Open Source Information Capacity Support

Final Report 09/2013

Administrative Arrangement
Between
DG Home Affairs (DG HOME)
No. HOME/2010/ISEC/AA/003-A1, ABAC No 30-CE-0444512/00-75
and
Joint Research Centre (JRC)
JRC No. 31992
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1 OVERVIEW AND BACKGROUND

Open Source Intelligence (OSINT) is a method of finding, selecting and acquiring information from publicly available sources. The raw information needs to be processed and analysed in order to produce actionable intelligence. The Internet is as a public medium with global reach, easy access and fast information propagation. These characteristics, enjoyed by law-abiding citizens and organisations, unfortunately, turn it also into a tool for illegal activities. These activities may be of pure criminal nature, such as commercial fraud, or are part of campaigns by terrorists to disseminate radical content, recruit new people and train and prepare for violent attacks.

The Joint Research Centre (JRC) has developed significant experience in advanced open source information text mining and analysis for OSINT. Most notably it has developed two systems which facilitate the work of OSINT analysts. The first tool is the Europe Media Monitor suite of applications to perform near real-time media monitoring and data analysis. It contains powerful server-based applications for monitoring and producing OSINT reports. It has already been adopted by EU Institutions and some Member State law enforcement authorities. The second tool called EMM OSINT Suite is a tool which can be installed directly on the desktop computer of OSINT analysts.

Many law enforcement authorities in the MS start to use OSINT tools and techniques. The goal of this Administrative Arrangement is to improve the capabilities of MS law enforcement authorities by sharing the tools we have developed. Furthermore, by building a community of OSINT practitioners we want to foster the exchange of best practices in the use of OSINT methods across Europe. Towards this goal, DG Home and the JRC have defined a number of objectives outlined in this AA concluded in 2011. This report gives an account of the work performed and the results achieved.

2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report summarises the work performed for the Administrative Arrangement (AA) “Open Source Information Capacity Support”. It describes and discusses the results of each defined work package.

The following objectives are completed:

- Training and installation of EMM at DG Home’s premises
- Support for EU Anti-Corruption Report
- Four incremental versions of EMM OSINT Suite with lot of functional additions delivered to law enforcement users (over 20 software licenses signed)
- Four OSINT events organised with high level of participation from MS law enforcement authorities
- Community web site ported to new technical platform, OSINT Field Guide as anchor content added to web site.

All required work packages have been completed. Please refer to chapter 3 for a detailed description of each work package and a discussion of the results.
3 WORK RESULTS

This chapter describes and discusses the work performed for the different work packages of the AA. Please refer to the Technical Annex of this AA for longer descriptions of each work package and some background information.

Chapter 3.1 of the AA’s technical annex defines objectives to support DG HOME’s information gathering capacity. It is further structured into the following work packages:

**Work Package 3.1.1: Support to DG HOME’s Crisis Management and Information Gathering Capacity**

*M1 (Milestone 1): Create EMM Monitoring Categories*

Objective: Create categories in collaboration with DG HOME to monitor sources of EMM for DG HOME’s areas of interest

We supported DG HOME staff related to definition and creation of EMM monitoring categories. A category is a definition of keywords and rules to categorise incoming news. These categories were designed for specific areas of interest and initially hosted by JRC’s EMM media processing system. These category definitions can later be transferred to the self-hosted EMM instance of DG HOME’s analytic capability.

*M2: EMM Training*

Objective: Train DG HOME’s staff on site in Brussels with access to the EMM NewsDesk editorial interface to compile information products.

We performed two online training sessions for DG HOME personnel via phone conference in April 2012. Intensive training of analysts working for DG HOME’s analytical capability was done in Ispra and Brussels as part of a dedicated AA with DG HOME.

*M3 (optional): Full Installation of EMM at DG HOME*

Objective: Provide a full installation of EMM at DG HOME’s premises to allow fully autonomous use of EMM applications during a crisis situation.

This milestone has been moved into the dedicated AA with DG HOME which also comprises training and additional elements not covered by this AA.

**Work Package 3.1.2: Compilation of information for the planned EU Anti-Corruption Report**

This work package relied on work performed in work package 3.1.1.

*M4: Setup EMM Account*

Objective: Creation of an EMM account for DG HOME’s unit A.2 to compile information on relevant prominent corruption cases on a periodic basis for all 28 EU MS.

The JRC created a dedicated EMM NewsDesk and EMM AlertEditor account for DG HOME. Building on a list of existing categories about corruption we closely collaborated with DG HOME’s analysts to define further categories and improve the existing ones. Using these categories the EMM system automatically categorises media reports covering corruption topics. The analysts can use the EMM NewsDesk application to create content to contribute to the EU Anti-Corruption Report.

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1 N° HOME/2011/ISEC/AA/002-A1, ABAC N° 30-CE-0513429/00-84 N° JRC.32848-2012 NFP
**M5: EMM Training for Duty Officers**

Objective: Provide at least one day of training to DG HOME duty officers in Brussels on the use of EMM applications.

The training of DG HOME duty officers was performed as part of the new AA which deals with a dedicated EMM installation at DG HOME’s premises (see also M2).

Chapter 3.2 of the technical annex defines objectives to improve member states’ capabilities in using open source information. These goals are achieved in improving existing tools and disseminating these tools in the member states. Chapter 3.2 of the technical annex is further structured in the following work packages.

**Work Package 3.2.1 OSINT Community and Tools**

**M6: Continuous Development of EMM OSINT Suite**

Objective: Provide at least 2 feature releases per year of the EMM OSINT Suite software in response to user requests.

The 2.0 release\(^2\) of the EMM OSINT Suite was introduced to law enforcement users using a Beta programme which allowed rapidly testing and improving existing and new functions of the software. During the beta phase four consecutive versions of the software were released. After the beta phase ended in 2012, four more feature releases\(^3\) (2.0, 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3\(^4\)) were released with substantial improvements.

Notable functions of the software:

- **Information extraction modules**
  - Text extraction from various input formats (HTML, PDF, XML, MS Office 97, MS Office 2010, Open Office)
  - Entity Extraction pipeline with various stages of extraction processes (Name variants, geo locations, entity guessing, custom entities)
  - User definable entity types (e.g. extract specific number plates)

- **Web Search module**
  - Predefined search engines (Google, Bing, Yahoo, Yandex)
  - User definable search engines

- **Analysis**
  - Entity browser component to browse extracted entity information

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\(^2\) A previously released v1.3 version of the software was maintained with further patch releases to give users more time to transition to the v2.0 version which features a redesigned user interface

\(^3\) A feature release contains some substantial new functions. In addition some patch releases correcting smaller problems of the software were released in between.

\(^4\) Version 2.3 is scheduled to be released in 10/2013
The software supports MS Windows and Apple Mac OSX and Linux\(^5\) desktop operating systems. To date more than 20 EU MS authorities have licensed the EMM OSINT Suite software packages as listed in the annex.

**M7: OSINT Field Manual**

Objective: Create online OSINT Field Manual describing best practices of using OSINT for law enforcement purposes.

In order to support our OSINT community the JRC maintains an online web site. This web site contains information about our events and software tools. We developed with DG HOME the idea to add an OSINT Field Manual which describes best practices in using OSINT for law enforcement purposes. The field manual deals with three main factors of an OSINT capacity: the human analyst, the tools and equipment used by the analyst and procedures and methods on how to effectively use the tools. Therefore, the field manual contains three main areas: A concept area introducing basic OSINT concepts, a tool registry containing description of relevant software tools and a collection of best-practice procedures.

**M8 (optional): Printed OSINT Field Manual**

Objective: Create a printed version of the OSINT Field Manual.

After discussions with DG HOME the JRC decided to concentrate on the online version of the field manual. The manual needs to describe the latest tools and techniques. Therefore, a printed manual with slow updates seems to be not suitable to reflect the rapid developments of the field.

**M9: OSINT Workshops**

Objective: Organise in total four workshops for law enforcement professionals about OSINT tools and techniques. (One workshop may be collocated with the workshop as defined by M10).

The JRC has organised four workshops:

- The first OSINT workshop took place in October 2011. This event provided hands-on exercises with our software tools. This event was collocated with the EMM Information workshop (see M10).

- The second OSINT workshop took place on the 21.-22. June 2012. This event was organised as an expert forum containing presentations from OSINT experts in the MS. One of the main topics was the use of social media for investigative purposes. This event was fully booked which shows the high interest from the law enforcement community. Please refer to the annex for a list of the given talks with short abstracts. The complete presentations can be found on the OSINT Community web site.

- The third OSINT workshop took place 27.-28. October, 2012. This event provided hands-on exercises with our software tools. Again, this workshop was very well received with over 30

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\(^5\) Support for Mac OSX and Linux operating systems was added on request by users in the MS to support diverse deployment scenarios. Linux and Mac OSX will be fully supported with version 2.3.
participants from EU institutions and MS. Please refer to the annex for the agenda of this event.

• The fourth OSINT workshop takes place 18.-20. September, 2013. This event has been extended to a third day in order to combine presentations from OSINT experts in the MS with hands-on sessions for our tools. The hands-on exercises provide more advanced sessions to make them suitable for participants who have taken part the previous year. Additionally, a beginner’s track is provided for all participants without prior knowledge of the software. The event is very well received with over 40 participants from MS and EU Institutions⁶.

Please refer to the annex for the agendas of the different workshops and information about participation from the MS.

Work Package 3.2.2 EMM Server Suite

M10: EMM Information Workshop
Objective: Organise a workshop for MS authorities to present the provided EMM server applications.

We organised an EMM Information Workshop in October 2011. The participation from the MS was very good with 40 participants from law enforcement authorities and EU institutions.

M11 Initial EMM Server Setup for Member State
Objective: Provide initial setup of an EMM Server installation as requested by a MS.

Members of the JRC project team visited the Dutch Internet Service Centre in order to support them operating an EMM installation which serves Dutch tax and law enforcement authorities. An installation with the Dutch customs is going to be used as a prototype for Dutch, French and British customs. Additionally, Swedish customs and Romanian authorities expressed interest in dedicated EMM installations.

The following MS institutions were provided with an account on EMM NewsDesk to allow them to evaluate the system:

• Belgium Ministry of Finance / Tax office
• Belgium Security Service VSSE
• Europol
• Estonian Police
• DG HOME
• Slovenian Police
• Swedish Police

M12: EMM training for Member State staff
Objective: Provide basic training for Member States’ staff on how to operate the EMM installation.

⁶ At the time this report is written, the registration period for the event is already over.
On-site training was provided when the project team set up the system at the Dutch Internet Service Centre. Most institutions evaluating the system received online training and attended our hands-on workshops with in-depth training sessions.

**Reporting**

*M13: Inception Report*

Objective: Submit inception report within one week after kick-off meeting, describing project plan for the first 6 months, team composition and further results of kick-off meeting.

The inception report was submitted 9.12.2011 after the kick-off meeting.

*M14: First Interim Report*

Objective: Submit draft of interim report within 6 months of AA execution containing executive summary update on carried out activities, progress report with results and difficulties and interim findings and conclusions on work packages 3.1 and 3.2. Submit revised final report within fourteen days of receiving DG HOME’s comments.

The first interim report was submitted 20.04.2012.

*M15: Second Interim Report*

Objective: Submit draft of second interim report within 15 months of AA execution addressing the same topics as first interim report. Submit revised final interim report within fourteen days of receiving DG HOME’s comments.

The second interim report was submitted 22.01.2013.

*M16: Final Report*

Objective: Submit draft of final report within 22 months of AA execution containing a description of the work accomplished and results obtained. Submit revised final report within fourteen days of receiving DG HOME’s comments.

The final report was submitted 16.09.2013.
4 DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS AND DIFFICULTIES

The JRC team composition changed while the JRC performed work towards the objectives. This impacted the completion of various deliveries. Especially the delivery and scope of the OSINT Field Manual was impacted. The first public version had to be postponed to 2013. Also, the JRC needed to postpone the 2013 workshop from April to September due to organisational reasons. However, the new September time frame allowed extending the event to three days.

The level of participation of EU MS authorities in the JRC’s OSINT related workshops stayed at a very high level throughout the two years of the AA. Also, the demand for the software tools is very high and increasing. The reason is in the JRC’s view a trickle-down effect that OSINT related tools and techniques are not only used by central authorities but also more and more in regional and local law enforcement units. Users of the tools in the MS are reporting that the provided tools form a very good basis to initiate and explore the use of OSINT in law enforcement units.

Currently, the EMM Server Suite is being tested in a pilot project by the Dutch, French and British customs authorities for customs specific risk analysis. If the project proves to be a success it is quite likely that there will be further demand from other MS customs authorities for this tools. The EMM OSINT Suite desktop software was recently mentioned in an article of the World Customs Organisation’s (WCO) news magazine7. Subsequently, the JRC received a request from the Australian customs authorities to obtain a license for the software.

In the JRC’s opinion the use of open sources is becoming an invaluable tool for law enforcement authorities across Europe. At the same time, it will take further efforts to bring all MS on the same level of capabilities. The high and even increasing participation from the MS in the OSINT events is a sign that the work in this area is highly appreciated by law enforcement authorities in Europe and should be continued.

5 ANNEX

The annex contains the following additional information:

- Agenda Workshop October 2011
- Agenda Workshop June 2012, Presentation abstracts
- Agenda Workshop October 2012
- Licensed users of EMM OSINT Suite

5.1 Agenda Workshop October 2011

The first workshop was co-located with the EMM Information Day as defined by milestone M10. The event took place 27.-28.10.2012. The event was fully booked with 40 participants from across Europe.

5.1.1 Thursday, 27.10.2011

- Welcome Remarks, DG HOME
- Presentation: EMM Suite of Tools – Overview, JRC
- Interactive Session: EMM Server
- Lunch Break
- Presentation: EMM OSINT Suite 2.0, JRC
- Presentation: Monitoring Media for Events: Moving from Early Alerting to Early Warning, JRC
- Interactive Session: EMM Server

5.1.2 Friday, 28.10.2011

- Welcome Day 2

Parallel Interactive Sessions:

- EMM OSINT Suite
  - Acquisition & Basic Functions
  - Advanced Functions
- EMM Server
- Plenum: Closing Remarks, Feedback, Wrap-Up

5.2 Agenda Workshop June 2012

The June workshop was organised as an expert forum with presentations from experts across Europe. The event was fully booked with 44 participants from across Europe.
5.2.1 Thursday 21 June 2012

- Welcome remarks DG Joint Research Centre, JRC
- Welcome remarks DG Home Affairs, DG HOME
- Presentation: Open source intelligence – a practitioner’s perspective, (Research Manager, West Midlands Counter Terrorism Unit, United Kingdom)
- Presentation: Real-time intelligence during events, and (Senior information analysts, Regional Police, Netherlands)
- Lunch break
- Presentation: Romanian Muslims on social platforms, (OSINT expert, Romanian Intelligence Service, Romania)
- Presentation: Public and private data analysis using open-source components in the real world with the iColumbo project, (Lead Developer of iColumbo/Founder of Seajas, Netherlands)
- Plenum: Feedback and conclusions

5.2.2 Friday 22 June 2012

- Welcome Day Two
- Presentation: How to improve security of police databases, (Police Superintendent, General Police Directorate, Slovenia)
- Presentation: Internet surveillance in practice, and (Internet surveillance, Regional Police, Netherlands)
- Presentation: The challenges of applying social network analysis to social media, (Intelligence Team Manager, Verisign iDefense, United Kingdom)
- Plenum: Feedback and conclusions
- Closing remarks DG Home Affairs, (Head of Sector, Strategic analysis and response, DG Home Affairs, European Commission)

5.2.3 Presentation Abstracts

- - Research Manager, West Midlands Police Counter Terrorism Unit, United Kingdom

Open source intelligence - a practitioner’s perspective

The presentation will cover a brief history of the Counter Terrorism Unit and its functions, followed by an overview of how the OSINT capability has been developed highlighting some of the issues, pitfalls, some of the solutions and the future. The presentation will contain examples of how OSINT assisted investigations including one case that led to a successful conviction.
Real time intelligence during events

During events, social media is scanned for signs of public disorder. Based on these signals, management information is produced. With this intelligence, police commanders are more able to give instructions to their police officers. In this presentation, examples and methods are discussed on the basis of the following three events: a demonstration of activists, a football match and the Dutch national celebration day “Queen’s Day”.

Romanian Muslims on social platforms

The communication changes registered by extremist organizations triggered a specialized approach in terms of monitoring the virtual space, in other words an appropriate management of the investigation results by means of an automated Social Network Analysis and Sentiment and Affect Analysis.

Given radicalization and self-radicalization high risks, security agencies need to establish the exact nature of an online social network by monitoring both quantitative elements (network dimension and volatility, frequency of participation in debates, number of messages per time unit) as well as qualitative issues (position of each member within the network; issuers’ persuasive ability; discourse patterns; indoctrination level and radical transformation potential).

The lack of a violent discourse inside a social network, although extremely convenient for security organizations, could actually be just a cover for achieving Islamic extremism main goal – setting up an Islamic conscience to precede the establishment of the Caliphate, based on rooting out Western influences and the practice of the ‘right’ religion, in European Muslims’ case.

In this particular context, one should use semantic analysis tools to explore a virtually unknown zone, namely translate human emotions into measurable data by resorting to sentiment analysis filters (positive versus negative), in order to reveal their intensity (level of emotional expression), clarifying the evolution of the radicalization process by which a moderate individual or group comes to adopt radical ideas and disseminate them.

The study I will present to you right now reveals the interest in using social media in order to strengthen the ties within the community and exchange almost radical opinions. Seeds of an inflexible form of Islam have been noticed, the trend being visible especially among young native and converted, who, driven by the need to be fully accepted by their adoptive ‘family’, eagerly take part in activism projects.

Public and private data analysis using open-source components in the real world with the iColumbo project

Data gathering, both on the public internet and from private sources, provides insight and relevance to intelligence and public institutions alike. With tangible implementations in the real world, we’ve built and used open-source components to provide search and data analysis capabilities that prove that these systems can be built using transparent open-source
software and technical systems. One of these implementations — part of the IRN / iColumbo Internet Monitoring project — focuses specifically on meeting the stringent privacy and security requirements set by public institutions. Its open and transparent design makes the technology suitable for democratic and legal review as well as meeting forensic standards to make the information suitable to be used as evidence in court cases.

- Police Superintendent, General Police Directorate, Slovenia

**How to improve security of police databases**

A large amount of data in log files can keep track of user’s activities in police databases. Examination of these log data for insider abuse can be a hard work. This presentation is aimed at our approach to support the examination of the log files. We support the examination by a recommender system that combines internal and external data in order to identify suspicious patterns and items. The identification is based on various data analysis techniques, from simple queries to advanced data visualization techniques and assessment models. The recommender system is composed of KNIME open source platform for data analyses, and data gathering tools such as OSINT Suite. The presentation will be focused on integration between the OSINT Suite and the KNIME platform. The OSINT Suite provides additional data from public sources that can enrich log file data, and the KNIME integrates this data into the recommender system. This concept can also be used for examination of similar data such as emails and various documents.

- Internet surveillance, Regional Police Force, Netherlands

**Internet surveillance in practice**

This presentation focusses on who we are, what we use and some examples of internet surveillance and investigation in our police region.

- Intelligence Team Manager, Verisign iDefense, United Kingdom

**The challenges of applying social network analysis to social media**

One of the most powerful tools in the social scientists tools box is Social Network Analysis (SNA), a method that can reveals hidden meaning in otherwise formless social groups. SNA has been successfully applied by intelligence agencies for decades into mediums such as telephonic analysis and the social hierarchies of numerous criminal and terrorist groups. Can SNA be as effectively applied to the medium of cyber space, specifically the social groups active within online forums and chat channels? This talk examines both the pitfalls and possible solutions to applying SNA to the cyber medium.

5.3 Agenda Workshop October 2012

The second workshop in 2012 was organised to contain hands-on sessions about our OSINT tools. The event was well received with 30 participants. The sessions took place in two parallel tracks covering an end-to-end scenario with EMM NewsBrief and basic and advanced sessions with EMM OSINT Suite.

5.3.1 Thursday, 27.10.2012

- Welcome Remarks, DG HOME
• Welcome Remarks, JRC

• EMM Products Overview & Latest Research
  o Event Extraction, JRC
  o Twitter Mining, JRC
  o Automatic Summarisation, JRC
  o Sentiment Detection, JRC

• Parallel Sessions
  o EMM End-to-End
  o EMM OSINT Suite
    ▪ Web Search, Crawling, Data Import
    ▪ Scripting
    ▪ Data Export and Reporting

5.3.2 Friday, 28.10.2012

• Welcome Day 2

• Parallel Sessions:
  o EMM End-to-End
  o EMM OSINT Suite
    ▪ Use Cases
    ▪ Questions and Answers

• Wrap-up & Feedback

5.4 Agenda Expert Forum and Workshop September 2013

The 2013 edition of the workshop was extended to three days to accommodate an expert forum as well as hands-on tracks to demonstrate basic and advanced features of EMM NewsDesk and EMM OSINT Suite. The event was fully booked with 51 participants from across Europe.

5.4.1 Wednesday, 18.09.2013

• Welcome Remarks DG HOME and JRC

• Presentation: Forensic Admissibility of evidence derived from social media platforms, Metropolitan Police, United Kingdom

• Presentation: Organisation and Mission of the Internet Service Centre, Dutch Tax Authorities, The Netherlands
• Presentation: Case Study on the use of EMM OSINT Suite v1.3 versus v2.1, Dutch Tax Authorities, The Netherlands

• Parallel Interactive Sessions:
  o EMM Advanced Coaching
  o EMM Beginner End-to-End
  o EMM OSINT Suite
    ▪ Data Import and Acquisition
    ▪ Entity Extraction

5.4.2 Thursday, 19.09.2013

• Welcome Remarks Day Two

• Presentation: Internet Data Seizure and Web Site Monitoring, Federal Criminal Police Office (BKA), Germany

• Presentation: Text Mining: A Problem and Solution Discussion, Federal Criminal Police Office (BKA), Germany

• Presentation: EMM Mobile Applications, Joint Research Centre

• Presentation: Social Media, Intelligence Service, Romania

• Parallel Interactive Sessions:
  o EMM Advanced Coaching
  o EMM Beginner End-to-End
  o EMM OSINT Suite
    ▪ Entity Extraction Advanced
    ▪ Data Export and Reporting

5.4.3 Friday, 20.09.2013

• Welcome Remarks Day Three

• Parallel Interactive Sessions
  o EMM Advanced Coaching
  o EMM Beginner End-to-End
  o EMM OSINT Suite Coaching and Q&A

• Plenum: Wrap-up and Feedback
5.5 EMM OSINT Suite – Signed License Agreements

The licensees are ordered in the sequence the license was signed.

- Belgium Police, Veurne, Belgium
- Centre for Bio security and Bio preparedness, Copenhagen, Denmark
- Ministry of Interior, Vienna, Austria
- Police Nationale DGPN, Paris, France
- Federal Judicial Police – Gent Branch, Gent, The Netherlands
- Police Brabant, Oosterhout, The Netherlands
- Ministry of Finance, Tax Inspection, Brussels, Belgium
- Ministry of Interior, Police, Ljubljana, Slovenia
- Police of Cyprus, Counter Terrorism Office, Nicosia, Cyprus
- Police Rotterdam Region, Rotterdam, The Netherlands
- Federal Police of Belgium, Brussels, Belgium
- VSSE (Interior Intelligence), Brussels, Belgium
- French Atomic Authority CEA, Fontenay aux Roses, France
- Danish Tax and Customs Administration, Hojbjerg, Denmark
- Finnish Tax Administration, Helsinki, Finland
- General Directorate of Customs, Prague, Czech Republic
- Customs Chamber E-Competence Centre, Opole, Poland
- Police Blekinge Region, Karlskrona, Sweden
- Italian Customs and Monopolies Agency, Rome, Italy
- European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), Lisbon, Portugal
- HM Revenue and Customs, London, United Kingdom
- Houston Police, Houston, USA

The following organisations have asked for a license, but the licensing has not yet been finalised:

- International Criminal Court, The Hague, International Institution
- Australian Customs Service, Melbourne, Australia
The following organisations are using the EMM OSINT Suite with a license based on a Memorandum of Understanding or a high level collaboration agreement:

- Europol, The Hague, EU-Agency
- Internet Service Centre, Dutch Tax Administration, The Netherlands
Title of Report or Deliverable:
Open Source Information Capacity Support
Final Report
Administrative Arrangement
JRC No. 31992
HOME/2010/ISEC/AA/003-A1, ABAC No 30-CE-0444512/00-75

JRC Author(s): [redacted]
Classification: Limited
Type of report: Final Report
Institutional Action/project: Optima

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