

Customers using message exchange for export

GUIDE FOR TRADERS APPLYING FOR MESSAGE DECLARANT STATUS FOR EXPORTS

SISÄLLYSLUETTELO

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I. TERMS USED

Agent

A private person or a company that completes and submits export declarations on behalf of a declarant (exporter). A forwarding agency is often used as an agent.

Message declarant for export (EDI sender)

A company authorised by Customs to submit electronic customs declarations from their own data system.

Technical sender

A company that sends export declarations on behalf of another representative.

Software supplier

A company that sells software required for export declarations. The software solutions are built based on Customs' message specifications and tested with Customs.

Operator

A company authorised by Customs to provide message transmission services required for export declarations.

Direct message exchange

Message transfer over the Internet to Customs. Companies can transmit messages to Customs over the so-called web service interface and retrieve reply messages generated by Customs' systems.

Direct message declarant

A company that creates and transmits messages to Customs' direct message interface. A direct message declarant can use a service provider for creating and transmitting messages.

Service provider

A company that builds and transmits messages to Customs' direct message interface on behalf of another company.

Certificate

Customs identifies the message builder and the intermediary with certificates granted by the Population Register Centre. The builder needs the certificate for the XML signature and the intermediary for the connections.

Serial number

A unique five-digit code identifying a message declarant. The serial number is needed during both testing and production and it can be seen in the transaction identifier of an export transaction.

Electronic Service Centre

The customs office where message-format declarations are directed when they have been selected for manual processing by Customs.

Customer testing

The stage preceding the authorisation to act as a message declarant, during which the customer submits declaration messages to the testing environment of Customs. After successful testing, the

customer will be given a decision on registration for message exchange and will, without problems, be able to submit error-free messages to the Customs system.

Registered export customer

A customer whose details has been entered into the customer register of Customs and who has been allocated an export code extension (in the form T0001).

Message exchange testing service (IAT)

An interface, which allows traders to undertake direct message exchange testing independently, irrespective of time and place. The testing service contains test cases created by Customs for use by the company.

2. CUSTOMER USING MESSAGE EXCHANGE FOR EXPORT

Message declarant for export

An message declarant for export is a customer of Customs (EDI sender) entitled to submit their own or their principal's (exporter's) export declarations by means of customs declaration messages in accordance with the XML standard. The message declarant status can be granted to exporters or forwarders who have been approved as registered export customers.

2.1. Technical sender for exports

A company that uses direct message exchange can act as a technical sender. This means that the company sends export declarations on behalf of another representative and retrieves related response messages. However, the technical sender is not responsible for the content of the export declaration.

Conditions for the technical sender:

- Registered export customer status
- The technical sender must provide Customs with a declaration drafted by the representative (on whose behalf the company sends messages) that they are authorised by each principal to use a technical sender.
- The declaration is to be submitted with the application for message exchange (Customs form 934).
- A company can apply for status as technical sender if it already has authorisation for message exchange for exporter or if it will be applying for the authorisation in question.

When using a technical sender, the following is to be considered:

- The exporter or the representative must have all authorisations required for export clearance
- The exporter and/or representative is responsible for the accuracy of declaration
- Customs will always send response messages to the technical sender, who is obliged to pass the messages on to the declarant or representative

The operator ID entered in the export declaration message must always be either the exporter's or the representative's ID.

If the message is sent by the technical sender, the additional statement code FIXTL must be entered for the item to be cleared. The technical sender's operator ID is entered as code description separated by a semicolon from the extension code granted by Customs.

Code	Description
FIXTL	FII234567-8 T0001

2.2. Transaction channels used in message exchange for export

For export, you can select either operator-based or direct message exchange.

- In direct message exchange, the exporter, i.e. the direct message declarant, sends messages in XML format to Customs via a public message interface by connecting to a public network (Internet).
- In operator-based message exchange, a company uses the services of data communications operators approved by Customs to submit messages.
No new customers will be accepted for operator-based message exchange.

3. APPLYING FOR AN AUTHORISATION TO USE MESSAGE EXCHANGE

3.1. Requirements for message exchange for export

- A company applying for the status as message declarant for export, must be a **registered export customer** (More information on registration is available at tulli.fi).
- Customs requires that the company applying for message declarant status is competent regarding the export procedure and customs clearance, to ensure a smooth message exchange. When necessary, the company may request training by Customs regarding the export procedure before starting customer testing.
- The company must have access to customs clearance software that can generate the required messages in accordance with Customs' declaration standards. Customs does not provide the required software; companies should instead contact their own software supplier. For companies that have not yet selected their own software supplier there is a list of direct message exchange software suppliers available on the Customs website: [Companies who provide customs clearance software for message exchange](#)

The message content guidelines and message descriptions for export declaration are available on the Customs website:

[Message descriptions](#)

- To create a connection and to exchange messages in direct message exchange, the company must acquire a certificate granted by the Population Register Centre.
 - Customs authenticates the message builder and the intermediary with the certificates. An XML format message created by the message builder is signed digitally using the certificate. Customs identifies the business ID of the message builder by the certificate in the XML signature.

More information about acquiring a certificate is available in the document "Message exchange with Finnish Customs: Technical guidebook", which is available at tulli.fi.

- In order to be approved as a message declarant for export, the company must test its customs clearance software and network connection with Customs. Customs also conducts testing with the software suppliers that provide customs clearance software. Testing is described in more detail in Chapter 4.

3.2. Applying for customer status

Authorisation to act as a message declarant for export is applied for using customs form no 934e “Application for message exchange with Finnish Customs”. If the company changes over from operator-based message exchange to direct message exchange, the section “amendment application” is filled in.

In direct message exchange, a company acting as message declarant and service provider must apply for authorisation to use direct message exchange. The application form is available on the Finnish Customs website at:

[Message exchange](#)

4. ADVICE TO BUSINESSES AND AGREEMENTS ON TESTING

When Customs has processed the application of the company, a Customs business adviser will contact the company to arrange a consultation. One free consultation visit will be arranged before the testing. The consultation can be provided over the phone or in person.

The consultation will cover issues such as:

- The unique serial number and the control identifier used by the company during testing and production
- message exchange: which messages the company must be able to send and receive
- message data-content: information that should be registered when filling in the application and when drafting XML messages: the message material is available on the tull.fi website at: [Message descriptions](#)
- testing material for export, which is agreed on individually with each company during the consultation meeting
- topics related to the service channel
- the company’s own questions

It is recommended that both the export declaration expert and the message exchange expert of the company takes part in the consultation meeting. The number of participants is not limited.

After the business consultation, the Customs testing official contacts the company’s contact person, as indicated in the application, in order to set dates for the testing and for opening the connections

5. CUSTOMER TESTING OF MESSAGE DECLARANTS FOR EXPORT

The objective of testing is to ensure that the company sends as error-free messages as possible when moving into the production phase. During testing, the company submits export declaration messages with varying data content (for example complete or amended), in reply to which the Customs message declaration testing service sends status messages (acceptance, error, release notification for the export procedure etc.). The company sends appropriate responses to the status messages; e.g. corrects an error.

The message declarant testing is carried out individually for each company (one business ID) and data system. Separate testing for each company office will not be carried out. The applicant company will have to undertake more than one testing only if it has several data systems in use at multiple offices. In the case of a group of companies, the testing will be carried out separately for each company (different business IDs). If one of the companies acts as a message declarant on behalf of all the companies in the group, only that one company has to undertake the testing.

Unless otherwise agreed, the applicant company's contact person for testing is the contact person for message exchange mentioned in the application. The software supplier's representative may assist the company in the testing, but the testing is always the responsibility of the exporter or the forwarder. The company will cover the costs of testing itself. If the company for production in their export software is planning to use such automated functionalities that have not become apparent during testing, they must be reported to the testing official. The company should reserve enough resources for carrying out the customer testing within the agreed schedule.

After the company has successfully tested all the test cases in the message exchange testing service and successfully received response messages from Customs, the customer testing official notifies by email of the acceptance and agrees on a date for launching production. Customs sends the company an authorisation decision on message exchange as well as the test report.

A company acting as a message declarant is responsible for ensuring that the personnel completing export declarations know how to submit export declaration messages. Employees completing electronic export declarations must participate in the testing as much as possible.

5.1. The objectives of testing the company

- must be able to produce correct export declaration messages according to the specifications set by Customs and to declare the required details.
- must be able to receive the response messages sent by Customs and to act accordingly.
- must be able to react to an error message and to correct their export declaration message.
- must be able to provide a complete export declaration submitted in advance as well as the data of a two stage declaration.
- must be able to declare several goods items and their special features in the same export declaration.
- must be able to declare the codes for the location of goods and the required location details as well as the term of delivery according to Incoterms and any other term of delivery.
- must be able to lodge different declaration types.
- must be able to provide the usual requirements related to commodity codes such as supplementary unit, additional codes, condition codes required for restrictions and the UNDG code.

- must be able to declare several attachments as well as a net or gross mass below 1 kilo with decimals.
- must be able to declare container details both at heading and goods item level.
- must be able to declare correct details of different package types and several package types of one goods item.
- must be able to declare long trader name details, if necessary.
- must be able to declare an export declaration for postal consignments.
- must be able to declare the data on customs procedures with economic impact.
- must be able to submit an export declaration to be provided using the fallback procedure
- must be able to provide safety and security data in an export declaration.

5.2. ELEX export system testing stages and schedule

The testing procedure for message declarants consists of:

- Testing the connection for direct message exchange
- Testing, using the message exchange testing service
- Testing the amendment and invalidation messages with the company's own declaration material
- Technical testing -> Arrival at Exit notification

1. Technical testing of the connection for direct message exchange

The aim of the test cases for testing the technical connection (3+1 for the Message Notification Service) is to ensure that the customer's software and the Customs web service for direct message exchange are compatible. Since the web service acts as a transmission layer for export declarations, the aim is to ensure the technical functioning of the connection before the testing with export declaration messages is started.

More specific instructions on how to test the technical connection are sent to the company in connection with agreeing on the testing time.

The company may also start using the Message Notification Service for direct message exchange, which speeds up the message exchange.

The testing is optional if the company is already using direct message exchange with a Customs system or uses a service provider (intermediary) that has already carried out the testing of the technical communications.

- A message declarant for export who changes over from operator-based message exchange to direct message exchange
 - The testing is optional if the company is already using direct message exchange with a Customs system or uses a service provider (intermediary) that has already carried out the testing of the technical communications.

2. Testing using the message exchange testing service

The direct message exchange customer testing is done with a test automation software, this

means that Customs' customers can independently test direct message exchange regardless of time or place. The customers are able to test their own systems against the Customs interface and to verify that their systems can correctly produce the messages to be sent to Customs, and handle the response messages from Customs.

The testing service will automatically perform the steps that the Customs testing official would perform manually at an agreed time. In problem situations, the customer can contact the testing official, but otherwise, the testing official does not participate in the testing.

With the message exchange testing service, the software suppliers can also test the transmission of attachments for export declarations.

- Testing material

In the testing service, the testing official determines the test cases, which the company must complete to pass the testing.

The test cases for export declarations and attachments created by Customs are available in the testing service. Every test case contains instructions on the details to be declared and the measures to be taken.

- Testing period

The testing official will set the testing period in the testing service, during which the company must successfully perform the testing. If the time limit is exceeded, the testing is stopped and the company must reserve a new time for testing.

- Passing the testing

The testing official will review and approve the testing performed by the company via the testing service.

- Further information about the testing service

The user manual for the testing service is available on the tull.fi website at: [Message exchange testing](#)

3. Testing using the company's own declaration material

If the company's software is connected to the company's other data systems in such a way that the details of certain export declarations cannot be declared (for example a certain quantity or commodity code), the customer testing can be performed with the Customs testing official, by using the company's own export declaration material.

When using the company's own material, the testing official ensures that the communications are working and that the export declaration messages sent by the company comply with the message descriptions of Customs.

- Testing material

The company must prepare the testing material themselves based on their export transactions in accordance with the guidance provided.

- Testing period
Three weeks will be reserved for the testing. If the time limit is exceeded, the testing is stopped and the company must reserve a new time for testing.

5.3. Customer testing of electronic correction and cancellation message for export

Correction and cancellation messages are tested with the Customs testing official using the company's own declaration material (testing cannot be done in the message exchange testing service). The testing of correction and cancellation messages can take no longer than one week.

5.4. Testing of attachment files

The direct message exchange has an attachment file message service, through which the company can send attachments for export declarations to Customs. Only software suppliers test this functionality and the testing is done in the testing service of the message exchange.

5.5. Line wrapping of an XML message

The message declarant must use line wrapping in XML messages sent to Customs.

If the message contains more than 8000 characters, the EDI server of Customs will line wrap the message after 8000 characters, which means that the data is interrupted in the wrong place and the message is lost.

6. CHANGING OVER MESSAGE EXCHANGE

6.1. Launch of message exchange in the production environment

After the testing has been successfully completed, Customs will send to the company the decision on message exchange authorisation and the test report containing information about the test phases and problems that occurred during the testing. The date when the production can be started is given in the decision.

In direct message exchange, the message declarants must ensure that the messages are sent to the production environment.

6.2. Changing over from communications via an operator to direct message exchange

The customer changing over to direct message exchange must ensure that any response messages sent later on concerning export declarations submitted via an operator can still be received via an

operator. The testing official and the customer agree on the date when the connections provided by an operator will be closed.

6.3. Responsibility for message follow-up

The message declarant is responsible for message follow-up and transmission and must make sure that a response is received for each message sent. A response message from Customs must be replied to as requested, for example with a corrected message, if Customs sends an error message as response message.

6.4. Sending attachment files

You will benefit from sending your attachments to Customs through the attachment message service (not via email) at the same time with your actual declaration. This speeds up the processing of customs declarations. For example, in situations that involve authorisations or certificates that require measures, Customs can start processing your declaration immediately after receiving the declaration and attachments. If Customs needs to ask you to deliver attachments separately, your incomplete customs declaration is returned to the Electronic Service Centre's processing queue, and there will be a delay in processing the declaration.

6.5. Problem situations

In problem situations related to message exchange, the message declarant should resolve the problem by contacting the company's own Help Desk and operator or the service provider. If the problem causes an interruption in the message exchange, the instructions for the export fallback procedure defined on the tullifi website should be followed.

7. CHANGES TO THE CUSTOMS CLEARANCE SOFTWARE

If the company changes its customs clearance software, starts using a new version of it or changes their service provider or data communications operator, it must file an amendment application to Customs so that the need for testing can be determined. A new version, software or message exchange connection cannot be used prior to approval by Customs.

8. FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information is available in the guides on direct message exchange available on the Customs website:

“Message exchange with Finnish Customs: Technical guidebook” as well as
“Message exchange with Finnish Customs: Introduction to message exchange with Finnish Customs”.

The guides are available on the tullifi website at:

[Message exchange](#)

Questions on how to apply for message exchange for export customer status can be sent to [yritysneuvonta.lupa-asiakkaat\(at\)tulli.fi](mailto:yritysneuvonta.lupa-asiakkaat(at)tulli.fi)

9. TEST CASE INSTRUCTIONS AND DESCRIPTIONS

9.1. Description of test cases in the message exchange testing service and instructions

In the testing service below the testing group, you can find export test cases 1-12 and export attachment message service test cases 1-4.

Each test case contains an info link with more specific instructions on the message to be sent to the customer-testing environment. The instruction manual may ask you to send a message to Customs' test environment or to check that you have received a certain response message.

The test system reports in the user interface if an invalid or a wrong message is sent or if a message is missing. If there is a problem, contact the customer testing support of the application or system concerned.

When all the mandatory test cases for export have been completed, the company's tester confirms the testing. Information about the completed testing is transmitted to the Customs testing official, who will accept or reject the it. If the Customs testing official notices flaws in the test runs, they may return the tests to be redone.

9.2. Testing using the company's own material, testing instruction

Companies will need to prepare test material using their own export declarations, number the test cases (Test 1, Test 2...) and mark each test case with information on what is to be tested in this test case. The test material must cover 10 to 20 of the most common export declarations of the company, and possible exceptional situations occurring regularly. If the test material does not cover some of the required data, the company must notify the testing official of this in advance and explain why this data is not to be tested. The company provides the Customs testing official with the test material a week before the start of the testing. If the testing official has not received the testing material before the start of the testing, it will be postponed.

When the company has notified the Customs testing official of the transmission of first test message, the official examines the transmission of the message and ensures that the message structure corresponds with the message description. When the message structure is correct, the testing official compares the received material with the XML message and checks the message content. If there are errors in the structure or content, the testing official informs the company of it. The company must correct the errors.

In addition to the mandatory data content of the export declaration, the test material chosen by the customer must include the following:

- Complete declaration (A)
- Advance export declaration (D), date and time of the presentation of the goods must be provided
- If the company uses two-stage declaration, declaration F+Y (otherwise A or D)



- If the company uses two-stage declaration, declaration C+Z (otherwise A or D)
- Declaration type EX, CO, EU
- Currency of the invoice (mandatory in export declarations as of 1 January 2012)
- Terms of Delivery according to Incoterms
- Term of Delivery other than Incoterms
- Location of goods code is Z and customs office
- Location of goods code O and address details
- Several additional statement codes at heading level (e.g. 30400 and FIXFQ)
- If the company acts as a representative, the representative's complete details should be declared (Customs' testing official should be notified of the company's details in advance)
- Mode of transport is 5, postal transports
- At least two countries of routing
- Freight charges method of payment
- Several attachments (e.g. several invoices)
- Several goods items
- Two attachments at item level (e.g. packing list and documents relating to restrictions)
- Net mass below 1 KGM
- Gross mass below 1 KGM
- Commodity code including supplementary measurement unit
- Commodity code including supplementary measurement unit extension
- Commodity code with additional codes
- Commodity code requiring several condition codes to be declared
- Commodity code with UNDG (if within the company's product scope)
- Kind of packages, number of packages and marks and numbers on packages
- Package type is bulk goods (VQ, VG, VL, VY, VR or VO)
- Package type is unpacked goods (package type NE, NF or NG)
- At least two package types must be declared at item level
- Containers (to be declared without the goods item reference for the first goods item)
- Several containers with the goods item reference (sequence reference)
- Several seals
- Several consignees (the consignees must be declared at item level, full details of the consignee must be declared)
- Long consignee details (long consignee name, enter detail name2)

- In some cases an incorrect statistical value 0,00 must first be entered (generates an automatic error message from the system), after which the company must submit an amended export declaration containing the correct statistical value

- Fallback procedure, when additional statement code FIXEV and actual date of export is declared

Data on customs procedure with economic impact, normal authorisation procedure (e.g. 3151/7SA)

A test case must include at least the following information:

- Inward processing authorisation number
- Previous document is import
- Supervising customs office must be entered
- Nature of the transaction, e.g. 51

Data on customs procedure with economic impact, simplified authorisation procedure (e.g. 2100/7UB)

A test case must include at least the following information:

- Supervising customs office
- Customs office(s) of discharge
- Means of identification
- Nature of processing operation
- Processed products
- Time-limit for discharging the procedure

if the company cannot enter the test case number as a reference, e.g. "Test 1" every test case must include the additional statement code FIXXX and the test case number.

9.3. Test case descriptions for electronic correction and cancellation message for export

The testing is carried out using the company's own export material. If the company does not receive a decision on the release of a customs procedure in response to their export declaration or if the decision is delayed, they should contact the testing official at Customs. Once the test case has been successfully completed, the testing official will always send a confirmation message by email to the company.

a. Amendment notification

Test case 1

If the company does not have advance export declaration, the Customs testing official will submit separate instructions on how to complete test case 1.

1. Send a complete (A) export declaration for export customer testing
2. When you have received the decision on the release for export, send a correction message regarding the export declaration where you notify Customs of replacing the complete export declaration (A) with an advance export declaration (D). Cite the additional statement code FIXFN and correction reason code 12. The additional statement code FIXFO of the consignment to undergo customs clearance is also used to indicate the reason for the correction and the information to be changed is listed. The purpose of a correction message is correction, 7.
3. You will receive a rejection message (TOR) and PDF in reply to your correction message because after the release, the declaration can no longer be changed from a complete declaration to an advance declaration. Provide the Customs testing official (TH.elex-testaus@tulli.fi) with your export declaration's MRN.

Testitapaus 2

Jos yrityksellä ei ole käytössään vienti-ilmoituksella kuin ainoastaan yksi tavaraerä, Tullin asiakastestaja lähettää vaihtoehtoisen ohjeistuksen testitapauksen 2 suorittamiseksi.

1. Lähetä viennin asiakastestiin vienti-ilmoitus, jolla on kaksi tavaraerää
2. Kun olet saanut vientimenettelyyn luovutuksen, lähetä kyseiseen vienti-ilmoitukseen oikaisusanoma, jossa ilmoitat tulliselvitettävän erän erityismaininnan lisäkoodilla FIXFN oikaisevasi tavaraerän tietoja, syykoodi 16. Ilmoita erityismaininnan lisäkoodilla FIXFS poistavasi tavaraerän numeron 2. Muuta tulliselvitettävän erän tietoja vastaavasti. Tulliselvitettävän erän erityismaininnan lisäkoodilla FIXFO ilmoitetaan lisäksi oikaisun syy ja luetellaan muutettavat tiedot. Oikaisusanomassa sanoman tarkoitus on oikaisu, 7.
3. Mikäli oikaisupyyntö on virheetön, saat vastaanottosanomana. Ilmoita Tullin asiakastestaajalle (TH.elex-testaus@tulli.fi) vienti-ilmoituksesi MRN. Tullin asiakastestaaja lähettää oikaisupyyntöön lisäselvityspyynnön. Tämän jälkeen saat oikaisusanomana ja oikaisupäätöksen PDF:n.

b. Invalidation notification

Test case 1

1. Send a complete (A) export declaration for export customer testing
2. When you have received a message confirming the release for export, send a cancellation request concerning the export declaration citing reason code 1 indicating that “the declared goods will not be exported from the Union territory”.
3. If the cancellation request does not contain any errors, you will receive a message of receipt. Provide the Customs testing official (TH.elex-testaus@tulli.fi) with your export declaration’s MRN. The testing official at Customs will send you a request for additional information. You will receive the cancellation message and decision on cancellation in PDF format.

Test case 2

1. Send two complete and identical (A) export declarations for export customer testing
2. When you have received messages confirming the release of the export procedure for both export declarations, send a cancellation request concerning the first export declaration citing reason code 3 indicating that “several identical declarations have been lodged for the same goods”. Replace the first export declaration’s transaction identifier with the other transaction identifier.
3. You will receive a message of receipt in response. Provide the Customs testing official (TH.elex-testaus@tulli.fi) with your export declaration’s MRN. You will receive the cancellation message and decision on cancellation in PDF format after a while.
4. Send the same cancellation request for the first export declaration.
5. You will receive a rejection message for the cancellation request (TMR) and a response in PDF format.