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GAMES CONSOLES VOLUNTARY AGREEMENT (GCVA)

THIRD UK STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

**24 January 2023
17:00-18:00 CET (16:00-17:00 GMT)
Hybrid meeting**



PARTICIPANTS

BEIS

1. Anum Kazmi
2. Margaret Sutherland

Defra

3. James Butterworth

Energy Saving Trust

4. Stew Horne

Independent Inspector (Intertek)

5. Steve Fernandes
6. Jane Lee

Microsoft Corporation

7. Kim Braun
8. Ted Eckert
9. Adriana Mattei, Zetacast, consultant

Nintendo of Europe GmbH

10. Julie Cheung-Rueckert
11. Eiichiro Morisaki
12. Emil Schweiger
13. Hiroki Takuma

Sony Interactive Entertainment

14. Joshua Aslan
15. Ceri Fenwick

VA Administrator (SEC Newgate EU)

16. Alberto Hermosel
17. Ferial Saouli

AGENDA

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Approval of minutes of previous Steering Committee meeting
3. Review of actions of previous Steering Committee meeting
4. Annual Compliance Report (ACR) presentation
5. Taking stock
6. Update from Signatories:
 - 6.1 2022 VA Revision (technical amendments)
 - 6.2 2023 VA Review
 - 6.3 Timeline
7. Update from the European Commission
8. AOB and date of next Steering Committee meeting
9. 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. Approval of minutes of previous Steering Committee meeting (November 2021)

Feriel Saouli (SEC Newgate EU, VA Administrator) confirmed that the minutes were circulated and approved as per the deadlines in the VA. They were uploaded to the Games Consoles Voluntary Agreement [website](#).

3. Review of actions of previous Steering Committee meeting

Feriel Saouli (SEC Newgate EU, VA Administrator) noted that all actions agreed at the 2nd UK Steering Committee meeting (23 November 2021) had been completed and that Signatories are still discussing internally the topics raised by stakeholders regarding the availability of spare parts and the technical feasibility of making further reductions in power caps for media modes. This will be touched upon during this meeting, under section #6.2.

4. Annual Compliance Report (ACR) presentation

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

- The Independent Inspector determined that the Signatories were compliant with all UK VA requirements.
- The VA version applicable to reporting period 16 - 31 December 2021 is [UKVA v1.0](#). This was the first reporting period for the UK VA, as it was only adopted towards the end of 2021, and therefore, no prior compliance testing was undertaken to be reported in the ACR.
- Nine games consoles fell within the scope of the VA: 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),

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PlayStation®5 (Model: CFI-1016A), PlayStation®5 Digital Edition (Model: CFI-1016B), PlayStation®5 (Model: CFI-1116A), PlayStation®5 Digital Edition (Model: CFI-1116B).

- Models reported for this period were considered for compliance testing after the publication of the ACR in 2022.

Jane Lee (Intertek, Independent Inspector) concluded by noting that there were no recommendations in relation to the reporting process, data handling and product compliance review associated with the role of the Independent Inspector to produce the UK ACR.

5. Taking stock

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

In the area of **energy efficiency**, Joshua Aslan (Sony) noted that:

- Signatories implemented 6 tiers of power cap reductions since 2015.
- It is estimated that of over 6.64 TWh of energy use was avoided in 2020, far exceeding the original EC target of 1 TWh per year by 2020 in Europe.
- Up to ~50% reduction in power consumption has been achieved 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 definition capable consoles were launched without increasing power caps despite substantial performance increase – which he highlighted was the first time industry achieved this.
- The [2019 CSES report](#) estimated that the VA would achieve an energy saving of around 54.42 TWh, which is equivalent to Greece's energy consumption in 2014, over the lifetime of UHD consoles in Europe.
- The [2018 Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory green gaming report](#) highlighted consoles as efficient gaming devices.
- Joshua Aslan (Sony) also highlighted that the new [GCVA website](#) was launched in December 2022.

In the area of **resource efficiency**, he went on to say that:

- Consumers have access to efficient refurbishment / out of warranty repair services.
- Non-destructive disassembly of key components is possible 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 a period of 2 years.
- Console external plastic enclosure parts >25g contain no HFRs >0.1% by weight.
- Repair and maintenance information is provided to end users.

6. Update from Signatories:

6.1 2022 VA Revision (technical amendments)

Emil Schweiger (Nintendo) went on to present some of the minor technical revisions and text clarifications of the UK VA v1.1:

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- Alignment of circumvention text with similar Ecodesign legislation.
- Further clarification added on product compliance reporting.
- Adjustment and clarification of the role and duties of the Chair and the Administrator.
- Simplification of the VA revision timing, and provision of more flexibility.
- Inclusion of a HFR content verification method for plastic enclosure parts.

It was agreed and confirmed that the UK VA v1.1 will be effective as of January 2023.

Anum Kazmi (BEIS) then asked for more information on the deletion for the provision of yearly sales figures (Annex C of the UK VA). Joshua Aslan (Sony) explained that the three Signatories still cover the 100% of the market, but, unfortunately, VGChartz does not provide a breakdown of the public sales data separating the UK from the rest of Europe. Due to the difficulty to obtaining market sales figures separately for the UK and the impossibility for Signatories to share their internal confidential data, this requirement has been changed in the UK VA.

Margaret Sutherland (BEIS) asked the Signatories whether something similar to a safeguard with regards to the market coverage could be put in place. Emil Schweiger (Nintendo) pointed out that the update of the requirement for the provision of sales data is to “when available”, and that in addition, in the UK VA (section 4.2) there is still a requirement if there is a change in the market coverage of the Signatories then the Signatories must inform the Steering Committee within three months.

6.2 2023 VA Review

Ted Eckert (Microsoft) mentioned that in parallel to the VA Technical Revision, the Signatories have also been working on the first UK VA Review (the outcome of which will be UK VA v2 – first draft is expected in Q3 of 2023).

Items under review include provision of spare parts, power caps reduction, increased transparency and testing, and additional information provision.

6.3 Timeline

Ted Eckert (Microsoft) said that the draft review proposal, including updates to the requirements within the VA, will be finalised and shared with BEIS towards Q3 of 2023, and presented at the next UK Steering Committee meeting in Q4 of 2023 (date to be confirmed later in the year).

In parallel, the UK ACR will be finalised by the Independent Inspector and published on the GCVA website in Q2 of 2023.

Regarding the items for revision, Anum Kazmi (BEIS) asked if the Signatories will be looking at controllers as well. Joshua Aslan (Sony) noted that discussions are currently ongoing, and Ted Eckert (Microsoft) indicated that Xbox controllers already have auto-power-down and stressed that outside of the VA and from January 2023, Microsoft encourages users to switch to the lowest power mode available on consoles by default.

Anum Kazmi (BEIS) asked whether it is possible to compare the energy use of the Signatories' consoles on the GCVA website. Joshua Aslan (Sony) indicated that this data is now available

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under the new "[Energy](#)" section of the GCVA website, which also includes information on power consumption and settings by modes via direct links to the three Signatories' websites. He also mentioned that there is a whole section dedicated to the [UK](#).

BEIS confirmed the three Signatories will need to sign Annex D of UK VA v1.1, which the Administrator will coordinate.

7. Update from BEIS

James Butterworth (Defra) highlighted that a consultation on the **Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE)** should take place in 2023 with the aim to make the existing scheme better and bringing more contributors to the system. One of the topics that will be reviewed in this proposal are the online marketplaces and free riding to ensure everyone is contributing equally to the scheme. He offered to share public information on the WEEE consultation as well as add Signatories to the list of stakeholders.

Joshua Aslan (Sony) then pointed out that due to the new **Ecodesign Regulation in the EU**, Signatories are closely following the ESPR file. Margaret Sutherland (BEIS) informed the participants that BEIS is also monitoring the developments, and that last summer they published an explanatory memorandum for the UK based on the ESPR proposal, which BEIS is happy to share with the Signatories.

Regarding the new **EU Standby Regulation**, Emil Schweiger (Nintendo) asked for guidance on what would constitute an acceptable proposal in the VA requirements. Margaret Sutherland (BEIS) indicated that BEIS is considering the impact of divergence on Ecodesign regulations, given the number of EU regulations in the pipeline. This work has just started and it will be some months before it is concluded. Emil Schweiger (Nintendo) also enquired whether it would be acceptable for the UK to align the UK VA with the new EU Standby Regulation. Margaret Sutherland (BEIS) assumed that it would, as long as it was ambitious enough. Joshua Aslan (Sony) added that Sony could share with BEIS a presentation with internal data about the impact of the new Standby Regulation on the Playstation consoles.

8. AOB and date of next Steering Committee meeting

No further questions were raised and there was an agreement to host the next UK Steering Committee in Q4 of 2023 (date to be confirmed later).

9. End of meeting

Feriel Saouli (SEC Newgate EU, VA Administrator) thanked participants and closed the meeting at 18:15 CET.

Actions

- VA Administrator to prepare and distribute the minutes of the current meeting. *DONE*
- VA Administrator to organise electronic signature of the UK VA v1.1 (Annex D) by the Signatories, which will be then shared with BEIS.
- James Butterworth (Defra) to share with the Signatories useful links on the consultation for the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE).
- James Butterworth (Defra) to add the Signatories to the list of stakeholders for the WEEE consultation. *DONE*

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- BEIS to share with Signatories their explanatory memorandum for the UK based on the ESPR proposal. *DONE*
- Sony to share with BEIS a presentation on the impact of 20 minute automatic power down requirement in new Standby regulation using example of PlayStation consoles in Europe vs rest of the world.