

**NOTE BY THE TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT****STATUS REPORT ON THE
VERIFICATION INFORMATION SYSTEM****Introduction**

1. The Verification Information System (VIS) is the information system that has been developed by the Technical Secretariat (hereinafter “the Secretariat”) to manage all verification-related information and to support verification activities.
2. The concept for the development of the VIS was presented by the Director-General in a Note to the Executive Council (hereinafter “the Council”) at its Fortieth Session (EC-40/S/2, dated 27 January 2005). The Secretariat provides regular updates to the Council on the status of the development of the VIS.¹

Status of the Verification Information System

3. The VIS is the key business-enabling technology platform that supports the Secretariat’s verification activities. With a view to streamlining and supporting verification business processes more effectively and increasing the Secretariat’s analytical capabilities, the VIS is continually being improved.
4. In 2018, the Secretariat completed several activities to improve the VIS, with an emphasis on unifying and streamlining business processes and eliminating ad hoc ways of capturing and tracking information. One of the key results of these efforts is the new “split and merge” functionality for plant sites, which allows verification officers to update in the VIS data for plant sites which have been split or merged as indicated in declarations, while automatically linking the historical data related to past inspections to the newly split or merged sites. As a consequence, the manual update of these sites is no longer needed. This eliminates the risk of errors and makes the verification process more efficient.

¹ The updates are contained in the following Notes issued by the Secretariat: EC-42/S/3 (dated 2 September 2005); EC-51/S/2 (dated 20 November 2007); EC-55/S/3 (dated 30 January 2009); EC-59/S/3 (dated 1 February 2010); EC-63/S/4 (dated 20 January 2011); EC-67/S/2 (dated 25 January 2012); EC-71/S/1 (dated 16 January 2013); EC-75/S/4 (dated 15 January 2014); EC-78/S/1 (dated 7 January 2015); EC-81/S/2 (dated 12 January 2016); EC-84/S/2 (dated 13 January 2017); and EC-87/S/3 (dated 24 January 2018).



5. Regarding the progress of the Verification Analytics (VERA) project for advanced data analytics, in 2018 the Verification Division successfully completed the deployment of the new analytical platform which will allow the delivery of advanced analytics, dashboards, and visualisations based on data related to Article VI declarations and Article III and Article VI inspections. Further phases, concerning, for example, data related to Article III declarations, will continue to be implemented in 2019.
6. In 2018, the Secretariat continued its efforts to implement a contemporary enterprise content management solution to ensure the integrated management of documents and records related to verification activities on the Secure Critical Network. The first phase was completed in the fourth quarter of 2018 and the following phases will continue in 2019.

Electronic declarations and Secure Information Exchange

7. In the year under review, the Secretariat observed that States Parties demonstrated a continued interest in the submission of declarations in electronic format. Fifty-six States Parties used the Electronic Declarations Tool for National Authorities (EDNA) for the preparation of annual declarations on past activities for 2017. In 2018, one additional State Party declared using EDNA, while representatives from 54 States Parties received EDNA training.
8. In continuation of the efforts to improve the EDNA software, the Secretariat started the development of the next version of EDNA—the Electronic Declaration Information System (EDIS). EDIS will further strengthen the verification regime by bringing usability enhancements and new functionalities to the declaration preparation and submission process. The first release of the system is scheduled for 2019 and will include all of the existing EDNA features, with the addition of a new user management module for distributed use of the system and Article III riot control agent declarations.
9. In 2018, the Secretariat also observed a rise in interest among States Parties in using the established Secure Information Exchange System (SIX), which was made available to States Parties in July 2014 (as reported in the Secretariat’s Note S/1192/2014, dated 1 July 2014). By the end of 2018, 56 States Parties had registered to use the system, in comparison to 46 States Parties as reported to the Council in the previous status report (EC-87/S/3). During both the Twentieth Annual Meeting of the National Authorities and the Twenty-Third Session of the Conference of the States Parties, the Secretariat conducted several bilateral meetings with the representatives of the States Parties to assist with the registration process. In 2018, the Secretariat provided technical assistance visits to six National Authorities to help them to implement SIX. These efforts in particular have accelerated the adoption of the system by more States Parties, bringing additional efficiencies and security to the annual declaration process.
10. SIX is constantly evolving and covering new use cases. In 2018, at the request of a number of States Parties, the system was used to disseminate new types of confidential documents. Furthermore, for the first time, SIX was installed in an international organisation to allow for the exchange of confidential information with

the OPCW. The Secretariat will continue its efforts to increase and expand the use of the system, as well as to provide further information and updates to the States Parties.

11. Further to the efforts to broaden the use of existing tools and systems and to promote new systems, the Secretariat provides regular training activities. Additionally, during the training course on National Authority and Chemical Databases (NACD) in Helsinki, Finland, training courses on EDNA and SIX were provided for the benefit of several States Parties.

Further information

12. The Secretariat considers the VIS to be an established system. It is in routine use and the main development activities have been completed. As a key enterprise software system that supports all verification activities, the VIS will continue to be subject to continual improvement, with maintenance and enhancement activities carried out as subprojects. The Secretariat will continue to report on this system, focusing on key developments such as the new electronic declarations tool (EDIS), developments with regard to secure information exchange, and enhanced data analytics capabilities.
13. Information on the VIS, EDNA, EDIS, and SIX can also be found on the OPCW external server, and is regularly updated as new information becomes available. Questions about the VIS, EDNA or EDIS can also be sent to a dedicated email address (vis@opcw.org). Questions concerning SIX can be sent to the dedicated address for that system (six@opcw.org). Interested States Parties can also make inquiries by calling the OPCW central telephone number (+31 (0)70 416 3000) and asking for the EDNA or SIX help desk.

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