UNITED
NATIONS

E

Economic and Social
Council

Distr.
GENERAL

TRADE/CEFACT/1999/2
7 January 1999

Original : ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

COMMITTEE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT
Centre for the Facilitation of Procedures and Practices
for Administration, Commerce and Transport (CEFACT)
Item 5 of the provisional agenda
fifth session, 15-17 March 1999

NEW MESSAGE DESIGN RULES (TRADE/WP.4/R.840/REV.5) IMPLEMENTATION TIMETABLE AND STRATEGY *

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Submitted by the EWG Group*

This document has been submitted by the EDIFACT Working Group (EWG) for publication. It provides the implementation timetable and strategy for document TRADE/CEFACT/1999/3 "UN/EDIFACT Message Design Rules for EDI".

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1. Introduction

The document, Message Design Rules for EDI (TRADE/CEFACT/R.840/Rev.5), was submitted to the ESG for approval in September 1998. A number of important enhancements are introduced, in particular to incorporate Interactive EDI, dependency notes and the use of repeating data elements. The underlying design philosophy for batch EDI, contained in Revision 4, has been retained. The interactive EDI design philosophy from the previously approved Interactive Message Design Guidelines (contained in document R.1237) has been retained.

This implementation strategy mirrors the approved implementation strategy for Version 4 of the Message Design Rules.

As with earlier versions, consideration needs to be given to the mechanism by which existing directory entries will be migrated to be compliant with the new rules. It should be noted that, on the implementation date, there is no intention to modify automatically existing directory entries to be compliant. Rather, this will be achieved over a time period via the Directory Maintenance Request (DMR) process. New directory entries would be expected to be compliant with the new rules as from the implementation date.
It should also be noted that no Data Maintenance Requests (DMR) will be issued for the sole technical purpose of applying these rules. It is expected that all DMR will be documented as a result of a valid business need.

Those users that wish to use messages from a previous directory can continue to do so since there will be no impact on earlier directories. Business decisions will determine within a user environment whether there is a requirement to move from an earlier directory version to a later directory version. The version/ release mechanism will of course indicate which directory set is being used.

This paper recommends an implementation strategy for the progressive migration of the existing directory entries to new structures that are compliant with the new rules.
We recommend that any modification to an existing entry would need to conform to the new rules. Where the modification makes use of an existing structure that is not compliant, a new structure(s) would need to be designed to replace the existing structure. The existing structure would then be marked for deletion.

2. Implementation Strategy

This strategy takes the approach where any DMR must comply with the new rules and must use the ‘mark for deletion’ procedure for controlling changes to existing structures.

2.1 DMRs for simple data elements and codes

All DMRs either updating existing, or providing new, simple data elements and codes must comply with the new rules. Also, a code value DMR for an existing data element shall result in the data element being checked for compliance (and amended accordingly) with the new rules (e.g. for naming and defining requirements).
Note: Changes in data element names that may lead to some of the codes in the data element ‘misfitting’. There is NO intention to move the codes to other data elements. In these instances, a degree of pragmatism should be applied.

2.2 DMRs updating existing composite data elements or segments

A DMR requesting an addition of an existing or new data element (stand-alone or composite) to an existing segment shall be subject to the new rules. If it is not compliant with the new rules then it shall be rejected. Where the target segment is not compliant with the new rules, it is strongly recommended that consideration is given to aligning it to the new rules. This may also mean that the existing segment is ‘marked for deletion’ and one or more new segments are designed in accordance with the new rules to replace the existing segment.

A DMR requesting an addition of an existing or new simple data element to an existing composite data element shall be subject to the new rules. If it is not compliant with the new rules then it shall

be rejected. Where the target composite data element is not compliant with the new rules, it is required it is aligned to the new rules. This may also mean that the existing composite data element is marked for deletion and one or more new composite data elements are designed in accordance with the new rules to replace the existing composite data element.

A DMR requesting an increase in the repetition factor of a data element within a segment will be subject to the new rules. Where the target segment is not compliant with the new rules, it is strongly recommended that consideration is given to aligning it to the new rules. This may also mean that the existing segment is 'marked for deletion' and one or more new segments are designed in accordance with the new rules to replace the existing segment.

For a DMR adding a dependency note to an existing segment or composite, the segment or composite to which it is being applied must comply with the new rules. If any segment in which the composite exists is also not compliant, it is strongly recommended that consideration is given to aligning it to the new rules. This may also mean that the existing segment is 'marked for deletion' and one or more new segments are designed in accordance with the new rules to replace the existing segment.

2.3 DMRs for new composite data elements or segments

For DMRs requesting new segments that use existing data elements (composite and/or stand-alone), these existing data elements will be required to be compliant with the new rules. In these instances, where an existing composite data element is not compliant, the composite data element in question shall be 'marked for deletion' and one or more new composite data elements created that conform to the new rules. As a result of this action, any other existing segment using the non-compliant composite data element would need to be changed within a period of three years to use the new composite data element(s). In which case, the segment(s) in question will also need to be compliant in all aspects to the new rules.

For DMRs requesting new composite data elements that use existing simple data elements, these existing data elements will be required to be compliant with the new rules.

The name, definition and length of a simple data element may be made compliant without marking it for deletion (insofar as conceptually, the modified simple data element does not represent something different to the original).

3. Implementation Timetable

Once approved, the Message Design Rules Group recommend that Revision 5 be adopted and a new Technical Assessment Checklist (TAC) applied to all Data Maintenance Requests (DMRs) at the start of the cycle following the EWG at which the rules were approved.

This means, that any DMR reviewed that has a Entry Point Log Date prior to the date of that EWG will be assessed according to the previous rules and TAC. Any DMR that has an Entry Point Log date after the date of that EWG will be assessed according to the new rules and TAC. This assessment applies for all of the following:

- the local entry point Technical Assessment Group reviewing local DMRs,
- Technical Assessment Groups reviewing non-local DMRs, and
- TASWG reviewing disputed DMRs.

Informative Annex A – Implementation Implications

This matrix describes for each type of DMR raised by a message designer what additional DMRs are required to be raised by the submitter. Any additional DMRs that are raised by the submitter as dictated in the “Must Do” column are not subject to these requirements.

	DMR	Must Do	Recommend To	Comment
1.	New Code for existing data element	Data element name and definition must comply to the new rules. If not, a DMR must be raised to correct the data element.	None	
2.	Change Existing Code name / description	Data element name and definition must comply to the new rules. If not, a DMR must be raised to correct the data element.	None	
3.	Mark a code / data element / composite / segment for deletion	Nothing required.		
4.	New data element	New data element must comply with rules.	None	
5.	Change an existing data element	If existing data element does not comply to the new data element rules, DMR must include the request to change the name and definition to comply.	If the new name of the data element means that the name of the composite should be changed to comply with the new naming rules, a DMR should be raised to change the name of the composite.	
6.	New Composite	The new composite must comply to the rules. All elements in the composite must comply to the data element rules. If not, DMRs must be raised to correct the names and definitions of the existing data elements in the composite that do not comply.	None	

	DMR	Must Do	Recommend To	Comment
7.	Change to existing composite	The resultant composite and all of its component data elements must comply to the new rules. If not, the DMR must be amended to correct the structure to comply with the new rules. The listed segment that contains that composite must be amended to contain the new composite, plus any other standalone data elements that may have been extracted from the composite. Adding dependency notes to the component data elements requires that DMRs be raised to make the composite comply with the rules.	Any segments that contain the existing composite should have DMRs raised to make the segment compliant. If this requires changes to other composites to make them compliant, any segments that contain these other composites also need to be made compliant	
8.	Request for new segment	New segment must comply with the new rules. If there are any existing data elements / composites in the new segment that don't comply, DMRs must be raised to change the elements to comply. Any segments that contain the non-compliant composites must be changed to have the new composite. All of these change requests will be within a single DMR in order that they are processed as a logical block.	Any other composites in the affected segments also have DMRs raised to change them to comply. Any segments that contain these composites also need DMRs raised to make them comply.	An analysis of the directories (D.97B) has found that that the worse possible case of this cascade will affect three segments.

	DMR	Must Do	Recommend To	Comment
9.	Change to existing segment	The data element (simple or composite) being added must be compliant. If not, a DMR must be raised to fix the data element to make it comply. Changing the number of repeats of the data element requires no change to the data element or segment. Adding dependency notes to the data element requires that DMRs be raised to make the data element compliant with the rules.	The target segment should be changed to comply to the new rules. If a composite is changed that is in other segments, then these segments should also be changed to comply.	An analysis of the directories (D.97B) has found that the worse possible case of this cascade will affect three segments.
10.	Change to an existing message	The resultant message must comply with the new rules	If the change is the addition of a existing segment, it is recommended that the segment be amended to comply with the new rules.	