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11 January 2008
For immediate release

Alleged Mifare Crypto "hack"

ITSO is aware of the recently reported alleged hacking of the Mifare® classic security system used in many commercial transport smartcard systems around the world.

Although smart cards of the same type may be used in the ITSO environment, the risk of this kind of attack has been recognised throughout the development of the ITSO environment and ITSO uses an internationally recognised security system which sits over and above the proprietary security algorithm that has reportedly been cracked.

Schemes using Customer Media of this type within the ITSO environment can be assured that, even if an individual card can be cracked (and it reportedly took the alleged hackers a week to do so), their transport products in the card still remain secure when the security seal is verified by the ITSO Secure Application Module (ISAM).

ITSO, being a multi-platform Specification and environment, also offers its members the opportunity to use other, more secure, alternative Customer Media types, should they be required.

Notes to Editors:

About ITSO

ITSO is a non-profit membership organisation run by its members for the benefit of its members and users of smartcard solutions, supported by the UK Department for Transport.

ITSO has created a common specification at both the card and application level, to enable the use of interoperable smart cards in transport and other areas.

ITSO is facilitating the "smart" functionality of the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme, the scheme entitling OAPs and disabled to free bus travel throughout England, due to commence on 1 April 2008.

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