

Completion of import and export declarations

Customs Information Paper (09) 68	
Who should read:	. JCCC Members, Freight Forwarders, Shipping Agents, Exporters, Importers and anyone involved in International Trade
What is it about:	Reminder of what should go where on import and export declarations
When effective:	Immediately
Extant until/expires:	When the Tariff is amended

1. Background / Introduction

The recent introduction of ECS (Export Control System) has highlighted some issues over the accuracy and understanding of data to be declared on CHIEF. We also need to remind some users of the correct input required in certain boxes. There is also a problem with movements to Special Territories (listed below), and the continental shelf, where there is conflict between country codes shown in the Tariff and those that appear in the relevant Commission Regulation ((EC) No 1833/2006). We are working on a solution to this problem. Finally, we are concerned to ensure that the data we collect for the purposes of trade statistics and safety and security (which is shared with Other Member States) is as accurate as it can be. We have taken this opportunity, therefore, to issue this omnibus CIP to bring all these issues together in one place.

2. Actions to be taken

The data rules have been organised in a table which appears below. The rules apply equally to imports and exports unless otherwise specified. The table is followed by some explanatory notes.

2.1

Box number	Data to be entered
1 -first sub-division	CO - this code must be used for trade between EC Member States and the Special Territories listed below and between the Special Territories themselves. We have evidence that code EX is often being used incorrectly in these circumstances.
15a – country of dispatch/export	We are experiencing problems with ECS movements to Special Territories and the Continental Shelf. The country codes used on CHIEF vary from those used on ECS, which

	follows the relevant EU Regulation. As there are valid business reasons for us to continue to use our “national” codes on CHIEF, we cannot simply change these to comply with EU law. We are working on a solution which will convert these codes between CHIEF and ECS. In the interim, the current country codes shown in the Tariff should continue to be used.
17a – country of destination	See above
34a – country of origin	See above
Affected Country Codes for Special Territories	
Code	Country
IC	Canary Islands
GG	Guernsey
JE	Jersey
GY	French Guiana
GP	Guadeloupe
RE	Reunion
MQ	Martinique
29 – Office of Exit	Where goods are being moved to one of the Special Territories above (or between two Special Territories), the export procedure should be used to open and close the ECS movement. The goods should then be moved using the transit procedure in accordance with the procedure detailed in CIP (09) 14.
31 – container number(s) & package number(s)	<p>Container numbers must be listed in full here, both for imports and exports. Where the number is not known at the time the declaration is made, ‘unknown’ must be entered and an amendment made as soon as it is known. An analysis of our Trade Statistics shows that this box is not being completed correctly.</p> <p>We are aware of problems exporters are having at Customs Offices of Exit elsewhere in the Community where the number of packages at goods item level does not tally with the actual number of packages per item OR where boxes 6 and 31 do not add up. This can happen wherever the number of goods items is more than the number of packages present in the consignment. CHIEF does not allow zero to be entered at goods item level (box 31). In order to limit inconvenience, we suggest a possible workaround below.</p>
33 – commodity code	<p>We are aware of problems over the declaration of personal effects. We are currently pursuing a solution in the relevant EU committees for the adoption of a specific commodity code exclusively for these goods. In the interim, these must continue to be declared as per the Tariff.</p> <p>If you wish to use a simplified procedure for indirect</p>

	movements on ECS you must declare a full commodity code. ECS will reject the declaration without it even if your authorisation allows you not to declare a commodity code where a full goods description is given. ECS was not designed to be used for simplified procedures.
35 and 38 – gross and net mass	We are aware that the weights of some large exports of bulk products are being accepted by CHIEF but then failing ECS validity checks. We are attempting to resolve this issue, which appears to be caused by the differing way that figures after the decimal point are processed. In the interim, we suggest that the bulk product is declared as two or more goods items to ensure that the quantity is small enough to pass through both systems.

2.2 - The Isle of Man is part of both the customs and the VAT/Fiscal territory of the Community. It does not, therefore, fulfil the definition of a Special Territory, so no declaration is required.

2.3 - Box 31 - As mentioned above, we have devised a work-around for number of packages at goods item level where there are more goods items than packages in the whole consignment, as follows. Enter a minimum of 1 against the first and each subsequent goods item. Where this is, strictly speaking, incorrect, include a brief explanation in the free text part of box 31 as to the relationship between total number of packages and total number of goods items. In this way, while the declared number of packages will exceed the actual number, Customs staff at the Office of Exit will be able to ascertain clearly why this is the case.

Box 6 (total packages) must always be completed with the correct overall number of packages covered by the declaration. CHIEF does not validate between box 6 and box 31.

2.4 - Countries of origin/dispatch/export/destination for the Continental Shelf. These will continue to be used until further notice.

Current code	Country
ZB	Belgium
ZD	Denmark
ZF	France
ZG	Germany
ZE	Ireland
ZH	Netherlands
ZN	Norway
ZU	United Kingdom

2.5 – United Nations Dangerous Goods (UNDG) codes - the Commission have confirmed that there is room for only one UNDG code per goods item. If you encounter circumstances that require you to declare two UNDG codes for an item

(e.g. where the packaging itself requires its own UNDG code), please let us know and we will publish a solution.

3. Contacts

Iain A. Ronald,

Exports and Data Elements Policy,

10th Floor Alexander House,

21 Victoria Avenue,

Southend-on-Sea.

SS99 1AA

Tel. (0)1702 366907

iain.ronald@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk

Issued on the **28/SEPT /2009** by the [JCCC Secretary](#), HMRC, Customs & International Directorate.

If you have a question about the content of this paper please use the details provided in the Contacts section. For general HMRC queries speak to the National Advice Service (NAS) on Tel 0845 010 9000.

For comprehensive guidance on international trade regulation, as well as advice on market information and business growth visit the [Business Link website](#).