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Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT)

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Item 10 of the provisional agenda

**RECOMMENDATION No. 19**

**(second edition)**

**CODES FOR MODES OF TRANSPORT**

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Submitted by the Codes Working Group (CDWG) \*

This revised recommendation is submitted to the Centre for approval.

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UNITED NATIONS  
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

## **CODES FOR MODES OF TRANSPORT**

This revised recommendation is submitted to the centre for approval.

RECOMMENDATION No. 19, *second edition, for approval*:  
United Nations Centre for the Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business

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Geneva, December 2000

## Recommendation No. 19

### *CODES FOR MODES OF TRANSPORT*

#### I. PREAMBLE

The United Nations through UN/CEFACT (United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business) supports activities dedicated to improving the ability of business, trade and administrative organisations, from developed, developing and transitional economies, to exchange products and relevant services effectively. Its principal focus is to facilitate international transactions, through the simplification and harmonization of procedures and information flows.<sup>1</sup>

Globalization of the marketplace is taking place rapidly, with companies sourcing components in one part of the world, assembling them in another part of the world and selling them in yet another. The trend towards transacting business through electronic means is leading to more physical goods flows with smaller and more frequent shipments of goods and commodities. This globalization of markets has resulted in the growing need for even more efficient and effective information flows. The solution to achieving effective information flows across international markets lies in the use of common procedures and processes based on the use of globally agreed standards. Inherent in this approach is the need for precise mechanisms to define the data and for common coding systems to represent specific data items.

The identification of the mode of transport is frequently required in information exchange in trade and transport. This Recommendation as an international standard, provides a single coding system that will facilitate the common identification of the mode of transport among all parties concerned with the exchange of this information.

The UN/CEFACT work-program emphasises the need for developing recommendations, which simplify and harmonize the current practices and procedures used in international transactions. Within this context, the role of the UN/CEFACT Codes Working Group (CDWG) is to secure the quality, relevance and availability of code sets and code structures to support the objectives of UN/CEFACT, including managing the maintenance of UN/ECE Recommendations related to codes.

This second edition of Recommendation No. 19 supercedes and replaces the first edition (ECE/TRADE/138, March 1981).

#### II. RECOMMENDATION

At its ..... session in ....., UN/CEFACT agreed to adopt the following Recommendation. A list of the countries and organisations present at this session can be found in Annex 1.

*The Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business recommends that Governments and business do mutually promote and support the implementation of one single system for the coding and classification of the modes of transport towards a common approach to trade facilitation on a world wide level.*

*This implies:*

1. *For participants in international trade and transport:*
  - to accept and implement the codes for the modes of transport;
2. *For Governments, international organisations and national trade facilitation bodies:*
  - to accept and encourage the implementation of the codes for the modes of transport.

#### III. SCOPE

1. This Recommendation establishes a common code list for the identification of the modes of transport. It has particular relevance to transport organisations and providers, Customs and other authorities, statistical offices, forwarders, shippers, consignees and other parties concerned with transport

#### IV. FIELD OF APPLICATION

2. This Recommendation applies in cases where a coded representation is required to specify the mode of transport. It is intended for use by commercial, administrative and regulatory parties concerned with the transport of goods and/or persons at national, regional and international levels. The codes defined herein may be used in manual and/or automated systems such as those that support EDI and electronic business, for the exchange of information regarding the modes of transport.

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<sup>1</sup> From the mission statement of UN/CEFACT

## V. EXPLANATORY TEXT

### A. Definitions

3. The following definitions have been adopted for the purposes of this Recommendation:

**code:** A character string that represents a member of a set of values.

**code list:** The complete set of code values for a data item.

**data:** A re-interpretable representation of information in a formalised manner suitable for communication, interpretation or processing.

**document:** Recorded permanent data containing information.

**EDI (Electronic Data Interchange):** The electronic transfer from computer application to computer application of commercial or administrative transactions using an agreed standard to structure the transaction or message data.

**electronic business:** The process of transacting business electronically. This includes the sharing of unstructured or structured business information by any electronic means among suppliers, customers, governmental bodies, service providers and other parties in order to conduct and execute transactions in business, administrative and other activities.

**facilitation:** The implementation of measures leading to the simplification, standardisation and harmonization of the formalities, procedures, documents and operations inherent to international trade transactions.

**formality:** A set of requirements of an official, commercial or institutional nature.

**goods:** All materials received from a shipper.

**harmonization:** The alignment of national formalities, procedures, documents, information, and operations to acceptable international commercial norms, practices and recommendations.

**means of transport:** Particular aircraft, vehicle, vessel or other device used for the transport of goods or persons.

**mode of transport:** Method of transport used for the carriage of goods.

**multimodal transport:** The carriage of goods by at least two different modes of transport.

**procedure:** Steps to be followed in order to comply with a formality, including the timing, format and transmission method for the submission of required information.

**standardization:** The development of standards whose purpose is to align formalities, procedures, documents, information, and operations.

### B. Background

#### B 1. Mode of transport

4. Information on the mode and means of transport as used for the movement of goods and/or persons is required for many purposes. Furthermore this information is communicated in many ways such as paper documents or EDI.

5. This information may be needed for contractual reasons, for example where a sales contract stipulates a particular mode of transport. In many countries information on the mode of transport is also required for Customs and statistical purposes.

#### B 2. Facilitating information exchange

6. The application of information technology such as EDI and electronic business depends on accurate and well defined information.

7. In information exchange, the use of an unambiguous code to indicate a mode of transport is preferable to variable and possibly imprecise textual descriptions. Such descriptions in turn may lead to contractual misunderstandings.

8. Many processes such as the compilation of statistics and the analysis of transport operations require a method to uniquely identify modes of transport.

### C. Specific Considerations

9. Provision should be made that the code set for modes of transport annexed to this Recommendation is used whenever required, in combination with the code values for types of means of transport specified in Recommendation 28.

10. Users of this Recommendation are encouraged to use it in conjunction with other applicable UN Recommendations. These include:

- Recommendation 5 - Abbreviations of INCOTERMS,
- UN Recommendation 10 - Unique Identification Code Methodology - UNIC,
- UN Recommendation 11 - Documentary aspects of the international transport of dangerous goods.
- UN Recommendation 16 - UN/LOCODE - Code for Ports and Other Locations,
- UN Recommendation 18 - Facilitation Measures related to International Trade Procedures,

- UN Recommendation 21 - Codes for Types of Cargo, Packages and Packaging Materials,
- UN Recommendation 22 - Layout Key for Standard Consignment Instructions,
- UN Recommendation 23 - Freight Cost Code - FCC,
- UN Recommendation 24 - Trade and Transport Status Codes,
- UN Recommendation 28 - Codes for Types of Means of Transport.

#### VI. MAINTENANCE AND UPDATING

11. This Recommendation shall be maintained on behalf of UN/CEFACT by the UN/CEFACT Codes Working Group (CDWG).

12. Proposals for updating this Recommendation should be addressed to the Trade Facilitation Section, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland, or via e-mail to: [cefact@unece.org](mailto:cefact@unece.org).

13. Draft revisions to the body text and/or code list of this Recommendation shall be issued by the CDWG when required and shall be made available on the CDWG Web page under:  
<http://www.unece.org/cefact/>

14. Draft revisions shall be subject to a public comment period of at least two months. UN/CEFACT Heads of Delegation shall be notified of the availability of a draft revision and the period for comment. Following the conclusion of the comment period, the CDWG shall address all comments received. Depending on the comments received, the CDWG shall issue a new draft revision or shall prepare a final revision for approval.

15. Final revisions of the body text of this Recommendation shall be approved by the UN/CEFACT Plenary.

16. Final revisions of the code list of this Recommendation shall be approved by the CDWG Plenary or in the case where the body text has also been revised, by the UN/CEFACT Plenary.

#### VII. CODE LIST STRUCTURE AND PRESENTATION

17. The code list is annexed to this Recommendation, as follows:

Annex 2 Code list for modes of transport.

18. The code list is presented with the following columns:

##### Change indicator (CI)

a plus sign (+)	for an addition
a hash sign (#)	for changes to the code name
a vertical bar ( )	for changes to the code description
a letter X (X)	for marked for deletion in this edition (will not appear in the next edition)

##### Code value

1 character numeric code value comprising characters 0 to 9.

##### Code name

Code value name

##### Code description

Code value description

## **ANNEX 1**

### **COUNTRIES AND ORGANISATIONS IN ATTENDANCE**

Countries and organisations in attendance at the UN/CEFACT session where this recommendation was approved and those having indicated their support in writing to the UN/CEFACT secretariat.

## ANNEX 2 CODE LIST FOR MODES OF TRANSPORT

CI	Code	Name Description
#	0	<p>Transport mode not specified Transport mode has not been specified</p> <p>Notes:</p> <p>1) This code can be used when the mode is not known or when information on it is not available at the time of issuing the document concerned.</p>
	1	<p>Maritime transport Transport of goods and/or persons is by sea.</p>
	2	<p>Rail transport Transport of goods and/or persons is by rail.</p>
	3	<p>Road transport Transport of goods and/or persons is by road.</p>
	4	<p>Air transport Transport of goods and/or persons is by air.</p>
	5	<p>Mail Method to convey goods is by mail</p> <p>Notes:</p> <p>1) This code is provided for practical reasons, despite the fact that mail is not a genuine mode of transport. In many countries, the value of merchandise exported and imported by mail is considerable, but the exporter or importer concerned would be unable to state by which mode postal items had been conveyed.</p>
	6	<p>Multimodal transport Method to convey goods and/or persons is by multimodal transport.</p> <p>Notes:</p> <p>1) This code is provided for practical reasons, despite the fact that multimodal transport is not a genuine mode of transport. It can be used when goods are carried by at least two different modes from a place at which the goods are taken in charge by a transport operator to a place designated for delivery, on the basis of one transport contract. (Operations of pick-up and delivery of goods carried out in the performance of a single mode of transport, as defined in such a contract, shall not be considered as multimodal transport).</p>
	7	<p>Fixed transport installation Transport of item is via a fixed transport installation.</p> <p>Notes:</p> <p>1) This code applies to installations for continuous transport such as pipelines, ropeways and electric power lines.</p>
	8	<p>Inland water transport Transport of goods and/or persons is by inland water.</p>
#	9	<p>Transport mode not applicable The mode of transport is not applicable.</p>