



Driving Innovation in Crisis Management for European Resilience

D74.2 - Launch of DRIVER Newsletter

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Document History			
Version	Date	Change editors	Changes
1.0	30/10/2014	ARTTIC	First version to be submitted
1.1	07/01/2016	ARTTIC	This deliverable now updates the information provided in the previous version of the deliverable. Annexes have been included that provide the first pages of and links to the full texts of both Newsletter 1 (included in the original deliverable) and Newsletter 2 (which was at the stage of finalization at the time of the 1st DRIVER review
1.2	15/01/2016	ARTTIC	Revised to take account of SP7 leader comments and inclusion of references.
1.3	21/01/2016	ARTTIC	Revised to take account of Q4PR internal review comments
1.4	25/02/2016	ARTTIC	Revised to take account of further Q4PR comments and formulate final version.
1.5	26/02/2016	ARTTIC	Minor corrections
2.0	29/02/2016	ATOS	Quality check performed on this deliverable

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List of Acronyms

Abbreviation / acronym	Description
CM	Crisis Management
COSMIC	Contribution of Social Media in Crisis Management (FP7 project)
CoU	Community of Users (European Commission)
CRISMA	Modelling Crisis Management for Improved Action and Preparedness (FP7 project)
DCP	DRIVER Community Platform
EPISECC	Effective Communication & Access to Critical Information (FP7 project)
I4CM	Innovation for Crisis Management
PSCE	Public Safety Communication Europe
TIEMS	The International Emergency Management Society

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Project Description

DRIVER evaluates solutions in three key areas: civil society resilience, responder coordination as well as training and learning.

These solutions are evaluated using the DRIVER test-bed. Besides cost-effectiveness, DRIVER also considers societal impact and related regulatory frameworks and procedures. Evaluation results will be summarised in a roadmap for innovation in crisis management and societal resilience.

Finally, looking forward beyond the lifetime of the project, the benefits of DRIVER will materialize in enhanced crisis management practices, efficiency and through the DRIVER-promoted connection of existing networks.

DRIVER Step #1: Evaluation Framework

- Developing test-bed infrastructure and methodology to test and evaluate novel solutions, during the project and beyond. It provides guidelines on how to plan and perform experiments, as well as a framework for evaluation.
- Analysing regulatory frameworks and procedures relevant for the implementation of DRIVER-tested solutions including standardisation.
- Developing methodology for fostering societal values and avoiding negative side-effects to society as a whole from crisis management and societal resilience solutions.

DRIVER Step #2: Compiling and evaluating solutions

- Strengthening crisis communication and facilitating community engagement and self-organisation.
- Evaluating solutions for professional responders with a focus on improving the coordination of the response effort.
- Benefiting professionals across borders by sharing learning solutions, lessons learned and competencies.

DRIVER Step #3: Large scale experiments and demonstration

- Execution of large-scale experiments to integrate and evaluate crisis management solutions.
- Demonstrating improvements in enhanced crisis management practices and resilience through the DRIVER experiments.

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Executive Summary

The DRIVER Newsletter is a key component of the overall portfolio of DRIVER dissemination materials. Its primary purpose is to group together compilations of DRIVER news items on a regular basis for onward dissemination to a wide range of stakeholders. In this sense it should be seen to represent one specific part of a range of complementary dissemination channels.

This deliverable describes the way in which the Newsletter is produced, its planned periodicity, its relationship with other DRIVER dissemination material as part of a complete portfolio of dissemination solutions, and its target readership. Some statistics are given concerning circulation figures for the first two issues. Section 3 includes guidelines for contributions that have been developed internally following the experience gained from producing the first two issues of the Newsletter. Screenshots of the front pages/tables of content of the first two issues and links to the full texts are included in Annexes 1 and 2.

Some conclusions are drawn based on the experience gained to date and the need to align the guidelines on contributions and production to the overall SP7 Communications and Dissemination Strategy that is currently under revision.

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1 Introduction

The DRIVER Newsletter is an important element of a number of complementary DRIVER dissemination channels which include also the project website (see D.74.1 [2]), the DRIVER Community Platform (DCP) (see D72.1 [1]), videos, DRIVER events such as Innovation for Crisis Management (I4CM) workshops (see D75.1 [5]), social media channels such as Twitter and LinkedIn (see D74.3 [3]), infographics, banners, press releases, articles in external media (see D74.4[4]) and other materials.

Preparation of the content of the DRIVER Newsletter is undertaken by PSCE with the assistance of ARTTIC and with content obtained from other DRIVER SPs and partners, and from other sources (e.g. news of forthcoming external events). The mailing of the Newsletter is also undertaken by PSCE with additional dissemination through the DRIVER website and by other DRIVER partners through their own contacts.

The Newsletter comprises a periodic (several issues a year are planned now that DRIVER has entered an active experimental phase) compilation of topical news items and announcements, e.g. of forthcoming events, that are assembled together for the convenience of readers. This content is also distributed by other means, e.g. the DRIVER website and DRIVER social media channels and such content will also be disseminated through the new DRIVER Community Platform (DCP) under the responsibility of PSCE.

This report comprises an overview of the production of issues 1 and 2 of the DRIVER Newsletter (Section 2) including production and mailing, statistics, and selection and production of Newsletter articles; guidelines for contributions to the Newsletter (Section 3); lessons learnt and future steps (Section 4); Conclusions (Section 5); References; and Annexes that include the front pages of and links to the full texts of issues 1 and 2 of the Newsletter.

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2 DRIVER Newsletter – Issues 1 and 2

2.1 Production and mailing of the Newsletter

The content of the DRIVER Newsletter is compiled by the DRIVER partner PSCE (Public Safety Communication Europe) with the assistance of other DRIVER SP7 members and with input from other DRIVER Subprojects, WPs and experiments leaders.

The Public Safety Communications Europe Forum was established as a result of a European Commission funded project in 2008. Since then, PSCE has evolved into an independent forum, where representatives of public safety user organisations, industry and research institutes meet to discuss and exchange ideas and best practices, develop roadmaps and improve the future of public safety communications.

PSCE is a permanent autonomous organisation, working to foster excellence in the development and use of public safety communication and information management systems by consensus building. It is therefore well-placed to act as a communication channel for the dissemination of DRIVER news.

The mailing list utilised by PSCE for distribution of the DRIVER Newsletter currently comprises, amongst other key stakeholders:

- PSCE members
- Contacts from PSCE conferences (national authorities, industry, research/academia)
- Stakeholders from the previous CRISMA, EPISECC, COSMIC and other European security projects
- First responder associations
- Specific EU officials
- Permanent representations
- National contacts
- DRIVER contacts registered to the DRIVER Community Database

The mailings comprise the relevant issue of the Newsletter accompanied by a covering email and pitch carefully prepared by the project partners.

A further important category of recipients is the subscribers of the DRIVER Community Platform (DCP) which has recently become operational (see deliverable D72.1 [1]). It is expected that the DCP will be an increasingly important channel for the dissemination of DRIVER news as it becomes fully implemented across the project and, for future issues, will be used to send the Newsletter directly to registered subscribers.

In addition to the direct Newsletter mailings by PSCE, the Newsletter is also relayed directly by DRIVER partners to their local contacts and constituents and copies of each issue remain available for download through links created on the DRIVER project website which is maintained by the Project Coordinator, ATOS.

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2.2 Statistics

The DRIVER Newsletter is sent to the targeted recipients by PSCE using a powerful email marketing tool, ICONTACT, which allows tracking of the dissemination.

For the 1st issue of the Newsletter, the following statistics (measured on 4 December 2014) have been provided by PSCE:

Sent: 3,368 contacts
 Opened: 1608 opens

For the 2nd issue, the equivalent statistics (measured on 28 July 2015) are

Sent: 3448 contacts
 Opened: 2471 opens

This suggests an increase in both the number of directly mailed recipients and in the number of opened emails between the first and second issues. For future editions of the DRIVER newsletter open rates will continue to be recorded and benchmarked against average open rates for similar types of newsletter to ascertain and improve success levels. It is proposed to include this task in the revised version of the DRIVER Communications and Dissemination Strategy.

2.3 Selection and production of Newsletter articles

The aim in the first two issues of the Newsletter has been to strike a balance between general articles describing the DRIVER project and intended to describe DRIVER activities to readers previously unfamiliar with the project, more specific technical news (e.g. experimentation activities) from within the project, reports on important events, e.g. I4CM events and EU CoU workshops, and announcements of important upcoming internal and external events.

Production of the content is undertaken by PSCE, based on the raw input received, and, where necessary, further editing has been carried out by native English speakers within ARTTIC. Approval prior to publication has taken place through the DRIVER Coordination team.

Based upon the experience gained with the first two issues of the Newsletter, and to better prepare future issues in both terms of breadth, balance and quality of articles and to streamline the production process, guidelines for contributions to the Newsletter were prepared jointly by PSCE and ARTTIC following the publication of the second issue.

These guidelines are intended to apply to all input, whether produced by PSCE or other SP7 partners such as ARTTIC, or submitted from other SPs and partners in DRIVER. They are reproduced in section 3 of this document.

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2.4 Links to first two issues of the DRIVER Newsletter

Rather than reproduce all content of the first two issues of the DRIVER Newsletter in this summary report, the first pages of both are provided in Annexes 1 and 2 of this document together with a link to the DRIVER website where the full texts of each issue may be downloaded.

The contents of the first two issues of the Newsletter comprised the following:

Issue 1

1. Foreword (from DRIVER Project Coordinator)
2. Facts and figures about DRIVER
3. An introduction to DRIVER
4. A description of the DRIVER Test-bed and Portfolio of Tools
5. A description of the DRIVER Community
6. Recent Events
7. Upcoming Events

Issue 2

1. Foreword (from DRIVER Project Coordinator)
2. Project News (including articles addressing civil society resilience theme, strengthened responder theme, supporting information and analysis theme)
3. DRIVER on Social Media
4. Recent Events (including reports from I4CM, Marseille (May 2015); EC CoU, Brussels (May 2015); European First Responders Interoperability Workshop, The Hague, The Netherlands (June/July 2015); Tsunami Decision Support Systems 2015, Ispra, Italy (July 2015))
5. Upcoming Events

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3 Guidelines for Contributions to the DRIVER Newsletter

NOTE. This section reproduces the text of the Guidelines for Contributions to the DRIVER Newsletter that were drafted jointly by PSCE and ARTTIC on the basis of experience gained with the first two issues of the Newsletter, with the aim of improving the style, layout, quality and relevance of contributions. They are intended to apply to all contributions, whether produced internally in SP7 or drafted by other SPs/WPs within DRIVER.

Abstract:

This document is intended to provide guidelines and hints on content for material intended for publication in the DRIVER Newsletter with a view to maximising relevance, interest and reader focus. It also provides guidance on style, length of contributions and the use of images and graphics.

Introduction

As DRIVER establishes a dialogue with various stakeholders in the field of crisis management and actively engages with them in the project it important that the Newsletter is used as a means to raise interest in the project. Material for the DRIVER Newsletter may come from a variety of sources such as interviews with CM experts, end users or those conducting experiments, from key results reported in project deliverables or by way of direct contributions from DRIVER participants. The common objective in all cases is that it should be presented in such a way that an external reader will understand the key messages without knowing about the DRIVER project in detail.

In order to facilitate this process all those involved in contributing material to the DRIVER Newsletter, both within the SP7 team and from other areas of the DRIVER project, are kindly asked to respect the following guidelines:

Length:

The length of each contribution should preferably be from 300 to 500 words with a preference towards the lower end of the scale and only going to 500 words where absolutely necessary. Brevity is key in this situation and will help the reader to digest the information presented more quickly.

Title

Each article should have an eye-catching, self-explanatory and, above all, interesting title. If needed a subtitle can be added. Keep both as concise as possible.

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Content

- Make it easy to read. Use simple language and avoid including too many technical details and remember that our task is to tell a story that will be of interest to external stakeholders. Try to answer the following questions as appropriate:
 - What is it about?
 - Who was/is involved?
 - Where did/will it happen?
 - When did/is it happening?
 - How was/is something done?
 - Why was/is it done?
 - What are the expected results, the expected impacts and benefits (and for whom)?
- Try to make it interactive, e.g. whenever possible invite users to share their opinion on a certain topic on Twitter or LinkedIn, or invite them to discuss the topic at an upcoming event.
- Talk to the reader. Instead of collectively referring to subscribers as “readers,” try to connect more personally.
- Focus on success stories and any particularly interesting features from your deliverable/task/experiment/WP/SP. The important sentences can be highlighted in bold letters.
- Wherever possible, try to use input from a person, e.g. quotes from an event participant, testimony from a team member or experiment participant, etc. as this will contribute greatly to telling the “DRIVER story”.
- Avoid using project jargon (i.e. SPx, WP, deliverable, etc.) When you want to refer to an SP or WP rather refer to them as thematic areas.
- Avoid abbreviations that will be unknown to an external stakeholder (e.g. SE2) and provide an explanation for any that are absolutely necessary.
- Include images wherever possible to visually express the conveyed message. Only use diagrams and charts if they can easily be understood by an external stakeholder and use them sparingly.
- Only use images for which you have the copyright or where you have permission for their use. When sending the pictures to PSCE (secretariat@psce-europe.eu) please provide them with the copyright information. If you want to include additional information that goes beyond the length of your contribution please consider adding a hyperlink to further sources (e.g. on the DRIVER public website, or on Twitter/LinkedIn/YouTube). If you refer to a public deliverable, please provide a hyperlink to the full document.

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- When writing about upcoming DRIVER events or third party events, include a link for registration or an e-mail address to obtain further information.
- Always conclude with a 'call to action' – Examples could be; go to the DCP to discuss further; share with your social network; send us feedback, etc.
- Use hyperlinks where possible, leading readers back to the DRIVER website. This will help increase traffic to the website and, subsequently, awareness of the project.

Submitting material for the Newsletter

You should forward your proposed content to PSCE at the email address below by the deadline indicated for the relevant edition of the Newsletter. PSCE will ensure that the contribution is written up and edited into the correct style and format and will revert to you if any clarifications are required.

In case of any questions, please contact secretariat@psce-europe.eu

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4 Lessons learnt and future steps

Lessons learnt

While the first two issues of the DRIVER Newsletter were produced and were deemed satisfactory, there is a need to further develop the content to reflect the evolution of DRIVER, e.g.

- to report on the results of ongoing experiments
- to ensure that the Newsletter is complementary to the portfolio of other communication and dissemination tools and channels, e.g. the DRIVER website, DRIVER social media and the DRIVER Community Platform (DCP), and
- to ensure that the Newsletter continues to meet the needs of its audience.

The current process for producing the newsletter has therefore been streamlined and made more effective. Now that the project has started producing results which are appropriate for dissemination and communication, news production will be based on a three-level approach:

1. Every time there is an opportunity to communicate about DRIVER towards the “DRIVER Community” or a thematic sub-community of interest, a specific news item will be drafted, either in text or including multimedia content (see previous comment).
2. Fresh news items will trigger tweets, posts in the “News” section of the public website and the DCP and on LinkedIn according to their content and intended target groups.
3. On a regular basis (typically several times a year so as not to overload readers) the DRIVER Newsletter will regroup the news items from the preceding period together with featured articles on topics of major interest, in particular for policy and decision makers and end users.

Future steps

To ensure a consistent approach to the development of content, quality control and working methods, it will be important to align elements such as the guidelines for contributions presented in Section 3 of this document, the production process, the overall message alignment and the graphical branding of the Newsletter to the overall revision SP7 communication and dissemination strategy due for publication as a new SP7 deliverable in April 2016. This will include enhancing the validation process for Newsletter content and ensuring that it supports DRIVER’s key strategic messages.

The third issue of the Newsletter was in preparation at the time of drafting. It, and future issues of the Newsletter, will be prepared in accordance with the Guidelines for Contributions detailed in Section 3 of this document. Feedback will also be sought from recipients in order to tailor content.

As the DRIVER project has now entered a more experimental phase, it is expected that the Newsletter will reflect this evolution in terms of content. In addition, it is planned that dissemination of the Newsletter will be closely linked in the future to content uploaded to the DRIVER Community Platform (DCP). For example, “news alerts” will be published to the DCP as they arise and then compiled, together with an editorial and longer “feature” articles, into the DRIVER Newsletter. Similarly, and as at present, topical news items will also be highlighted on the DRIVER project website and disseminated through DRIVER’s social media channels as they arise.

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5 Conclusions

The experience gained in the period covered by this revised deliverable has been valuable in terms of optimizing the process for the production of the Newsletter, defining guidelines on contributions that should lead to more consistent, balanced and engaging articles, better integrating the Newsletter with the full range of DRIVER dissemination materials and channels, and planning the production of the Newsletter in a way that is complementary to new dissemination channels like the DRIVER Community Platform (DCP).

The newsletter is an important channel to promote the project and engage the community of users. Therefore, identifying, curating and mobilising the stories are key aims, and there is also a need to align messages with the updated dissemination and communications strategy that will be published at M24 (April 2016). Improved and more striking graphical design and reinforcement of “DRIVER” branding will be applied, as for other current DRIVER dissemination materials, and adaptation of technical content to the need of identified audiences will enhance accessibility, readability and impact.

There is a continual effort to increase the range of stakeholders who can benefit from receiving the Newsletter and other DRIVER dissemination materials. In this respect, links have been forged over recent months with TIEMS (The International Emergency Management Society). Two DRIVER articles have already been placed in the TIEMS Newsletter, which is circulated to some 100 000 emergency management practitioners and a series of articles are planned for a forthcoming “Scientific Articles” issue of the TIEMS Newsletter scheduled for publication in Spring 2016. It is expected that this synergy will be valuable to both DRIVER and TIEMS. Further opportunities for synergy and collaboration are also being explored.

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Annex 1: Foreword and table of contents of DRIVER Newsletter #1



Figure 1: DRIVER Newsletter #1¹

¹ A complete copy of the text of DRIVER Newsletter #1 is available at: <http://driver-project.eu/media/19>

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Annex 2: Foreword and table of contents of DRIVER Newsletter #2



Figure 2: DRIVER Newsletter #2²

² A complete copy of the text of DRIVER Newsletter #2 is available at: <http://driver-project.eu/media/19>

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