



DTCE Position Statement on Trust in Business Identities

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An association established in 2011, Digital Trust and Compliance Europe (DTCE) brings together businesses and practitioners with an interest in trust and compliance methods and technologies in Europe.

DTCE is concerned that a common approach is established to assuring trust in digital identities for businesses in line with European and International best practice. Without a common framework for user trust in business identities DTCE is concerned that European companies will not be able to compete effectively within the international market. Successful e-commerce depends on trust in business identities that is seen by users as trustworthy.

An essential element of assuring trust by users of e-commerce in business identities is the trustworthiness of Trust Service Providers (TSPs) certifying electronic business identities. Trust in such services is commonly established through audit / conformity assessment against recognised best practice.

For effective assurance of business identities DTCE is concerned that under European regulatory policy:

- a) There is a need for much greater harmonisation of schemes for audit / conformity assessment of Trust Service Providers providing certification and other trust services which assure trust in business identities than is currently applied by national supervisory bodies operating under Directive 1999/93. The schemes need to provide a common level of trust by using common approaches to supervision and conformity assessment.
- b) Schemes for conformity assessment of Trust Service Providers need to be applied by bodies demonstrated to have the appropriate competence such as through accreditation in line with European Regulations for conformity assessment.
- c) Schemes for conformity assessment need to be based on internationally recognised best practice, where necessary applied through pan European standards.
- d) The harmonised schemes need to cater for Trust Service Providers supporting electronic identities and authentication as well as signatures and address the needs of trust in business identities as well as personal identities.
- e) Information on acceptable techniques for implementing best practice needs to be shared between those concerned with conformity assessment of TSPs across Europe. This needs to be kept up to date to take account of changes in technology and weaknesses found in current techniques resulting from investigation of security incidents.



- f) The issues of legal liability of all the parties involved in assuring trust in business identities need to be taken into account in ensuring that a pan European policy on trust in business identities within a global context. Contract law between consenting parties should form this bedrock- articulating the terms upon which credentials are issued and are relied upon, with provisions for revocation, dispute resolution and so on.
- g) There needs to be a common understanding of the concepts used in establishing trust in business identities for e-commerce

DTCE encourages the EU Commission to take account of DTCE's concerns over the harmonisation of EU regulatory policy. Only by ensuring a harmonised approach can the risks associated with trust services be properly managed to maximise trust within a pan-European and global business context.

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