

Mails Electronic Data Interchange and Customs Integration (MEDICI)

Executive Overview

1. Introduction

The Mails Electronic Data Interchange and Customs Integration Group (MEDICI) is a group of Postal Administrations committed to improving customs procedures for mail, resulting in reduced costs and fewer delays. To this end, members of the group capture and electronically exchange customs information.

2. Scope

MEDICI addresses the customs aspects of international mail, exchanged in accordance with the *Universal Postal Convention*, to which the requirements for UPU forms CN 22 or CN 23 apply. Members capture and exchange the data required for completion of these forms, together with such additional information as is required for the identification and, where required, interception of the postal items to which the data relates.

Participation in MEDICI is based on the principle of reciprocity. Each member is expected, to the extent that this is technically, operationally and economically feasible, to collect customs-related data on outgoing items and to supply these data electronically to the delivery Post concerned. In return, it can expect to receive corresponding data on incoming items.

Usage of the data, which includes the name and address information required for customs clearance purposes, is limited by articles RL 152 and RC 121 of the Letter Post and Parcel Post Regulations respectively, new provisions for which entered into force on 1 September 2007. Each MEDICI member is free to determine the appropriate operational interface and data exchange procedures with its own Customs Authorities¹.

3. Participants and Structure

The MEDICI group is managed at two levels:

Steering Committee

MEDICI is controlled by a Steering Committee, which sets overall policy, decides on any changes to the group's scope and objectives, defines procedures and deals with any issues which cannot be resolved at lower levels. The Steering Committee also formally approves membership requests and decides on transfers from associate to full member status.

The Steering Committee comprises senior managers nominated by the various members (one per member Post), each member being authorised to commit their organisation in all MEDICI-related respects. The Committee is chaired by IPC, which also acts as its secretary.

Project Managers' Advisory Group (PMAG)

Each member's participation is managed, on a day-to-day basis, by a member-appointed MEDICI project manager. Together, the member project managers constitute the project managers' advisory group (PMAG). This group, chaired by the IPC project manager:

- Monitors progress, based on plans submitted by each member;

¹ The PTC is specifying a standard interface with the UNCTAD ASYCUDA system, which is used in many countries, and plans to implement support for this interface in the IPS system.

- Reviews the scope and objectives of the group, advising the Steering Committee of the need for any change;
- Prepares advice to the MEDICI Steering Committee on policy decisions;
- Resolves technical and other issues between the members wherever possible.

Progress reviews are held monthly, normally by teleconference but using face-to-face meetings where necessary. At each review, consideration is given to any actual or anticipated deviations from development plans, and appropriate remedial actions agreed. Reference is made to the Steering Committee for formal review should any of the members consider this necessary.

There are two levels of MEDICI participation:

- Full member
 - Full members actively participate in PMAG and Steering Committee meetings with voting rights. To be a full member, a Post must actively collect and exchange customs data with the other participating Posts.
- Associate member
 - Associate membership is open to Posts that are not yet actively exchanging customs data with other members, but which aim to do so within a reasonable time. Associate members are kept aware of MEDICI developments and are provided, to the extent possible, with technical advice on their preparations for full membership. They are entitled to observer participation in PMAG meetings.

4. Costs

MEDICI participants are required to fund (or obtain their own funding for) their own activities. Based on current member experience, one or two people are required part time to participate in PMAG and Steering Committee meetings. Resources are also required to implement the changes necessary to enable data collection, transmission and reception, and to develop and deploy the operational and other procedures needed to make effective use of captured and received data. The requirement for such resources is dependent upon the volume of incoming and outgoing items which are subject to CN 22 and CN 23 procedures and on the timetable for implementation.

5. Benefits

Customs Administrations are attempting to modernize clearance processes and address heightened security mandates. MEDICI members assist in this process by providing information to their respective Customs Administrations electronically. Both Postal Administrations and Customs Administrations benefit from EDI customs messages with potential benefits including:

- Ability for Customs to conduct risk assessment, thereby permitting timely customs clearance and increasing customer satisfaction;
- Cost savings from more efficient methods of collecting duties/taxes;
- More efficient use of Customs/Postal resources;
- Possibility of using the same customs data for customs export reporting and import clearance, reducing overall data capture costs;
- Increased competitiveness.

6. Data exchange

The exchange of customs-related data on individual items is accomplished using a MEDICI-specified subset of UPU standard M33 ITMATT V1.0 messages. The implementation of support for this is a member responsibility. Effective participation also requires the use of PREDES V2.0 (UPU standard M14) messages to pre-advise despatches and of EMSEVT V1.0 (M17) messages to provide tracking information.

The Steering Committee monitors ongoing UPU standards developments and can modify the list of supported standards should this prove desirable.

7. Relationship with Other Groups or Agencies

Each MEDICI participant manages its own relationships with its local Customs and related authorities. Relationships with the WCO are managed through the UPU Customs Support Project Group (CSPG) and WCO-UPU Contact Committee. Members may refer policy issues to or provide information to other UPU Groups either collectively or individually.

8. Resolution of Issues

The Steering Committee is responsible for the resolution of any issue that is referred to it by PMAG or for which the Steering Committee itself considers that direction is required. Steering Committee members are encouraged to consider all legitimate views and objections, and endeavour to resolve them consensually. Where this is not possible, issues may be put to a vote for resolution.

9. Reference Documents

In its Secretariat role, IPC maintains copies of all reference documents and meeting minutes.

10. How to Join MEDICI

Though founded by IPC members and coordinated by IPC, MEDICI is open to participation by any Postal Administration which is able to meet the membership requirements. Prospective members are required to commit to:

- Participate in all MEDICI core activities;
- Use captured and supplied data only in accordance with the provisions of the updates to UPU articles RL 152 and RC 121 which entered into force on 1 September 2007;
- Involve their own Customs Authority, developing (or appropriately adapting) electronic exchange and operational procedures with that authority;
- Develop, implement, deploy and operate, at their own cost, the new or modified systems required to support their participation.

The Steering Committee will consider all requests for participation². Those interested in joining the MEDICI Group should express their interest to IPC:

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² Prospective members may be invited to attend subsequent PMAG meetings or teleconferences prior to consideration of the application by the Steering Committee