

Confidential information holders' number

Number recognition

The number recognition system was introduced in the Netherlands in 2011. The Netherlands Bar (NOvA) played a major role in this. Conversations between lawyers and their clients, including over the telephone, must always be able to be held in strict confidence, which is why the NOvA considers a reliable number recognition system to be essential. It ensures that telephone conversations between lawyers and clients are not monitored by the police.



How the number recognition system works at the National Police

Lawyers, including persons with derived lawyer-client privilege, provide telephone and fax numbers to the NOvA by secured electronic means. The NOvA passes such numbers on to the Dutch National Police, which processes them in its “telephone numbers of privileged persons” database. These numbers are subsequently recognised automatically. The National Police is then no longer able to monitor conversations using those numbers, either in real time or afterwards. The NOvA only passes on telephone numbers to the National Police, not any name or address particulars.

Number recognition and the Custodial Institutions Agency

On behalf of the Minister of Security and Justice, the Custodial Institutions Agency (*Dienst Justitiële Inrichtingen (DJI)*) implements penalties and custodial measures that are imposed by the courts. Lawyers can pass on telephone numbers to this department’s number recognition system on a voluntary basis. The NOvA advises lawyers to do this, in any case in instances when lawyers have one or more clients in detention but even when they do not have any such clients.

The DJI’s number recognition system operates differently from that of the National Police. The DJI records every conversation that a detainee has with his or her lawyer from a custodial institution. Recordings of telephone calls to a privileged person’s telephone number are blocked in advance; such telephone calls cannot be monitored in real time either.

Every lawyer is personally responsible for passing on telephone numbers to, or withholding them from, the DJI.

Information

Click on the following links for more information about the number recognition system. The confidential information holders’ number is mentioned in article 6.8 in the Legal profession bye-Law (Voda):

<https://www.advocatenorde.nl/english>