



ICS User Representative Newsletter

20 May 2003

Number 5

In This Edition

I am including reports on the Release 1 Trial, progress on the testing of Release 2 (Exports) and updates on Release 3 Imports and PKI. In addition, I will be advising training dates for the joint ACS/CBFCA sessions on "Creating the Essential Link to Customs".

Release 1 Trial

Well, the ICS Release 1 Trial between Customs and DHL has been run and won. The following is a report on the trial extracted from the ACS CMR Website:

high volume low value reporters

This phase of CMR commenced on 3 March 2003. It will only impact air express couriers and their software providers.

Trial of the Customs Integrated Cargo System

On 11 April the trial of Customs new Integrated Cargo System and Customs Connect Facility was concluded. The trial, operating in partnership with DHL Worldwide Express commenced on 3 March with the purpose of ensuring that Customs new Integrated Cargo System met stakeholder expectations before being made widely available to other external users of the systems.

Although technical difficulties were experienced in the early stages of the trial, the end outcome was positive with most trial expectations met.

The direct connection to Customs used by DHL was tested successfully, as was the SEDI product that met expectations and exceeded processing timing targets. The Customs Connect Facility passed error and status messages back to DHL consistently and accurately and passed messages to the Integrated Cargo System which were also processed consistently and accurately.

Availability of the CCF and ICS was high but did not meet target standards which were based on Customs current standards. Customs will be working on improving availability prior to the next industry testing phase to commence in the first week of June.

Read the Evaluation Report of this trial '[Customs Connect Facility and Integrated Cargo System Industry Trial of System Functionality](#)'

Send any questions about ICS infrastructure by e-mail to cmr@customs.gov.au

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Release 2 (Exports)

Release 2 has been in a testing phase since late February this year. Customs reports that the test phase has been completed successfully in the last week, one day ahead of schedule.

While there are several outstanding issues that need to be resolved, the overall advice from the Customs team is that it is well on track to meet the December implementation date. This is exciting, encouraging news indeed.

How do I Prepare for Exports?

There are several steps that industry must take in preparation for the cutover to the new Exports system in November.

- 1) Ensure in-house or third party software developers are ready to commence testing from mid June this year. All this takes is a phone call to satisfy yourself your developer is making the appropriate preparations. Customs is in the process of developing test plans for Release 2 that will be available to industry for use in the test phase
- 2) Have appropriate staff attend workshops on Digital Certificates and Client Registration. These sessions are open to all sectors of industry and are being run by Customs and the CBFCA. Information provided at these sessions will provide direction for the questions posed step 3 below. Dates and content for the sessions can be found here:
http://www.cbca.org.au/cbca_site/site/page.asp?flash=ok
- 3) Obtain your Digital Certificates from Verisign. Currently, Verisign is the only Certification Authority authorized to provide Digital Certificates (DCs) for use with the ICS. A detailed process must be followed to obtain your DCs. Several critical decisions need to be made in your company such as **who** will be the 'Authorising Officer', how many 'Authorising Officers' does your company need, **what type** of DCs does your company need and most importantly, **how many** DCs does your company need

Customs has tasked Verisign with the production of a guide to obtaining DCs. I hope this valuable tool will be available soon. In the meantime, you should register your interest with Verisign at the following site:

http://www.verisign.com.au/cgi-bin/form?id=gk_customs.

I am happy to field any questions you may have on DCs, or you can get a better understanding of the new DC world by visiting Verisign through their website at:

<http://www.verisign.com.au/gatekeeper/>. Also, see my Digital Certificate Update later in this newsletter

- 4) Later in the year, CBFCA and AFIF, in cooperation with Customs will be presenting ICS Exports Training sessions for industry. These courses will provide detailed information on the process changes introduced under CMR as well as familiarisation with the features of the new Customs Interactive facility that will be available for exporters. AFIF has announced dates already:
http://www.afif.asn.au/html/training/export_cmr.pdf

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Release 3a (Imports Cargo Reporting)

Advice from Customs is that the design of Imports Cargo Reporting is complete and the build has commenced. Implementation Guidelines for this component of Release 3 have been available for a while now and can be found on the CMR web site. Based on the positive Exports development experience industry should be able to test this component in about October this year.

Release 3b (Import Declarations)

The largest single component of the ICS is currently well into the design stage. Not much more to report on this topic other than to say that AQIS has established an impressive project infrastructure to support the introduction of the ICS, and industry can be confident that AQIS will be well prepared when Imports is introduced next year.

Digital Certificate (PKI) Update

In my last newsletter, in the Q&A on PKI, I advised, “The DC is not software per se in that it does not need to be “installed”. The DC is a file just like a Word document is a file. As such, the file is as portable as any word document could be.”

This is **not correct**. Digital Certificates (DCs) must be downloaded onto your computer through a specific process, and transferred between computers by using a software exporting and importing process....you cannot just copy or cut and paste these files. Sorry for any confusion. As I noted earlier, the more I learn about DCs the more concerned I become.

My concerns arise from the fact that the whole realm of obtaining and deploying DCs is far from simple. Here is an extract from the Verisign website on the role of an ‘Authorising Officer’

3.1.11.2 Functions of Authorised Officer

Once the Authorised Officer has been issued with an ABN-DSC he or she may act as the interface between the Organisation and the Verisign CA for all matters relating to the issue of ABN-DSCs to other Key Holders on behalf of the Organisation, including:

- (a) requesting additional ABN-DSCs as required for use by Key Holders on behalf of the Organisation; and
- (b) Verifying the identity of all persons for whom applications to hold ABN-DSCs on behalf of the Organisation are made; and
- (c) requesting the Revocation of Certificates on behalf of the Organisation.

Did you know, for example that the person(s) who are nominated as the ‘Authorising Officer’ **must** be licensed brokers in the case of a brokerage; that ‘requesting’ in the above extract means they must **personally** email Verisign with details of new and departing employees.

Large companies in more than one state must carefully consider who in their organisation will be nominated as an Authorised Officer, as employees in other states might not be known to the Authorised Officer, particularly in the case of new recruits. This might mean there is a need for an Authorised Officer in each state, remembering though that a backup

“there are a few other surprises with the introduction of Digital Certificates”

Authorised Officers need to be established in the case of leave/illness etc.

In addition, there are a few other surprises with the introduction of Digital Certificates. Essentially, Digital Certificates link a person's identify to their email address. Any change in the email address will result in the need to obtain a new Digital Certificate (including a new payment). This could occur due to:

- a person changing their name by deed poll or through marriage
- a company changing ISPs in which case everyone in the company who has a DC will require new ones

As I noted earlier, this is a complex area and decision makers in a company would do well to attend sessions being held by Customs and industry in all states.

The Last Word(s)

As always, I am happy to take on any questions, issues, problems and suggestions.

Copies of my past newsletters are available on the CBFA and AFIF websites.

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