

Aadhaar simplifies the issuing of e-licenses for drivers in India

With 110 million drivers, managing and optimizing the issuing of driver's licenses in India poses a real challenge which is being addressed by Aadhaar, a citizen identification program using biometrics.

IDENTITY

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For thirteen years now, India has been replacing a simple paper driving license with the “*smart card*,” an **electronic driver's license**, which incorporates the holder's demographic information such as the driver's name and address, date of birth and the type of vehicle they are authorized to drive. By introducing the use of **Aadhaar** a tremendous amount of time for applicants is saved, since everything is automated. “*A few hours are all it takes to obtain a driver's license.*” says Arunabha Goswami, Head, S/W Delivery & Solutions, Transport BU, at Safran Identity & Security.

Biometrics: improved security and reliability

Since its inception in 1998, over 60 million new driver's licenses have already been issued. There are several benefits from the Indian government's point of view. “*The main aims are to avoid citizens being issued duplicate driver's licenses and to enable the automatic identification of the applicant,*” explains Arunabha Goswami.

To address this need, Safran Identity & Security rolled out a **fingerprint authentication and deduplication solution** in the state of Madhya Pradesh. The solution can be used to take **fingerprints for driver's licenses**, ensure that a driver's license does indeed match a single citizen, secure and authenticate the database and incorporate the information in the national transportation database.

Streamlining procedures with Aadhaar

In 2009, the government launched (“foundation” in Hindi), a program in which Safran Identity & Security has been involved and which makes it possible to allocate a **unique identification number** to each Indian resident. Harnessing three biometric measures (retina, fingerprints and facial recognition), **Aadhaar** is used to access a range of services (social welfare, healthcare, etc.).

By adding the issuing of driver's licenses to the services accessible through **Aadhaar**, the government is able to roll out a simple and secure application system at national level. “*Aadhaar verifies the identity of a citizen. By utilizing the Aadhaar database to automatically and biometrically check the identity of an applicant, the State no longer needs to process additional documents because they will already be in the system,*” explains Arunabha Goswami. “*The feature of Aadhaar integration for the identification and authentication of citizen has already been incorporated into our current solution, and the system will be rolled out over the coming months, as soon as we have received a formal agreement from the various States,*” clarifies Arunabha Goswami.

Fully automated test track for driver accreditation in India

While other countries are discussing to reform the driving license process, India has been a pioneer in developing, through our subsidiary Smart Chip, the first 100% automated evaluation process for driver's licenses. According to the regulations and laws in force in India concerning the driving of motor vehicles, every candidate for a driving license must first have a document called Learning License (the equivalent of our French Code), valid for 6 months after its date of issue. Currently, the Learning License is obtained by passing a written test at the Road Transport Office (RTO). This is where several suggestions have been made by the Indian government, one of which is that every candidate can take the written exam of the driver's license from her/his home instead of the RTO. The credentials would be validated using the information gathered through **Aadhaar**. All personal data can be provided using the web portal and the scanned documents as well as the photograph can be downloaded online. Each candidate thus avoids the queues at the RTO while benefiting from a facility of access to the services.

For the practical driving test, the candidate must go to the nearest RTO to perform the automated road test, monitored by video surveillance equipment. There is no concept of a driving school authorized to issue a driver's license. But to facilitate and speed up the process, the automated driving test track is implemented in all states (the state of Punjab was the first to test this new process). *"Here, we have integrated the **MorphoTablet** for the biometric authentication of the candidate before he starts the automated track test,"* says Arunhaba Goswami. *"We have also begun to implement this solution in Madhya Pradesh and have proposed this concept to other states in India that have shown a keen interest in this project. For its part, the Ministry of Road Transport has launched a consultation with the different transport directorates of the different countries, in order to propose the implementation of the automated solution for monitoring driving tests,"* concludes Arunhaba Goswami.