

UNECE
UN / CEFAC

Executive Guide

**Streamlining
Formalities and
Documentary
Requirements**

Introduction

Streamlining formalities and documentary procedures allows governments, governmental agencies and business communities to take advantage of elimination of redundant data and duplication of information. This process entails a regular review of domestic and cross border trade documents. The review ensures that (i) the regulatory and official requirements and the business needs of the trading community are fully considered in an open, transparent and

5 billion trade and transport documents are issued annually

inclusive way; (ii) all the data requested is justified by a regulation or a specific business need – the legislative framework should also be reviewed regularly to correspond to actual

business practices; (iii) the information requested is still pertinent and up-to-date; and (iv) the data requested cannot be inferred from any other sources.

The review of all the documents used in domestic and international trade should be conducted on a regular basis. For ease of conducting this review, the documents should be divided into specific functional groups, for instance, Commercial, Transport, Financial (including international payments) and Official.

Application

In recent years, trade has grown very rapidly due to decreased trade barriers, transportation costs and advancements in information and communication technology. These increased flows of trade put a lot of pressure on administrative

Total US international trade documentation annually consumes more than one billion man hours, equal to 600 thousand work years

and customs agencies managing this traffic and businesses trying to comply with numerous trade requirements.

The manual on streamlining formalities and trade procedures aims to provide a set of strategies and tools to assist countries to identify the redundant and duplicative information and to apply

data harmonisation and standardisation tools and techniques to simplify and eliminate these formalities.

Benefits

Streamlining trade formalities and documentary procedures brings numerous benefits to governments, governmental agencies, and business communities.

Australia: 22 Agencies collect the name of the exporter on 118 different forms .described in 61 different way

Elimination of redundant data and duplication of information enables the authorities to use more efficiently the scarce resources for combating illegal trade, enhance the risk management techniques and official controls and therefore induce traders' compliance and secure governmental revenues. Likewise,

simplified, consistent and predictable information requirements will benefit business communities and make it easier for them to meet legal, regulatory, and administrative requirements through a reduced time, effort and financial resources, therefore making them more competitive in international markets. Finally, reduced costs for producers will create benefits for consumer through lower prices.

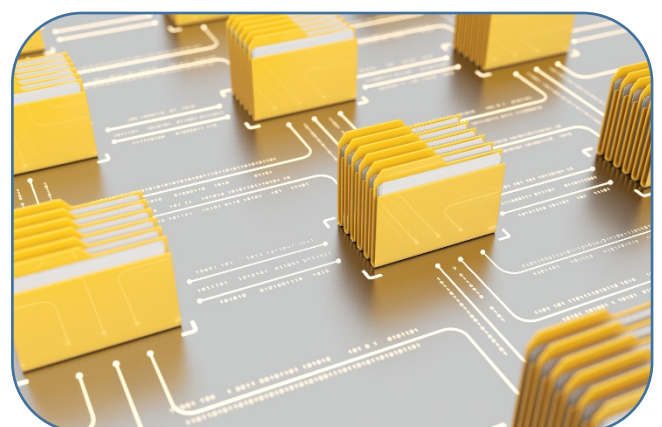
More information

UNECE Recommendation 1 UN Layout Key for Trade Documents,

http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/trade/Publications/ECE_TRADE_432E_C_F-Rec1.pdf

UNECE Recommendation 14 Authentication of Trade Documents,

http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/cefact/recommendations/rec14/ECE_TRADE_C_CEFAC T_2014_6E_Rec14.pdf



What is UN/CEFACT?

UN/CEFACT, the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business, supports activities dedicated to improving the ability of business, trade and administrative organizations, from developed, developing and transition economies, to **exchange products and relevant services effectively**. Its principal focus is on facilitating national and international transactions, through **the simplification and harmonization of processes, procedures and information flows**, and so contributing to the growth of global commerce.

UN/CEFACT has a global mandate. Participation in the UN/CEFACT Forum is open to all. There are 1000 experts from every region in the world.

Within the framework of the United Nations Economic and Social Council, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) serves as the focal point for **trade facilitation recommendations and electronic business standards**, covering both commercial and government business processes that can foster growth in international trade and related services. In this context UN/CEFACT was established, as a subsidiary, intergovernmental body of the UNECE.

Participation in the development of UN/CEFACT standards and recommendations is free of charge.

If you are interested in joining us, you should register at <https://uncefact.unece.org/display/uncefactpublic/UNCEFACT+Expert+Registration>

All resulting deliverables are available online free of charge at <http://www.unece.org/cefact>

For more information:
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See also: <http://tfig.unece.org/>

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