



TECHNICAL REPORT

**LEA Support Services;
Takedown requests;
Benefits, use cases and approach**

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ETSI

650 Route des Lucioles
F-06921 Sophia Antipolis Cedex - FRANCE

Tel.: +33 4 92 94 42 00 Fax: +33 4 93 65 47 16

Siret N° 348 623 562 00017 - APE 7112B
Association à but non lucratif enregistrée à la
Sous-Préfecture de Grasse (06) N° w061004871

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Foreword

This Technical Report (TR) has been produced by ETSI Technical Committee Lawful Interception (LI).

Modal verbs terminology

In the present document "**should**", "**should not**", "**may**", "**need not**", "**will**", "**will not**", "**can**" and "**cannot**" are to be interpreted as described in clause 3.2 of the [ETSI Drafting Rules](#) (Verbal forms for the expression of provisions).

"**must**" and "**must not**" are **NOT** allowed in ETSI deliverables except when used in direct citation.

1 Scope

The present document contains the following material relating to takedown requests:

- A statement of benefits for using standardized interfaces for takedown requests.
- Suggestions around potential requirements (though the present document does not formally define requirements).
- Use cases, examples and scenarios which are brought together into categories (the goal is that all scenarios in the same category can be handled in a similar way).
- Potential approaches for each category i.e. ways to achieve the benefits for the scenarios identified (the approaches considered include creating new standards and creating Change Requests against existing standards).

2 References

2.1 Normative references

Normative references are not applicable in the present document.

2.2 Informative references

References are either specific (identified by date of publication and/or edition number or version number) or non-specific. For specific references, only the cited version applies. For non-specific references, the latest version of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

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The following referenced documents may be useful in implementing an ETSI deliverable or add to the reader's understanding, but are not required for conformance to the present document.

[i.1] ETSI TS 103 120: "Lawful Interception (LI); Interface for warrant information".

3 Definition of terms, symbols and abbreviations

3.1 Terms

Void.

3.2 Symbols

Void.

3.3 Abbreviations

For the purposes of the present document, the following abbreviations apply:

DNS	Domain Name System
IP	Internet Protocol

4 Core concepts

4.1 Foundations

A takedown request is a technical request to take down an account, content or service.

The present document does not make any statement about legislation. The request should contain supporting information which will allow the recipient to fully understand what is being asked for and why (e.g. can cite relevant legislation or can indicate that the request is made because the material in question does not meet a certain policy or practice).

The basic definition of a takedown request does not involve requesting the disclosure, storage or delivery of data. ETSI TS 103 120 [i.1] already contains a range of provisions for disclosure and data preservation. It is for future study to look at whether there are situations in which there are requests for data to be both taken down and disclosed (or preserved). As part of this study, it is important to bear in mind the need to avoid confusion between takedowns and disclosure.

4.2 Benefits

The goal is to create a way of submitting requests that is clear, consistent, secure and efficient.

This goal helps deliver the following benefits:

- All parties can quickly have a common understanding of the action that is being requested and the justification for it.
- Parties can have confidence that material is not being revealed to people who should not see it. Parties can have confidence that they are talking to the people they think they are talking to.
- Parties do not have to build lots of different ways of working and do not have to try to understand which way of working is being used.
- As much of the work as possible can be done automatically. There is always scope for humans to do tasks that need human judgement (interpretation of policies or legislation) but the goal is that automation is used to do the tasks that computers do best (moving data, following certain rules about data).

In summary, the goal is to ensure requests can be made in a way which is low-risk and low-cost, giving everyone confidence to implement takedown requests in a way that meets the community's common goals (the takedown of material which everyone agrees should not be available or accessible).

4.3 Scenarios

The following scenarios are relevant:

- Takedown of user-generated content.
- Blocking of a service based on phone number, email address or (potentially) IP address (care needed about ephemeral identifiers).
- Blocking material by a hosting organization or blocking a domain at a registrar level (for DNS Abuse, Fraud, hosting material that does not meet certain policies or legislation).

It is important to handle situations where the takedown is temporary as well as those where it is permanent. It is important to bear in mind that (in some situations) decisions about takedowns may need to be changed later (e.g. an appeals process). The present document does not specify whether appeals are allowed or how appeals are decided; however, the present document aims to support situations where appeals take place.

5 Approaches

5.1 Two principles

The following two principles are recommended:

- 1) It is recommended to re-use existing TC LI standards where they are suitable i.e. re-use protocols and structures from existing TC LI specifications. Care has been taken to avoid confusion between takedowns and lawful disclosure requests: there are distinct standards and standard numbers; the messages will be incompatible at a coding level; care has been taken to keep terminology distinct.
- 2) There is a range of different scenarios and use cases (user-generated content, domain registration, IP address, email address, phone number). They are different in a range of ways. However, in terms of the structures/protocols for how to deliver requests (and reply to them), the different scenarios look very similar. Therefore, the recommended approach is to create one standard which covers all use cases, with space for defining the content (to be taken down) in a variety of ways.

5.2 Outline of the candidate solution

The recommended solution involves following these steps:

- Establishing a secure link between the people making the request and the people receiving it. The goal is to use standard internet-based secure protocols which are easy to code.
- Follow a certain message flow, which defines who starts the conversation and how people can respond (e.g. with acknowledgements or errors).
- There is a clearly defined set of data in the messages. Some of it is basic information about times of messages and identifiers. Also, it includes a way to identify the material in question.
- There is a clear, standard way of formatting messages.

5.3 Implementing this approach

The above approach is implemented by using the structure for takedown tasks (Called TDTask) as defined in ETSI TS 103 120 [i.1].

The TDTask is distinct from the existing tasks at a high level in the stack, so that software will be able to immediately see whether a request is a disclosure or takedown request. The TDTask reuses certain basic identifiers but care has been taken to ensure that concepts are not included where they are not relevant or appropriate to takedown requests. The main differences and similarities (for TDTask compared to the other types of tasks in ETSI TS 103 120 [i.1]) are explained in clause 5.4.

The details of how to create and use the takedown task are given in ETSI TS 103 120 [i.1].

5.4 Comparing TDTask to other request types

Clause 5.4 examines differences and similarities between the Takedown Task (TDTask) compared to the other types of tasks in ETSI TS 103 120 [i.1], such as the Lawful Disclosure Task LDTask. The purpose of clause 5.4 is to demonstrate that a balance has been struck:

- Relevant material from other task types has been re-used i.e. not re-inventing the wheel.
- Critical differences between takedowns and other task types have been acknowledged and properly accommodated.
- There is a very clear distinction between takedown tasks (compared to other tasks) to keep the possibility of confusion as remote as possible.

The main similarity is that the goal is to create a secure, authenticated channel which can reliably and efficiently communicate requests from the organization making the request, to the organization receiving the request. All this infrastructure should be reused from ETSI TS 103 120 [i.1].

Some of the critical differences are as follows:

- There will be different ways to identify the subject of the request. It is useful to re-use the techniques (such as dictionaries) in ETSI TS 103 120 [i.1] which give flexibility and strong typing at the same time. However, it should be noted that list of potential identifier types is often different for takedowns.
- The process for authorizing takedown requests could be very different compared to requests for lawful disclosures. For example, some takedown requests might be based on the justification that "the material in question appears to contradict company policy". However, it is still essential to be able to have confidence in the identity of the organization making the request, i.e. the authentication provided by ETSI TS 103 120 [i.1] is still important.
- No material (content) is supplied as part of a takedown request (unlike requests for disclosure or intercept). It is still important to have some information sent in return (such as feedback on the outcome of the request to perform a takedown, i.e. whether the takedown happened or not).
- The process of appeals needs to be supported for takedown requests. It is important to support a process where either side can appeal a decision (the organization requesting the takedown, or the subject of the takedown request).
- A similarity with other tasks in ETSI TS 103 120 [i.1] is that the request should support a flag indicating whether, or not, the subject of the request should be informed about the request. The present document does not describe the consequences of setting this flag (a policy or legal matter outside the scope of the present document).

Annex A: Change history

Status of Technical Report ETSI TR 104 126		
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January 2026	1.1.1	First publication of the TR after approval at ETSI TC LI#71 in Sophia Antipolis (France)

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