



# The El Salvador Smart Driver's License and Registration Card



## Background

In order to deploy a smart card based National Driver License, Vehicle Registration and Tax Payment program, the El Salvador government decided in 1997 to outsource program and integration services to Sertracen a local private organization, Sertracen, selected Gemplus as the exclusive smart card provider.

The El Salvador Sertracen Program is the first and largest nationwide implementation of both a smart driver's license and a smart card-based car registration card. Since 1998 over 3,5 million cards have been issued to registered drivers and vehicle owners in El Salvador, and 60,000 new cards are issued every month.

## Objectives

El Salvador needed to securely identify and register both drivers and vehicles circulating on national territory in order to combat vehicle theft, illegal importation, identity theft, and to reduce fraud related to counterfeit documents.

From issuance and revocation of licenses to management of traffic violations and payment, the government needed to efficiently master knowledge and control of the driving population. A clear objective was

to make drivers and vehicle owners accountable for their actions.

The El Salvador government aimed to streamline, centralize and secure inefficient, paper-based administrative processes related to the issuance and revocation of licenses and vehicle registrations, and to manage the payment of fines and taxes.

Furthermore, it needed a central database securely shared by the Departments of Interior, Transportation and Finance, to monitor the traffic-related activities of its population.

## Solution

Gemplus and Sertracen delivered a nationwide multi-application smart card solution created to address the government's driver's license, vehicle registration and tax payment needs for the driving population and vehicles in El Salvador.

Both the smart driver's license and the national vehicle registration program are managed through the Sertracen database. It is the only centralized nationwide database in the world to efficiently and effectively manage real-time vehicle and driver-related infractions and payments through the use of a smart card.

### Driver's License

The smart driver's license securely stores and manages a driver's profile directly on the license's chip:

- Identity credentials
- Photo ID
- Fingerprints
- Digital signature

High-security biometric checkpoints throughout a 30-minute card issuance process ensure identity uniqueness of all applicants, eliminating identity fraud and collusion.

Thanks to the card's off-line functionality, authorities using portable terminals have instant access to the up-to-the-moment information on a driver, any time, anywhere.

Policemen on the field can issue traffic violations and fines – even revoke licenses - directly in the card, eliminating the need for paper-based fine issuance and record keeping.

### **Vehicle Registration**

The smart registration card was issued in order to securely identify, prove ownership and follow the life cycle of new and used cars residing within the country's borders. At the time of purchase, car owners receive 'proof of ownership' smart cards containing important vehicle and owner identification information (car serial and license numbers, the owner's digital fingerprint and demographic information).

All registration-related payments and data, including car sales, are stored directly on the smart card's chip by program authorities at the time of transaction, and uploaded into the program database. Like for the driver's license data, the card enables storage of lasting and passing vehicle registration data, allowing the card to store its history of car registrations and payments and to remove any sensitive data regarding its previous owner at the time of sale.

### **Tax and Fine Payment**

The centralized program database contains up-to-the minute data on the national driving population and vehicles but also helps keep track of tax payments and fines.

As the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Transportation are networked to this central database for updates in real time, it is possible to supervise the payment of fines and taxes.

These are automatically audited and collected online, so that due payments can go straight into the state account.

## **Benefits for Government & Citizens**

The major advantages of this application include complete automated procedures for government knowledge and control over the driving population and vehicles circulating on national territory, as well as improved security for the general public.

### **Reduction of Fraud**

Both government and population benefit from the establishment of a secure used car market due to correct and reliable identification and tracking of vehicles in circulation. The government also benefits from the reduction of fraud through the elimination of counterfeit licenses and registration documents, not to mention the reduced vehicle theft and illegal importation resulting from the use of secured vehicle identification cards.

### **Citizen Benefits**

Proper identification of drivers and vehicles also results in benefits for the general public. Thanks to secure identification cards, people enjoy improved safety, vehicle resale value and access to credit through the protection of their property and identities. They significantly reduce their risk of vehicle theft or of purchasing cars that have been illegally imported.

In addition, the effectiveness of the program makes drivers and vehicle owners more accountable for their actions, resulting in more responsible driving habits, fewer accidents and lower insurance premiums.

## **How it Works**

1. Driver was issued a smart driver's license.
2. Driver gets pulled over for traffic violation
3. Police officer carrying a portable reader prompts driver for his/her

- smart driver's license and registration card.
4. Card is inserted for validation of driver's data: Identity, vehicle registration, driver's license type, vehicle tax data, traffic violation records.
  5. For double identity check a biometrics reader integrated on the handheld reader terminal matches driver's fingerprint stored on card.
  6. Driver's identity and registration status are validated through screen on reader terminal.
  7. Traffic violation (speeding, illegal parking etc.) is uploaded on the card and database in real time.

## Summary

The El Salvador smart driver's license program is the first and only nationwide, multi-application solution to implement both a national smart driver's license and national smart vehicle registration card program.

The smart card program has successfully established reliable vehicle and driver identification, improved fine and registration fee recovery, reduced operating costs and inefficient manual processes related to program administration, and has established a secure used vehicle market by reducing vehicle theft and illegal importation.

The government benefits from the centralized administration of all vehicle-related and driver-related information through the Sertracen program database. These benefits include the knowledge of drivers and vehicles in circulation as well as the efficient and complete recovery of traffic violation fines, car registration fees and taxes.

Citizens of El Salvador can enjoy improved safety through the protection of their property and identities, as well as reduced risk of vehicle theft or of purchasing cars that have been illegally imported.

## Before

- No population database
- Forgeable documents
- No control over the issuing of the ID card
- The State could not control collection of tax and fine payments
- Fraud

## Today

- Very high level of security
- Secure verification of identity uniqueness
- Automated collection of tax and fine payments
- Paperless administration