



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
LEGAL SERVICE  
IT Group

# LS-IT

## Supplementary specifications, Base Contentieux version 1.8.11

Date: 06/11/2012

Version: 1.0.1

Authors:



Revised by:

Approved by:



Public:

Reference Number:

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## Document History

Version	Date	Comment	Modified Pages
1.0	07/05/2012	Document created by [REDACTED]	All
1.0.1	06/11/2012		Result validation

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1. Purpose**

This document establishes the specification for “Base Contentieux” version 1.8.11. This version of “Base contentieux” brings major functional evolutions and is the first step towards an integration with ULM (Unified Litigation Management).

### **1.2. Scope**

“Base Contentieux” has been and remains one of the most important information systems in the Legal Service. Recently “Base Contentieux” is in the process of being integrated into the first part of the ULM system, which has brought major changes in the way references to people and organisational units are managed in LS information systems.

“Base Contentieux” is yet to be fully integrated with the business processes as offered by ULM: management of cases, management of procedural steps, designation of agents, etc. This will be the subject of a vision document in the framework of ULM. The description of the functions offered by ULM is currently under way.

### **1.3. References**

See description of “Base Contentieux” in GovIS.

## **2. SPECIFICATION: REFERENCE TO PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONAL UNITS**

### **2.1. Business requirement**

In the current situation (version 1.8.8), teams, people (agents) and the composition of teams that are managed through SYSPER2 are duplicated in the “Base Contentieux” database schema. This duplication occurs through manual data entry.

This leads to several problems:

- Data entry is prone to errors, which means that names or given names of people may differ from the official ones that exist in SYSPER2
- The composition of teams as it exists in SYSPER2 is reflected after a certain delay in “Base Contentieux”, but in light of other priorities this is not seen as a strategic issue for the Business Manager team. Therefore the update occurs on a “best efforts” basis and the situation in Base Contentieux may be outdated
- As the information is being used throughout several other applications (RECO, NAT) the impact of outdated or wrong information is further magnified.
- Workload issues
- Potential data protection issues or constraints

In application of the communication on the rationalisation of Information Systems, the request to integrate “Base Contentieux” with SYSPER2 through the COMPEF data being made available by ULM has been made by the IRM. This request has been approved by the Business Manager.

### **2.2. Proposed solution**

From an architectural point of view, no specific litigation management system should have precedence over another and therefore the delivery of data brought by corporate systems should be the role of the functional services as provided by ULM (“Unified Litigation Management”).

BC shall only present data as they are provided by ULM. ULM should make provision not only for current data but also for historical data. Data for people who have left or will leave the Commission will still have to be present and preserved in the database.

Specifications of data retrieval and organisation offered by ULM are described in the architectural document of ULM (REF of document).

At production roll-out for version 1.8.11 or earlier, a conversion process will migrate the existing data from BC to data as provided by ULM. All exceptions and rejections will be presented on an exceptions report supplied to the “Business Manager”. This report will be archived with the older system version for future reference.

The synchronisation process with the content of COMREF will take place daily. It will not be necessary anymore for the people in charge of maintaining the BC database to:

- Create new teams
- Create new officials to be referenced as “Agents”
- Enter agents in teams, with start and end dates

This data will be automatically taken care of by ULM-COMREF. The Use Cases, where references to agents are required, are the “designation of an agent”, the “search cases” and “search timetables”. For these Use Cases, the names of agents as provided by ULM-COMREF will be used.

Provisions for the signalling and handling of exceptions in the daily synchronisation process with COMREF are part of the ULM specification. Current alert mechanisms consist in error messages sent to functional mailbox “SJ SI Support”, which is accessible and managed by the IT project leaders of the IT group.

### **3. SPECIFICATION: IMPLEMENTATION OF A SIMPLIFIED WORKFLOW FOR THE ENTRY OF “CASE RESULT”**

#### **3.1. Business requirement**

Analysing the outcome of a case, from a legal point of view, is of paramount importance for the Legal Service as an organisation. This analysis based on the judgement made by the Court is formalised in the “Note d’information”, written and signed by the agents, which exists for all cases that warrant it.

However this legal analysis must be translated into data usable from a statistical point of view, so that the ratio of won/lost cases can be built and monitored on a yearly basis.

In the current situation, this is the purpose of the “Fiche de résultat” currently used to summarize the result of a case. The current structure of the “Fiche de résultat” is presented in annex 1. Points 4, 5, 6 are of particular importance: analysis of results (favourable outcome for the Commission), follow-up (“pourvoi” and reasons for it), and legal costs for the Commission.

The current procedure is initiated by the “Greffes Contentieux”: for all the cases for which a judgement has been done during the previous week, the “Greffes Contentieux” extracts all pre-generated “Fiches de resultats” from the application and sends them, via email, to the relevant teams.

The completed “Fiches de résultat” are then sent back by the Legal teams to the “Greffes contentieux”, where they are registered into Ares and filed into the relevant file for the case. This allows the “Cellule Contentieux” to perform the transcription of the data brought by the “Fiche de résultat” into “Base Contentieux”, through the form “Détail d’une affaire / Résultat”.

The “Cellule Contentieux” is brought to issue frequent reminders to the teams, so that they return the “fiche de résultat” in due time.

The procedure is unnecessarily complex, redundant and lengthy. The current requirement is to streamline the collection of won/lost indicator through the implementation of an integrated workflow within “Base Contentieux”.

### **3.2. Proposed solution**

The proposed solution is based on the implementation of a simplified workflow involving the agent, the head of team and the “Greffé Contentieux”.

#### ***3.2.1. Result proposal***

As soon as the case is closed by “Cellule Contentieux” following a procedural step which has the capacity to end the case, all co-agents in charge may see on the welcome screen of “Base Contentieux” that they have closed cases for which a result is yet to be formalised.

After a click on the offered link, any of the co-agents can see the list of cases with pending results and then navigate to the entry form where they can enter their proposals for the case result.

They can save the result for further edition. The status of the proposal is at this stage "In progress". If their proposal is finished, they can initiate the “Propose result” action and push the result proposal further in the workflow (status: "Proposed"). At this stage however, the result is not yet validated and the case is not listed among the cases for which a result exists.

#### ***3.2.2. Result review***

The proposed results are electronically submitted to the Head of team, which may validate (status: "Validated") or request amendments (status: "Amendments requested") to the initial proposal. In the case of a validation, the results are immediately known to exist and may be used at this stage to build statistics.

In the case of amendments requested, the co-agents of the case are made aware of the change of status of the result proposal. They can discuss the legal issues with the Head of team and this part is not in the scope of the IT system. They can then amend the initial proposal and send it again to the validator (Head of Team). There is no limitation to the number of iterations in this procedure.

The major innovation is the direct involvement of the co-agents in the entry of results and its implementation through IT tools, thereby suppressing the need for intermediate documents and their circulation.

The new procedure will require a specific test plan. It should probably be implemented in a first team and only then generalised to the remainder of teams.

## **4. SPECIFICATION: SECURING THE INFORMATION (META-DATA) OF CASES “F”**

### **4.1. Business requirement**

The “F” (Civil Service Tribunal) cases are handled exclusively by the PERS team and are identified as sensitive. The associated documents, managed and stored through Ares, comply with the strict rules of “need-to-know” which are enforced in Hermes and implemented, at file level, by the DMO team.

The consequence is that only people within team PERS or agents still in charge of “F” cases are allowed to access documents filed in the structures reserved for “F” cases in Ares.

However this strict enforcement of access rules falls short when dealing with metadata (description) of cases: in practice, it has been the rule at the Legal Service to offer unlimited access to metadata to all agents and members of legal teams for all cases. There is an identified risk that unrestricted access to the name of a complaining party in “F” cases (usually the name of an official of the institutions) by all people in the Legal Service could lead to the unauthorised dissemination of this information.

It should be noted however that the situation where this information can be considered sensitive can only occur in the particular instance when a request for anonymisation has been made by the defending party and not yet granted by a Cour order.

The requirement, endorsed in ITSC, is to mask in “Base Contentieux” the names of parties who correspond to individuals for “F” cases, except for members of the “PERS” teams.

## **4.2. Proposed solution**

The solution consists in masking conditionally specific information in Base Contentieux:

- A specific role “Staff Case Viewer” is created in “Base Contentieux”
- Users of Base Contentieux who are assigned this role by default are the members of “PERS” team and the members of “Cellule Contentieux”, who have to update and maintain the information.
- Only users with role “Staff Case Viewer” are allowed to see the text of the case where the name of parties is available. The names of “Other” (that is, not “Institutions”) parties are masked with the static text “Partie” for F cases for all users of “Base Contentieux”.
- The tab “Parties” which shows the same information, but in a structured form, is active only for people with this specific role.

This replacement of information is generalised through all content of “Base Contentieux” and applied to reports as well as forms.