# ICS2

**Release 3:
Technical Preparation**

Under the third release of the European Union's customs pre-arrival safety and security system – **Import Control System 2** – all goods transported on maritime and inland waterways, roads, and railways, to or through the EU[1], including postal and express consignments, will be subject to new requirements.

Affected Economic Operators (EOs) will have to send safety and security data to ICS2 through an Entry Summary Declaration (ENS) and will need to connect to the system to do so.

## Who is directly affected?



Carriers operating in maritime and inland waterways, road and rail



Freight forwarders



Ultimate consignees
(in maritime transport)



Postal operators



Express carriers

[1]  All EU Member States, as well as Norway, Switzerland, and Northern Ireland.

## What should you do first?

As an affected EO, you need to decide whether you want to develop your own in-house IT system or use the services of an IT Service Provider (ITSP) to send the ENS data to ICS2.

You will also need to make early arrangements with various parties in the supply chain for how you will file the ENS data. This depends on whether the supply chain parties agree to make the necessary commercial documentation data available to the carrier.

1. **If yes**, the carrier sends all the required data to ICS2 in the form of a complete ENS

2. **If not**, the carrier's customers must send the relevant partial ENS data to ICS2 themselves or arrange for it to be sent by another party in the supply chain (e.g., an EU-based consignee in maritime transport)

Regardless of who the technical Sender is (you or your ITSP), you (as Declarant or Representative) remain legally responsible for the accuracy, completeness, and timeliness of the data.

## How do you proceed with your technical preparation?

The party sending the ENS data (you or your ITSP) to ICS2 will have to do the following:

1. Ensure you have an **Economic Operators Registration and Identification (EORI)** number from one of the EU Member States' customs authorities.

   a. If the EO is both the Sender and the Declarant, they need only one EORI number, which can be used for both roles.

   b. If the EO works with an ITSP as Sender, then both need an EORI number to register a certificate and send ENS messages.

2. Contact the responsible national customs administration (which issued the EORI) and provide your **plan**[2] for carrying out self-conformance testing and starting your ICS2 operations.

3. Develop or update your **IT system** on the basis of the latest ICS2 common functional and technical system specifications (**CFSS** and **CTSS**).

4. Get the necessary digital certificates from the certificate authority in the **List of Trusted Lists (LOTL)** to authenticate your identity (applicable to the Sender only).
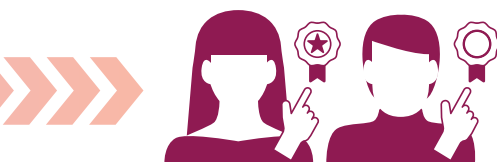
   a. **One certificate to seal the message (defined in the CTSS - interface control document). This:**

   › must be obtained from an **approved certificate authority** listed in the LOTL;

   › is owned by the Sender and linked to the Sender's EORI; and

   › should be registered in the national/central Unified User Management and Digital Signatures (UUM&DS) system. This system provides you with secure authorised access to the EU customs electronic systems.

   b. A **Transport Layer Security (TLS) certificate** to encrypt the https connection. This:

   › must be obtained from a trusted commercial certificate authority;

   › will be used at the transport layer (https) for identification purposes; and

   › doesn't need to be registered in the UUM&DS system.

5. Run the mandatory **self-conformance testing**.

[2] If an EO is based in Switzerland or Norway, it may register its EORI number in the EU Member State of choice. However, the EO needs to submit the plan to its own country's customs administration.

## What do you need to know about self-conformance testing?

› **Self-conformance testing is mandatory**. Its purpose is to confirm that an IT system to be used for sending and receiving technical messages to and from ICS2 is ready to carry out ICS2 operations.

› If you are already connected to ICS2 (i.e., you're a freight forwarder, express carrier, postal operator, etc., involved in air transport), you only need to test the new business processes for the third release.

› If you are connecting to ICS2 for the first time, you need to test all core processes.

› Self-conformance testing is different, depending on the roles and activities of the EOs.

## How do you run self-conformance testing?

› Check the procedure defined in the **Self-Conformance Testing Organisation document** and test design specifications for EO conformance testing scenarios and cases.

› Send a request to the **National Service Desk** to create users and roles in UUM&DS in the ICS2 conformance environment to access the system.

› Use the UUM&DS credentials (assigned by the National Service Desk) to connect to the **Shared Trader Portal**.

› Select your role and test scenarios and run the conformance testing. In case of questions, contact the National Service Desk.

**There are two options for connecting to run mandatory self-conformance tests.**

› For a system-to-system connection, set up the 2-way TLS connection, operating your Applicability Statement 4 (AS4) ICS2 access point.

› For a user-to-system connection, connect to the Shared Trader Interface – Specific Trader Portal (STI–STP).

## Notifications for Carriers

› Where a carrier uses an ITSP and opts to receive notifications from ICS2, then the carrier must register its EORI in the UUM&DS system. The carrier should also set up its access point through the STI-STP and configure its preferences accordingly.

## Dates to remember

AUG › SEP › OCT › NOV › JAN › FEB › MAR › APR › MAY

**1 July 2023**
Testing connectivity to the self-conformance testing environment

**11 December 2023**
Start of mandatory self-conformance testing

**3 June 2024**
ICS2 Release 3 go-live

› For additional information, or if you need assistance, contact the **National Service Desk** of the Member State where your EORI number is registered.

› Check the documentation (specifications, error codes, training materials, and FAQs) available in English on the **CIRCABC document sharing platform.**

**STAY ON TRACK FOR ICS2**
Find out more on the website: **ec.europa.eu/ICS2**

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