

GSM Association and EICTA joint statement:

IMEI Integrity on the theft of mobile phones

In recent months, the GSM Association and EICTA have worked together on a set of proposals designed to ensure the necessary measures are in place to address the issue of handset theft.

For its part, the GSM Association has placed a renewed emphasis on the promotion and development of its Central Equipment Identity Register (CEIR) to ensure an appropriate solution is in place to facilitate the exchange of handset data to deny network access to stolen handsets.

The discussions between the GSM Association and EICTA have focussed on strengthening the security of the International Mobile Equipment Identity (IMEI) within the handset to increase the efficiency of EIR systems. It is hoped that enhanced IMEI security and increased usage of a Central EIR will lessen the attractiveness of stolen handsets which in turn will lead to a reduction in the number of handset thefts. The criminalisation of unauthorised IMEI re-programming is also desirable and the industry believes that EU member states should develop appropriate legislative provisions.

The work of the GSM Association and EICTA brought about a clear understanding of the requirements of the vendor and operator communities and has resulted in the development of a set of commonly agreed proposals to satisfy the requirements and concerns of all stakeholders. The proposals fall into three distinct categories that are described below.

1. Agreed Technical Principles

The GSM Association and EICTA agreed on the need to continue to seek technical principles that may offer increased IMEI integrity. A number of technical principles designed to increase the integrity of IMEIs have been documented and EICTA and the GSM Association will work together over the coming weeks to review and assess the technical principles with a view to finalising a prioritised list of Technical Principles. The final list will be published on industry Internet sites and may be used as guidance for manufacturers and to provide suitable input to the relevant standards development organisations to promote the adoption of increased IMEI integrity.

Next Steps:

GSMA and EICTA to finalise prioritise and publish agreed technical principles	End Nov '03
Submit agreed proposals to relevant standard development organisations	End Feb '04

2. Reporting and Correction of Identified Weaknesses

The GSM Association and EICTA agreed the need to develop and implement a formal process to facilitate the reporting and correction of IMEI weaknesses in the event that successful compromise attacks become apparent. It is envisaged that the improved

communication process will greatly enhance the exchange of intelligence and will accelerate co-operation between the manufacturer and network operator communities.

The reporting process relates to existing and future handsets over their product lifetime from launch to end of production and consists of the following steps;

- Once an operator detects compromised IMEIs in a specific mobile equipment model, which is still in production, it informs the assigned GSM Association's representative who examines and validates the report
- Where deemed appropriate, the assigned GSM Association's representative formally addresses a notice to the relevant manufacturers nominated representative
- The manufacturer assesses the veracity of the report and responds to the GSM Association within 42 days to acknowledge receipt of the report, propose remedial action to be taken, and provide estimated dates from which equipment with an improved IMEI implementation will leave the factory
- In the event that the manufacturer fails to respond within the prescribed 42 days, or fails to take satisfactory action, the GSM Association will inform its members of the product compromise
- Once informed of the compromise, network operators may take proportionate action but in the event that a satisfactory solution is put forward by the manufacturer the notification will be withdrawn

At all stages of the process on a potential IMEI compromised case, the involved parties will ensure the highest possible level of confidentiality throughout the whole communication chain and for that purpose put appropriate Non Disclosure Agreement ("NDA") in place.

Next Steps:

GSMA and EICTA to finalise process details and documentation and create a list of central points of contact between the parties	End Nov '03
Basic NDA format to be agreed between the legal representatives	End Nov '03
GSMA and EICTA to launch formal reporting process	End Dec '03

3. Communications

The GSM Association and EICTA, utilizing BAPT's database of IMEI applicants, will develop a newsletter style communication aimed at all industry players to promote the latest IMEI integrity and handset theft initiatives. The communication will be widely distributed to ensure increased awareness of all relevant issues.

Next Steps:

GSMA and EICTA to agree newsletter content	End Oct '03
Distribute newsletter and publish on relevant industry web sites	Mid Nov '03

Conclusion

The GSM Association and EICTA are willing to provide a report on the effective implementation of their initiatives after all the prescribed measures have been put in place and would welcome the opportunity to present to TCAM in approximately six months time.