



ICS User Representative Newsletter

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Number 9

"Customs should be applauded for pursuing the delivery and implementation of a robust cargo system"

In This Edition

Customs today announced that the ICS Exports release date will move from 1 December 2003 to 1 March 2004. A copy of the letter distributed by Customs is attached.

Customs should be applauded for pursuing the delivery and implementation of a robust cargo system, rather than attempting to install an incomplete product with a view to achieving a "target date".

The good news is that the import date shifts only slightly to the right, moving from June to July. The change of dates may have a significant effect on industry, particularly software developers. The planned six-month break between the exports and imports releases meant that industry had a reasonable period in which to become familiar and comfortable with the exports component, and allowing time for testing and training of imports. However, this period is now down to four months.

Customs Statement

"Changes to Cargo Management Re-engineering implementation schedule"

The purpose of this letter is to advise you of changes to the previously published Cargo Management Re-engineering (CMR) implementation schedule.

The introduction of the exports release of Customs new Integrated Cargo System (ICS) was scheduled for 1 December 2003. To ensure the first significant release of the system is as robust as possible and to minimise disruption to the trading community, the date of introduction has been postponed to 1 March 2004.

As you are aware, Customs CMR project will be implemented in a series of phases. These phases cater for the gradual introduction of legislative amendments and the ICS. As a part of the CMR project Customs is closely examining how best to assist industry prepare for and implement the ICS and associated legislative changes.

Over the past months representations have been received from industry on the timing of the exports release of the ICS, particularly in connection with the busy trading period in Australia and the Pacific region over December and January. Delays have also been experienced by Customs in the development of its complex new IT software. Acknowledging these competing demands, Customs has agreed that it is appropriate for the full introduction of the ICS export release to be moved.

The system will still be available to developers for export testing purposes for 6 months commencing from 18 August 2003.

Earlier consultation with industry showed that a two-week transition period prior to

cutover would be appropriate. Consequently the new system will now be available for reporting from Monday 16 February, with full cutover from the existing system (EXIT) to the new system required from Monday 1 March 2004.

In line with this adjustment, timing of later phases of the ICS and associated legislative changes is also to shift slightly. This includes the timing for the introduction of the import component of the ICS. Partial testing of imports functionality will commence by 1 December 2003. Full final cutover to the new system is to be deferred one month to maximise the remaining time for industry to prepare prior to the statutory deadline of 21 July 2004.

The dates for the phased implementation of the CMR project are as below. The precise dates for the imports cutover will be finalised after further consultation with industry.

Schedule for the implementation of CMR	
CMR Phase	Date
Export registration commencement	18 August 2003
Export test period commencement	18 August 2003
Import cargo reporting test period commencement	1 December 2003
Export transition period commencement	16 February 2004
Cutover from EXIT to the ICS	1 March 2004
Availability of ICS for special reporters (HVLV document reporters)	1 March 2004
Import declaration test period commencement	April 2004
Import registration commencement	April 2004
Cutover from Import systems to ICS	July 2004

Exact dates will be reported on Customs website www.customs.gov.au (follow the links to Cargo Management Re-engineering). I note to those developers that have not yet commenced testing with Customs that there is new information concerning registration for testing purposes on the CMR website that can be accessed through the Customs website.

Should you have any questions regarding these changes please direct these to Nicole Cottrell, Director Communication and Training Section, on (02) 6275 6111 or email nicole.cottrell@customs.gov.au".

Release 2 (Exports)

While the start date has shifted to March, testing will commence as per the revised schedule.

Dane Cupit (Director ICS Business Support) has confirmed that the Customs Connect Facility (CCF) and the Integrated Cargo System (ICS) will be made available from start of business Monday 18 August. From that date, Version 2 of the ICS which incorporates both HVLV and Exports functionality will be available in Industry Test.

"While the start date has shifted to March, testing will commence as per the revised schedule"

"All cargo reporting messages have now been released"

"There is an important update on this topic announced today"

I am informed that the joint ACS/CBFCA training sessions will continue with the current schedule despite the shift in implementation dates for the exports release. These sessions will provide all you need to know about exports and the transition from EXIT to the ICS.

Here is the link for more information: <http://www.cbca.org.au/>

Release 3a & 3b (Imports)

All release 3a (cargo reporting) messages have now been released. The Customs Software Developers Guide Release 3.1 is now available from the Customs website:

http://www.customs.gov.au/resources/WWW_Sites/cmr_sdg.zip

Digital Certificate (PKI) Update

Nicole Cottrell provides the following information on the availability of digital certificates: *"Customs and VeriSign are waiting for the National Office of Information Economy (NOIE) to verify the digital certificate documentation. Customs and VeriSign are finalising a service level agreement that is expected to be completed by the weeks end. Customs has agreed with Verisign that on completion of that negotiation VeriSign can open its website for enrolment"*.

Client Registration System

There is an important update on this topic announced today. Customs have developed an "Interim Client registration facility" that will be available early next week for those companies who report to Customs on behalf of other clients.

There is also a separate registration process available for registered software developers who are seeking to test their internally developed software with Customs. Details of this process are currently on the CMR website under the button titled software developers.

I have attached below a "Question and Answer" document provided to me today by Customs on this topic.

INTERIM CLIENT REGISTRATION FACILITY

ARE YOU A PERSON WHO WILL REPORT TO CUSTOMS ON BEHALF OF OTHER CLIENTS?

Introduction

Anyone who intends to electronically communicate with Customs will first need to register in the Integrated Cargo System (ICS). Where a service provider is reporting on behalf of another client, and that client requires a declaration to be submitted on their behalf, the service provider must register the client (unless the client has already registered or been registered by another

service provider).

The registration facility for the exports component of the ICS was expected to be available from August 2003. Due to a delay in the release of the ICS, the registration component is not yet available as part of the system.

In the meantime Customs has made available an Interim Client Registration Facility for service providers.

What is the Interim Client Registration Facility?

The Interim Client Registration Facility is an exact simulation of the actual ICS client registration module.

It is designed specifically for use by service providers to register their export declaration clients (that is, those clients that require a declaration to be submitted on their behalf). Where the client being registered is an ABN holder, Customs will use this number as the registration identifier. Where no ABN exists, Customs will use the date provided to generate a CCID, which will be published when the ICS production environment is made available to industry.

Who can use the Interim Client Registration Facility?

Any service provider who will report transactions on behalf of a client can use the facility.

When is the facility available?

From Monday 18 August, through the Customs website.

Do I have to use the facility?

No. You can wait until the ICS registration module is available

Do I need a digital certificate to use the facility?

No. You do not need a digital certificate to use the Interim Client Registration Facility. In future, registration will be undertaken through the ICS. A digital certificate purchased from a certification authority will be required at this time.

Do I need to register my business prior to completing the registration details of my clients?

No. You will not be able to register your business through this facility. Service providers must wait until the actual ICS registration facility is available.

Can I register my import declaration clients as well?

Not yet. You can only use this interim facility to register export declaration clients. Customs will advise industry how and when they can commence registering their import clients including suppliers in due course.

Do I need to register all of my declaration clients?

No. Customs clients who are ABN holders and have dealt with Customs, quoting their ABN on an export entry, on more than one occasion in the past financial year, will be registered in the ICS by Customs.

Service providers will only need to register clients that do not meet this criterion.

When can I find out which ABN clients will be registered by Customs?

The ABNs of clients that are to be registered by Customs will be made available in September. A list of ABNs will be posted on the CMR website.

What information do I need to provide to enable me to complete the registration record for my client?

When registering a client in the Interim Client Registration Facility the minimum information that will be required is:

- name (name of the person entering the details)
- organisation (organisation that the person works for)

For clients that are non-ABN holders:

- client type (ie. organisation or individual)
- individual - individual's name or
- organisation - organisation's name
- business address
- contact details (name and contact address)
- role - at least one must be selected from a list provided under 'Client Roles'

For clients that hold an ABN:

- ABN of the client

(The ICS will automatically check these details against the Australian Business Register(ABR), which is maintained by the Australian Taxation Office, when they are loaded into the ICS).

- contact details (name and contact address)
- role - at least one must be selected from a list provided under 'Client Roles'

Will the Interim Client Registration Facility issue the CCID number for non-ABN clients?

No. The facility will not issue CCID numbers. However, the facility will have similar checks to the ICS to ensure that duplicate records are not created.

When the ICS registration facility is available service providers will be able to search for the CCID of the client they registered in the interim facility.

The ICS will provide a search facility that will allow you to search for a client by registered name (the search criteria provides for 'exact match', 'contains' or 'starts with').

Who will 'own' (be associated with) the clients registration record if I use this facility?

The records will be owned (or associated with) Customs and the actual client. A request can be put to Customs at a later date for an association to be created between the client and the service provider. This will enable the service provider to make changes to the client registration record.

Can I access help in completing the registration records?

Yes. There is a facility built into the Interim Client Registration Facility. Simply place your cursor over the field where you need assistance and help will be provided.

How will I know when the actual ICS registration facility is available?

The date will be advised on the CMR website.

Where can I get further information?

You can call the CMR Information Line on 1800 022 267 or email cmr@customs.gov.au.

Note: This facility is not the ICS registration facility. A Customs Client Identifier (for those clients that do not have an ABN) will NOT be generated through this facility. Customs will, at a future date, generate a CCID where required, through the ICS.

Information you provide through this facility will only be used in connection with the ICS. The information may become available to any user of the ICS once it is loaded into that system.

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