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GAMES CONSOLES VOLUNTARY AGREEMENT (GCVA)

THIRTEENTH STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

13 December 2022, 17:00-18:00 CET
Hybrid meeting



PARTICIPANTS

European Commission (EC)	1. Ewout Deurwaarder
Independent Inspector (Intertek)	2. Steve Fernandes 3. Jane Lee
Microsoft Corporation	4. Ted Eckert 5. Adriana Mattei, Zetacast, consultant
Nintendo of Europe GmbH	6. Julie Cheung-Rueckert 7. Eiichiro Morisaki 8. Emil Schweiger 9. Hiroki Takuma
Sony Interactive Entertainment	10. Joshua Aslan 11. Ceri Fenwick 12. Anne Hühnerfuß, Dentons Global Advisors, consultant 13. Kieren Mayers
VA Administrator (SEC Newgate EU)	14. Ilaria Graceffa 15. Alberto Hermosel 16. Ferial Saouli

AGENDA

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Appointment of the new Steering Committee Chair
3. Approval of minutes of previous Steering Committee meeting
4. Review of actions of previous Steering Committee meeting
5. Annual Compliance Report (ACR) presentation
6. Taking stock
7. Update from Signatories:
 - 7.1 2022 SRI Revision (technical amendments)
 - 7.2 2023 SRI Review
 - 7.3 Outreach on the proposed ESPR
 - 7.4 Timeline
8. Update from the European Commission
9. AOB and date of next Steering Committee meeting
10. End of meeting

MEETING MINUTES

1. Welcome and introductions

Feriel Saouli (SEC Newgate EU, VA Administrator) opened the meeting at 17:00 CET, she welcomed participants and presented the agenda. No AOBs were added.

2. Appointment of the new Steering Committee Chair

Ted Eckert's (Microsoft) term as Chair of the Steering Committee ended in 2022, but he announced that he would stand again for a new term until 2024. There were no objections.

3. Approval of minutes of previous Steering Committee meeting (November 2021)

Feriel Saouli (SEC Newgate EU, VA Administrator) confirmed that the minutes were circulated, approved, and uploaded on the Games Consoles Voluntary Agreement (GCVA) [website](#).

4. Review of actions of previous Steering Committee meeting

Feriel Saouli (SEC Newgate EU, VA Administrator) noted that all the actions agreed at the 12th Steering Committee meeting had been completed.

5. Annual Compliance Report (ACR) presentation

Jane Lee (Intertek, Independent Inspector) presented the 2021 Annual Compliance Report (ACR). Both the [ACR](#) and her [presentation](#) can be found on the GCVA website.

- The Independent Inspector determined that the Signatories continue to be compliant with all SRI requirements.
- The SRI version applicable to reporting period 1 January - 31 December 2021 is [SRI v4](#), which included for the first time a provision for reporting non-energy/resource efficiency requirements for consoles using <20 W (such as power caps and auto power

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down in Active Gaming Mode, information provided to consumers, refurbishment and out-of-warranty repair services).

- Nine games consoles fell within the scope of the SRI: Xbox Series S (Model: 1883), Xbox Series X (Model: 1882), Nintendo Switch (Model: HAC-001(-01)), Nintendo Switch OLED Model (Model: HEG-001), PlayStation®4 (Model: CUH-2216), PlayStation®5 (Model: CFI-1016A), PlayStation®5 Digital Edition (Model: CFI-1016B), PlayStation®5 (Model: CFI-1116A), PlayStation®5 Digital Edition (Model: CFI-1116B).
- Two compliance verifications were undertaken during this reporting period:
 - For new games consoles models / revised models after placed on the market: Xbox Series S (Model: 1883), Xbox Series X (Model: 1882), Sony Playstation5® Digital Edition (Model: CFI-1016B) and Sony Playstation5® (Model: CFI-1016A).
 - Testing and verification by the Consumer Electronics division of Intertek Performance Electrical & Network Assurance test facility was done according to [SRI v3](#) as the investigation took place in 2021.

Jane Lee (Intertek, Independent Inspector) concluded by making some recommendations:

- Ensure clarity regarding the SRI version to be used at the point of compliance testing.
- Provide the verification information in relation to Annex A-2 immediately prior to a compliance review to the Independent Inspector.

Ewout Deurwaarder (EC) asked for clarification on the SRI versions used for the latest Compliance Investigation Reports. Joshua Aslan (Sony) explained that in 2021 the Independent Inspector submitted a Compliance Investigation Report against [SRI v3](#) (2020), but as this version did not contain the requirements for new consoles that were launched at the end of 2020, it was necessary to complete the testing using the following version, [SRI v4](#) (published in 2021), which included the applicable requirements for the new consoles.

6. Taking stock

Joshua Aslan (Sony) presented the main energy achievements and resource efficiency commitments of the GCVA.

In the area of **energy efficiency**:

- Implementation of 6 tiers of power cap reductions since 2015.
- Estimate of over 6.64 TWh of energy use avoided in 2020, far exceeding original EC target of 1 TWh per year by 2020 in Europe.
- Up to ~50% reduction in power consumption in PlayStation 4 and Xbox One generation consoles, driven by GCVA requirements (Xbox One X vs Xbox One S; PlayStation). He noted the Nintendo Switch is an inherently low-power console.
- In 2020, new 8k capable generation consoles were launched without increasing power caps despite substantial performance increase – the first time industry has achieved this.
- [2019 CSES report](#) estimated that the SRI would achieve an energy saving of around 54.42 TWh, (equivalent to Greece's energy consumption in 2014) over the lifetime of UHD consoles in Europe.

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- [2018 Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory green gaming report](#) highlighted consoles as efficient gaming devices.

In the area of **resource efficiency**:

- Consumers have access to efficient refurbishment / out of warranty repair services.
- Non-destructive disassembly of key components is possible with commercially available tools at the end-of-life.
- Console plastics parts >25 g are labeled specifying the type of resin to improve recycling.
- Key components are available to authorised repairers and select spare parts to end users / independent repairers for 2 years.
- Console external plastic enclosure parts >25g contain no HFRs >0.1% by weight.
- Repair and maintenance information is provided to end users.

7. Update from Signatories:

7.1 2022 SRI Revision (technical amendments)

Emil Schweiger (Nintendo) went on to present some of the minor technical revisions and text clarifications of SRI v4.1:

- Aligned circumvention text with similar Ecodesign legislation.
- Further clarification added on product compliance reporting.
- The role and duties of the Chair and the Administrator were adjusted and clarified.
- SRI revision timing was simplified and kept more flexible.
- HFR content verification method was added for plastic enclosure parts.

The SRI v4.1 will be effective as of January 2023. Ewout Deurwaarder (EC) confirmed that he was fine with this.

7.2 2023 SRI Review

Ted Eckert (Microsoft) mentioned that in parallel to the SRI Technical Revision, the Signatories have also been working on the fourth SRI Review (the outcome of which will be SRI v5 – first draft is expected in Q3 of 2023).

Items under review include provisions on spare parts, power caps reduction, increased transparency and testing, and additional information to users and stakeholders.

7.3 Outreach on the proposed ESPR

Ted Eckert (Microsoft) explained that Signatories are closely following the process of the proposed Ecodesign Sustainable Product Regulation (ESPR). They have prepared a position paper which they are sharing in meetings with stakeholders (EP, Council, EC). The main request of the Signatories is that the new Article 18 on self-regulatory measures be kept.

7.4 Timeline

Ted Eckert (Microsoft) then presented the timeline for 2022-2023. The technical amendments (SRI Revision) have just been finalised, and discussions with stakeholders such as MEPs and Members States will continue with a view to finalising the draft SRI Review proposal towards Q3 2023. The next EU Steering Committee meeting should take place in Q2 or Q3 of 2023,

with possibly another Steering Committee meeting (as well as the Consultation Forum meeting) towards the end of 2023.

8. Update from the European Commission

Ewout Deurwaarder (EC) gave the following comments/updates:

a) On the proposed EU Batteries Regulation:

- **Timeline:** On 9 December 2022, a political agreement was reached (final details need to be finalised). The text includes a specific article on removability and replaceability of batteries from appliances. The political agreement is that batteries will have to be replaceable by end users (with some exemptions) in around 4 years from now. Julie Cheung-Rueckert (Nintendo) asked about the expected procedural timeline. Ewout Deurwaarder (EC) explained that the provisional text will be made available in the next few weeks with publication of the final text expected in the summer of 2023. This is because the endorsement by the European Parliament and the Council and the translation and official publication in the EU Official Journal; in total these may take up to 6 months (mid-2023). This specific provision should be implemented 3.5 years after that (estimated to be end 2026).
- Kieren Mayers (Sony) explained that batteries requirements have been taken onboard, and engineers are working on this aspect. There are some complexities (e.g. ergonomic design that could create safety issues, and therefore justify some exemptions) but overall very substantial changes will come to redesign and comply with new batteries requirements.
- Ted Eckert (Microsoft) and Emil Schweiger (Nintendo) noted that although there are some safety concerns to be addressed, Signatories are looking at ways to comply and make sure the VA will be aligned with the new regulatory requirements for batteries.
- Emil Schweiger (Nintendo) asked if there will be a guidance document accompanying the Batteries Regulation (for instance, explaining how to remove batteries or how to define what is removable). Ewout Deurwaarder (EC) confirmed that there will be guidelines as additional support for this specific provision. The Commission has set no specific deadline for that, but they are working on it, so manufacturers should have the guidance available well before these new requirements,. Emil Schweiger (Nintendo) added that removability is important, but safety is also key and must be granted, which is why it is important for manufacturers to understand all requirements.

b) On the ESPR:

- **Timeline:** The focus is now on the negotiations (European Parliament and Council). After their respective positions, a political agreement should follow around the end of next year, and the final text should then be adopted before the elections of the European Parliament (mid-2024). The subsequent issue will be the implementation.
- The [draft EP ESPR report](#) has just been published, suggesting deleting Article 18 (replaced by a temporary provision, Amendment 88). The Commission is defending the ESPR proposal.
- In response to comments that some Member States are not enthusiastic about VAs, Ferial Saouli (SEC Newgate EU, VA Administrator) said that VAs are a good tool in general for the regulation of some product groups, and a good option to keep due to the extensive number of products that will be regulated within the ESPR.

9. AOB and date of next Steering Committee meeting

Signatories presented the updated [GCVA website](#) and the page on [energy efficiency](#) which Ewout Deurwaarder (EC) found very interesting.

10. End of meeting

Feriel Saouli (SEC Newgate EU, VA Administrator) thanked participants and closed the meeting at 18:00 CET.

Actions

- VA Administrator to prepare and distribute the minutes of the current meeting.