The New Electronic Driving License In The Netherlands

RDW, the Dutch vehicle licensing and control authority in the Netherlands, has introduced a new microprocessor-based electronic driving license to strengthen security, improve in-the-field verification by police and provide a cost-effective and efficient way to identify citizens in their motoring.

The roll-out of the new electronic driving licenses began in November 2014.
A critical asset for a nation’s mobility

The Netherlands is a densely populated and highly developed country in which mobility is a key factor for the economy. 11 million of its 17m citizens are drivers and the country is an important European transportation hub for significant amounts of exported and imported goods transiting by road.

RDW, an independent administrative organization of the Dutch government, is a key public service provider in the national mobility chain. Its main responsibilities include licensing all motor vehicles and parts in the Netherlands, issuing driver’s licenses and vehicle registration cards and ensuring that all vehicles on the roads meet safety and environmental regulations.

In 2015 RDW expects to handle a huge amount of mobility-related data – issuing around 1.4 million new driving licenses, 3.5 million new vehicle cards and responding to 900,000 phone enquiries and over 1 billion online requests to its database with Dutch police, insurance companies, municipalities and other organizations.

Road safety and citizen security

Motorized road traffic has often been an attractive target for criminal activity - whether legalizing stolen vehicles or parts through fraudulent registration papers or providing people with fake driving licenses when they are not entitled to drive. Illegal activities like these put public safety on the roads at risk and authorities are under pressure to ensure that drivers are who they say they are and operating registered, insured vehicles. One of the ways to reduce such fraud is to strengthen the security and authentication of documents used to identify drivers and vehicles. And many governments have looked to technology for the solution.

2015 - KEY FIGURES

- INHABITANTS: 17M
- DRIVERS: 11M
- VEHICLES: 9.6 M
- NEW DRIVING LICENSES/YEAR: 1.4M
- NEW VEHICLE REGISTRATION CARDS / YEAR: 3.5 M
The Netherlands first adopted a credit-card sized driving license in 2006, following an EU directive that laid the groundwork towards harmonizing the many different driving license programs across European states through common design and data requirements.

Secure identification and authentication of drivers was doubly important. From January 2005, a new law was passed requiring all Dutch citizens and residents aged 14 and above to carry a valid ID document. A driving license was one of the few documents permitted as a means of secure identification alongside a passport, Dutch or European ID card or residence permit.

In 2013, the government opted to upgrade its program and introduce a new driving license model, this time enabled with a contactless microprocessor. As the country was already using a card solution, contract optimization and process re-engineering resulted in this contactless chip-based document at no additional cost to either Dutch drivers or the authorities.

**The new Dutch electronic driving license**

RDW selected Gemalto’s polycarbonate Sealys electronic driving license (eDL) for its strong protection against fraud and forgery as well as advanced document design integrating a microprocessor. The new eDL combines a number of visual, physical and electronic security features that make the card harder to copy but easier to use.

**Active role in standardization bodies**

The credit card-sized document meets all the requirements of the latest EU-wide directive to establish a unified European eDL program standardizing format, data, optical security and validity period.

In fact, RDW has been very proactive in that field as a key contributor in the creation of new standards (ISO WG10 International Standard for Driving Licences – ISO/IEC 18013) and for the new electronic driving license in particular.

It has been the general consensus of opinion among professionals for several years now that a smart card license offered significant business and customer benefits in terms of security, remote authentication, data capture and storage of additional data. In the European Union, it was decided that it would be a great benefit to all Member States in having a standard in place so that they could upgrade to smart cards when or if they chose to. This was done in 2012.

**Enhancing efficiency**

The inclusion of a micro-processor in the eDL enables police to read the data on the card and electronically verify the authenticity of the document using smart phones when on the move. By improving interconnection and communication between police and other state agencies in the field the new eDL will facilitate more efficient and effective law enforcement.

**ID credentials for motoring and more**

While the Dutch eDL primarily proves the identity of a driver and his/her entitlement to drive, it also provides a valid identity document for other purposes, from proving age, ID to opening a bank account.

“Ensuring only authorized drivers take to the road is a vital element of any road safety program,” commented André Uuldriks, Unit Manager of the Driving License Department at RDW. “The new electronic driving license strengthens security as it is much harder to falsify and ensures that we can validate the document visually and electronically to match the identity of its holder.”

**The Dutch eDL: security features at a glance**

“People clearly noticed that the new license was different - some thinking that the transparent window feature was a hole in the card!” explains André Uuldriks, “Officials have welcomed the increased security the eDL brings with no increase in the cost of issuing.”
The applet is available on iOS, Android and for Windows Mobile. Its goal is to guide a large range of populations in recognizing key security features of the electronic driving license.

Major security features are clearly explained. The front and back of the card are detailed. The card under UV light can be displayed and even tactile effects are simulated. (Courtesy of RDW)

**Visual:** A transparent window is created in the polycarbonate structure that is impossible to copy and enables an immediate visual check. This helps law enforcement teams carry out quick verification, for example during night controls.

**Physical:** Tactile and optical effects make attempts to tamper with the document immediately detectable, in particular laser markings on the edge of the card.

**Electronic:** An NFC-readable chip, containing the same data printed on the card body, enables police to check the document authenticity and verify the user’s identity using a handheld device.

**Benefits for state:**
- Combats identity fraud linked to motoring and other civic interactions
- Builds a secure driving license register on which police and other public institutions can confidently rely
- Facilitates operational efficiency

**Benefits for citizens:**
- Reinforces trust in state-issued identity credentials
- Provides more secure and efficient identity checks
- Reduces the need to carry multiple ID documents
Evolving the service for the future

From 1 January 2014, RDW had been issuing vehicle registration certifications in the form of a smart card in a new process that issued and sent cards to customers on the day they apply. The experience gained prompted RDW to bring in-house the personalization of the new electronic driving licenses and guarantee a robust service issuing up to 5000 licenses per day.

Into the future, RDW is looking at streamlining the operational process yet further by evolving its service to enable users to renew their driving licenses online, with enrolling and issuing wholly independent of time and place.
About Gemalto

Gemalto is the world leader in digital security with 2014 revenues of €2.5 billion. In the public sector, Gemalto provides secure documents, robust identity solutions and services for governments, national printers and integrators in the service of citizens. Its products and solutions are deployed in more than 100 government programs worldwide.

The company is active in numerous e-driving license and vehicle registration projects in particular in Australia (Queensland), El Salvador, India, Ireland, Luxembourg Morocco, Mexico, the United Kingdom, Serbia and Sweden.

In the United States, Marquis ID Sytems, a Gemalto company, provides state-of-the-art, fully integrated solutions for the production of Drivers License and Identification (DL/ID) Cards to New Hampshire, Hawaii, Wyoming, West Virginia, Alaska, District of Colombia and Colorado.

Gemalto is contributing to more than 30 eID initiatives and over 30 ePassport programs with specific expertise in border and visa management projects. Gemalto also collaborates with its clients to report and share best practices from around the world.

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