

COMMITTEE ON PETITIONS  
THE CHAIRMAN

Brussels, **310816** **20.07.2006**  
AGV/mb[02-COM.PETI(2006)D/58577]  
41226

Mr. Olivier-Paul Morandini,  
European Emergency Number  
Association (EENA)  
Avenue Louise, 262, B-1050

Subject: Petition No. 0688/2005 (reference to be quoted in all correspondence)

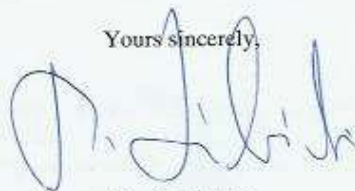
Dear Mr. Morandini,

Following your letter of 22 May 2006, I would like to inform you that the Committee on Petitions considered your petition and decided that a discussion on issues you raised would be scheduled for its 13/14 September 2006 meeting. The Committee will take this opportunity to assess the written information provided by the European Commission of which I am enclosing a copy.

I will keep you informed about the time and the place of the meeting, which you are welcome to attend. When your petition is introduced, by special permission of the Committee, you may if you wish make a brief statement lasting no longer than five minutes. In this case, it would be helpful if you could provide a copy of your statement to the Committee secretariat so that photocopies can be made and distributed. Members will then be in a position to discuss your case.

I look forward to welcoming you to the Committee meeting.

Yours sincerely,



Marcin Libicki  
Chairman of the Committee on Petitions

*Annex: Commission's reply PE 376.510*

### 3. Commission reply, received on 3 July 2006.

The Commission will set out:

- a brief overview of the action it has taken to ensure implementation by Member States of the obligation to put 112 in place
- a reply to the specific implementation questions raised by the Petitioner
- its response to the more general policy issues to which the Petitioner refers.

Following extensive action by the Commission, **the emergency services can now be accessed in each of the 25 Member States using 112, from both fixed and mobile phones:**

- The Directive was adopted in 2002, with a date for transposition of July 2003.
- The Commission immediately opened infringement proceedings against Member States which did not transpose on time.
- As regards implementation by the new Member States, the Commission carried out extensive preparation for accession in May 2004, in particular through the Communications Committee, and reported on progress to the European Parliament's ITRE Committee.
- Having secured transposition, the Commission sent a questionnaire on the implementation of 112 in practice to the Member States in June 2004, through the Communications Committee. The replies showed that 112 was available throughout the EU, with the exception of Poland for fixed phones. As a result, the Commission started an infringement proceeding in March 2005, which led to a positive outcome in September 2005.
- The Commission has in parallel reported extensively on the implementation of 112 in a succession of implementation reports submitted to the European Parliament and Council.
- The Commission has also regularly discussed 112 with the Member States, in particular on four separate occasions in the Communications Committee, the corresponding working documents for which are publicly available and on which reports have been submitted to the European Parliament.

#### **On the specific implementation questions raised by the Petitioner:**

##### 1. "112 is still unknown to the majority of European citizens"

- The Commission has, in the context of its reporting referred to above, verified that publicity is given to 112. All Member States have taken and continue to take steps to inform their citizens of the existence and use of 112. These range from mentioning 112 alongside other emergency numbers in payphones, directories, police notices, newspapers, and other media, to organising dedicated TV programmes on 112 (as is the case in Latvia).
- A recent Eurobarometer survey (December 2005) shows encouraging results as far as knowledge of 112 by European citizens is concerned. 35% of EU citizens now identify 112 as the number to call in case of an emergency outside their Member State, whereas only

19% were able to do so in 2000. In order to support this positive development, the Commission intends to launch an information campaign on 112, together with the Member States, once it is convinced that the quality of the emergency service offered through 112 has reached a satisfactory level in all EU countries.

2. "Answering and handling of calls is highly problematic in several Member States"

- In the absence of harmonised rules at Community level, the Commission has taken a proactive approach concerning answering and handling of calls to 112. This question touches both the first and third pillar, as it is closely related to civil protection, an exclusive competence of the Member States. The Commission accordingly decided to promote best practice amongst Member States, as a means of achieving a positive result for European citizens.
- A conference was organised in October 2005, under the auspices of the Commission's Information Society and Media and Environment Directorates General. This conference, which members of the EP ITRE and ENVI committees were invited to attend, brought together representatives of administrations responsible for electronic communications and civil protection from each Member State.
- A number of best practices were identified. For instance, a call to 112 in Finland has to be answered within 10 seconds, and competent emergency units should respond within 90 seconds; in Spain, the regions have dramatically improved the quality of their emergency response by ensuring that caller location data is available to the emergency services; and in the Czech Republic, the emergency operator can transfer calls depending on the language knowledge of the operators in different centres.
- As a follow-up, the Commission proposed the creation of an expert group dealing with 112 issues, composed of experts both on telephony and civil protection. The first two meetings of the group, which took place on 16 February and 6 June 2006, gave the opportunity to further discuss implementation issues (e.g. caller location information or the existence of several organisational models to handle emergency calls).
- The Commission has, in parallel, launched an initiative named « eCall », in cooperation with the industry, which promotes a pan European service of emergency calls from cars, using 112, by 2009. This initiative has been presented to the EP TRAN Committee.

3. "Caller location is still not implemented"

- In order to promote technical solutions, the Commission adopted a Recommendation on caller location information in July 2003. The Commission services announced in April 2005 that they regarded caller location information as technically feasible. There is accordingly no longer any technical barrier to the adoption of this service in the Member States, although implementation involves complex organisational and technical issues.
- In April 2006, the Commission started infringement proceedings against 11 Member States which had failed to introduce caller location information either for calls from fixed or mobile networks.

**On the more general policy issues to which the Petitioner refers:**

Finally, the Commission would like to point out that, as requested by the Petitioner, it duly treats the implementation of 112 in a multi-disciplinary way, that is, by bringing together the telephony and civil protection aspects, while at the same time **respecting the competences of the Member States in relation for example to civil protection and security.**

As regards commonly agreed quality standards in regard to the response that Member States give to emergency calls, to which the Petitioner refers, it is clear that Single Market legislation of the type which has introduced 112 across the Union by means of the Universal Service Directive for e-communications services **cannot be used to enforce common requirements for police, ambulance and other emergency services in the Member States.**