success of EU Watch in achieving this objective has clearly been demonstrated through the:

- large volume of good quality information provided to HA staff on a regular basis
- different levels of detail provided in headlines short articles, more detailed articles and links to sources and contact points for obtaining further information
- positive feedback received from users, both in the user surveys, and contact with individuals in the HA in the course of their work

3.2 Increase HA involvement in ITS in Europe

Achievement of this objective is more difficult to evaluate with the information available within the project, because EU Watch has not been tasked with monitoring the extent to which the HA is involved in Europe. However it is clear that:

- the EU Watch service has provided information on a significant number of opportunities, providing the starting point for HA involvement which would not otherwise have been possible
- a few of the events identified have been attended by HA staff, including events promoting the EC 7th Framework Programme and research conferences
- EU Watch has attended 12 events on behalf of the HA and provided reports and recommendations for further involvement, although many more events were identified.

3.3 Communicate relevant information about activities and opportunities effectively within the HA

Several indicators point to the success of EU Watch against this objective:

- The email Newswires and web site have provided accessible information to a circulation list of 95 HA staff, with links to further information and contact points to help those who need to know more
- HA Information Directorate noted the user-friendly nature and attractive design of the web site
- The number of Newswire recipients has grown and includes a large number of HA contractors
- One suggestion received is that this approach should be used as a model for disseminating other types of information within the HA
- The opportunity tracker has provided a quick reference guide to almost 100 opportunities identified.

However other indicators demonstrate further opportunities to improve:

- The web site has received relatively small numbers of visits from HA IP addresses (average 15 per month over a year), however HA staff can

access the site without using HA IP addresses (e.g. when working away from HA offices). For many HA readers, the Newswire headlines appear to provide sufficient information for much of the time, so that they do not need to access the more detailed information on the web site

- One comment from an HA contractor who is not involved in ITS suggests that EU Watch does not cater well for those with limited knowledge of ITS: an 'ITS for Beginners' section was requested for the web site.

4 Recommendations

On balance, the indications are that EU Watch has been very successful in meeting its objectives and that it supports the HA in meeting its overall aims and relevant business targets. Support for EU Watch from within the HA and the value for money provided suggest that it should continue in a similar form.

The following recommendations should be considered when planning the future of the EU Watch service.

1. The HA should consider bringing together EU Watch and ITS Radar more closely, perhaps by including the ITS Radar project as a sub-project within EU Watch.
2. The service will continue to need promoting within the HA, to meet the needs of new members of staff and staff taking on new responsibilities.
3. The HA portal should include a link to the EU Watch web site, providing easy access to the web site for those who are not on the circulation list.
4. The service and the themes covered should continue to be reviewed each year in consultation with HA staff to ensure that the method of delivery and focus remain relevant to the HA audience, and to identify any improvements required.
5. The following enhancements are suggested:
 - More resources should be made available within the HA for developing the opportunities identified and for tracking their progress
 - A larger budget should be made available for participating in events
 - The web site should be adapted to improve the presentation of the large volume of information now stored there
 - An 'ITS for Beginners' section should be considered for the web site to extend the outreach to a wider HA audience
6. With the HA web site rationalisation programme in mind, the EU Watch domain name will need to be changed to bring the site under the HA domain. In the longer term, EU Watch may need to be adapted to meet the requirements of the HA web site rationalisation programme, thereby integrating it with other web-based information for the Highways Agency.

Finally, a wider recommendation can be made on the basis of the success of EU Watch:

7. The service provides a model for communication on other issues and topics within the HA; for example HA business information, HA procedures, work on architecture and standards. A feasibility study is recommended on how the concept could be applied across the HA business, to meet the requirements of the various 'domains' represented by the HA structure: Traffic Operations, Network Strategy, Safety Standards and Research, Information Directorate.