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## **“The Crystal Scales of Justice” Prize**

**The European prize for innovative practice  
contributing to the quality of criminal justice**

**2009 Edition**

**Application form**

**Entry form**

To be returned to the European Commission or Council of Europe by 1 March 2009	
Crystal Scales of Justice European Commission DG Justice, Freedom and Security Unit E1 B-1049 BRUXELLES E-mail: jls-justiceforum@ec.europa.eu Fax: (32) 22.97.95.88	CEPEJ Secretariat – Crystal Scales of Justice Competition, Directorate General of Human Rights and Legal Affairs, Council of Europe, F -67075 STRASBOURG Cedex Fax: (33) 3.90.21.50.33 E-mail: cepej@coe.int

**1. Details of applicant (institution/organisation)**

**Name:** General Public Prosecutor's Office of the state (Land) Brandenburg

**Address:** 14767 Brandenburg an der Havel

**Tel.:** +49 3381 2082 - 0

**E-mail:** gsta@bb.sta.brandenburg.de

**2. Represented by**

**First name/Surname:** Dr. Erardo Cristoforo Rautenberg

**Post held:** General Public Prosecutor of the state (Land) Brandenburg/Germany

**Tel.:** +49 3381 2082 - 200

**E-mail:** e.c.rautenberg@bb.sta.brandenburg.de

**3. Scheme submitted**

**Title:** SAS – eJustice used in the Public Prosecutor's Offices of the state (Land) Brandenburg

**Date of introduction:** gradually since 2007

**4. Please attach to the entry form, preferably in English or in French or, where this is not possible, in one of the other official languages of the European Union:**

a. A description of the scheme

The Prosecutorial Automated Recording Mechanism (**Staatsanwaltschaftliche Automatisierte Schreibwerk; hereinafter SAS**) is an innovative document management system, which is used by the General Public Prosecutor's Office as well as all the other Public Prosecutor's Offices in the state (Land) Brandenburg.

SAS comprises five constitutive elements:

- 1) Exchange of data with the prosecutorial proceedings
- 2) Cubicle of electronic standard forms
- 3) Integrated digital dictation workflow
- 4) Filing of documents
- 5) Electronic work files

and

- 1) und 2)

SAS provides for almost all prosecutorial decisions and procedures different standard forms. Data concerning persons and proceedings are copied directly from the prosecutorial database into the respective form. During the generation of the form the monitor screen is divided into two parts. One side of the screen displays the entry of the data into the form and the other side shows already the final document. The software produces basic written communication like information provided to other authorities, including authorities of other member states, automatically. Simple calculations can be realized during the generation of the form.

- 3)

The combination between the processing within standard forms and the digital dictation closes a methodological gap. In case of longer textual passages within a written decision the prosecutor can use the standard form for large parts of his/her written decision and at the same time can assign the longer textual passages to a professional typist. As soon as the Dictaphone/voice recorder is placed into a charging device/charger the dictation is recorded by the computer and a screen mask opens on the computer. Through the use of this screen mask the prosecutor assigns the dictation to the proceedings in question and to the typist. The transport of the dictation and of the written documents is effected by an integrated tasks and in-box tool.

- 4)

All the generated prosecutorial documents are saved automatically within SAS according to their file number and can be provided electronically from SAS to other law enforcement offices throughout Europe for their own proceedings. All the incoming information (including inter alia information extracted from criminal records of other member states or information from the central prosecutorial record of proceedings) are saved automatically as well within the respective proceeding.

- 5)

If required, especially in large-scale criminal proceedings, an electronic file can be produced by scanning the hard copies of the file. An optical character recognition is effected automatically. The user can moreover add notes into the document, organize the file according to subject areas and define key words. A comprehensive search function makes it possible to quickly find a source of information.

The electronic work file including pictures and videos can be saved on a notebook to be used during external appointments like external hearings of witnesses or a main hearing before a court. Notes taken during these external appointments are subsequently transferred into the electronic work file by way of synchronisation. Access to records can be provided to attorneys-at-law/defence lawyers likewise in a digital form.

b. A description of the effects of the scheme on the workings of the court

The generation and the saving of the data optimizes the processing of the proceedings. Services provided by back staff can be reduced. The length of the criminal proceedings is reduced. Outbound documents of the Public Prosecutor's Office are issued much faster, so that the public (person who filed the charges, injured party) is notified of the outcome of the criminal proceeding much earlier.

The structured saving of the documents allows their simple retrieval. The main tide of the proceedings is documented and makes it easy to assess the state of the proceeding at any time without the necessity to look into the hard copy file.

The manually typing of the documents by a professional typist and the transportation of the hard copy file from the prosecutor to the professional typist is made unnecessary by the automatic generation of the basic documents through SAS.

While before the dictation tapes were carried together with the hard copy files to the professional typists, the integrated dictation workflow makes sure that the transportation is be effected by the transmission of the data. The hard copy file stays with the prosecutor.

The comprehensive memo and organization functions for editing and structuring the content of the documents and the search functions of the E-work file provide for a quick assessment of the content of the files and also ensure a better quality of the criminal proceedings.

The cooperation between the police and the public prosecutor's office will be more effective in large-scale criminal proceedings. After an investigation the police can scan documents in and transfer them to the prosecutor by a secured line. The complex courier service which is otherwise needed in a territorial state (Flächenland) like Brandenburg can be therefore omitted. The prosecutor is immediately informed about the current results of the conducted investigation. At the same time, a complete duplicate of the file is available to him in case that he has to file motions with a court.

The sub-project of an E-work file provides valuable conclusions regarding a possible exclusive electronic record-keeping. The prosecutors are introduced to this new medium by collecting positive experiences.

- c. Any possible future additions which might improve the results of the scheme

In the future, all the records of proceedings can be scanned in to provide the prosecutor with the access to the file on a notebook during a main hearing and to provide the involved parties with electronic access to the records.

It is further contemplated to supplement the digital dictation with a speech recognition software.

If the necessary legal requirements are established the software might be expanded to an exclusive electronically kept record.

- d. Any documents, press articles, evidence from members of the public etc. relating to the scheme (*with a brief summary in English or French*)

From the 3<sup>rd</sup> to the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2009, the project will be presented at the **CeBIT** (the world's largest annual trade show for information and telecommunications technology):  
[http://www.cebit.de/aps09\\_seiten\\_de?reiter=1&id=10067712:907](http://www.cebit.de/aps09_seiten_de?reiter=1&id=10067712:907)

The project is also described in an article titled „Ten Years of MESTA – field report about the holistic IT-system of the Public Prosecutor's Offices of the state (Land) Brandenburg“ in the internet-newspaper for law computer science and right to information:  
(<http://www.jurpc.de/aufsatz/20080056.htm>).

- 5. Does the scheme have the support of the competent public authorities in your country? If so, please give details.**

The project is supported by the Ministry of Justice of the state (Land) Brandenburg.

- 6. Do you believe the scheme to be usable in other courts in European states? Give your reasons.**

The project can be used by courts and public prosecutor's offices of other European states in order to optimize their work flows. The adjustment of the forms can be easily carried out by the staff members of the courts or the public prosecutor's offices. The functions of the E-work file are usable without further ado.

**I, Dr. Rautenberg, representing the aforementioned institution/organisation, declare that I am aware of the rules of the competition, with which I undertake to comply.**

**Done at** Brandenburg an der Havel  
**On (date)** 27.02.2009

**Signed** (Dr. Rautenberg)

