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Press Release

European Payments Council and Cards Stakeholders Group Publish the SEPA Cards Standardisation Volume Ready for Market Implementation

7th January 2014 – Brussels: the European Payments Council (EPC), representing the European banking industry in relation to payments, together with the Cards Stakeholders Group (CSG), today published version 7.0 of the Single Euro Payments Area (SEPA) Cards Standardisation Volume (the SCS Volume), ready for market implementation.

This document defines a standard set of requirements to ensure an interoperable and scalable card and terminal infrastructure across SEPA, based on open international card standards. Following the public consultation on its provisional version 6.5 in June and July 2013, the CSG has processed more than 2,000 comments received from market participants. The six books of the SCS Volume version 7.0 cover a set of requirements applicable to card-present (face-to-face) transactions to allow investment decisions and implementation based on stable requirements. All stakeholders and interested parties active in the SEPA cards domain are encouraged to roll out services and products in line with the requirements set out in version 7.0 of the SCS Volume in a three-year period, i.e. by January 2017.

The CSG is a multi-stakeholder body representing retailers, vendors, processors, card schemes and the EPC. Created in 2009, the CSG develops and maintains the SCS Volume, and focuses on a cards standardisation programme that will create a better, safer, more cost efficient and functionally richer card services environment, whatever the card product or scheme may be.

The documentation relevant to version 7.0 of the SCS Volume is available on the [EPC](#) and [CSG](#) Websites.

EPC Chair Javier Santamaría, says: “The European Union authorities driving forward the SEPA programme identified the need to create harmonised cards standardisation requirements throughout all countries across SEPA early in the process of integrating the market for electronic euro payments. In response to these expectations retailers, vendors, processors, card schemes and the EPC jointly created the CSG which developed the SCS Volume. The version 7.0 of the SCS Volume is a major achievement reflecting a unique multi-stakeholder effort in the area of cards.”

CSG Co-Chair Jeremy Massey, adds: “I personally am very pleased with the content and quality of this new version of the volume, thanks to the efforts of more than sixty industry experts who have contributed their time and knowledge.” He also points out: “The SCS Volume version 7.0 consists of six separate books. This structure will facilitate future issuing of updated versions of the SCS Volume with amendments only to individual books as required, such as including card-not-present (i.e. mail orders, telephone orders and e- and m-commerce) functional and security requirements. The SCS Volume structure also provides for the option to integrate further books addressing aspects other than those reflected in version 7.0.”

Ugo Bechis, Chair of the EPC Cards Working Group and CSG Co-Chair, comments: “Implementation of common standards requirements detailed in the SCS Volume will promote interoperability and foster competition in the SEPA cards domain. The version 7.0 requirements will bring benefits to the planning



and stability of investments on terminals and on cards by market players, usually made with a five to seven year perspective and even beyond. Cost savings and stability are relevant in the physical card environment to favour cheaper, easier and broader acceptance both at national and cross-border levels. Once the harmonisation exercise is also concluded on card-not-present requirements, it is expected to promote development and innovation for both e- and m-commerce and e- and m-payments.”

The SCS Volume security requirements for remote payments were on a separate public consultation in July to August 2013. It is planned to include card-not-present functional and security requirements in an SCS Volume related books update in 2015. This is in line with feedback received during the public consultation indicating the need for further in-depth dialogue on the topic. This approach also ensures consistency with new rules expected to be defined by the European authorities in the course of 2014. The timeline to implement the security requirements for remote payments will be communicated when these will be published, taking into account relevant regulatory initiatives.

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Media contact at the EPC: For further media information, please contact the EPC’s PR agency Octopus Group (e-mail epc@octopuscomms.net).

About the European Payments Council:

The European Payments Council (EPC) is the coordination and decision-making body of the European banking industry in relation to payments. The term bank is used in a non-discriminatory fashion and includes payment institutions. The purpose of the EPC is to support and promote the Single Euro Payments Area (SEPA). SEPA is a European Union (EU) integration initiative in the area of payments designed to achieve the completion of the EU internal market and monetary union. SEPA is currently defined as consisting of the 28 EU Member States plus Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein, Switzerland and Monaco. The EPC develops the payment schemes and frameworks which help to realise SEPA. EPC members represent banks, banking communities and payment institutions. More than 360 professionals are directly engaged in the work programme of the EPC, representing all sizes and sectors of the banking industry within Europe. For further information on the EPC please contact secretariat@epc-cep.eu or visit www.epc-cep.eu.

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