

**RECOMMENDATION OF THE CUSTOMS CO-OPERATION COUNCIL  
CONCERNING THE USE OF THE UN/EDIFACT  
RULES FOR ELECTRONIC DATA INTERCHANGE  
(26th JUNE 1990)<sup>1</sup>**

THE CUSTOMS CO-OPERATION COUNCIL,

DESIRING to facilitate the international exchange of data between Customs administrations and between Customs administrations and trade users,

CONSIDERING that it is desirable that an internationally agreed and universally applicable set of rules for the structuring of such data should be used in the electronic data interchange,

NOTING that the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UN/ECE) has developed a comprehensive set of standards, directories and guidelines for use in electronic interchanges known as UN/EDIFACT (Electronic Data Interchange for Administration, Commerce and Transport) and defined in the Annex to this Recommendation,

AWARE that the UN/EDIFACT standards, directories and guidelines can be used independently of the application area and that their widespread use in international trade will greatly facilitate the movement of cargo,

NOTING that certain elements of the UN/EDIFACT rules are in the nature of standards which must be strictly adhered to for successful data interchange to occur (e.g. the EDIFACT Syntax Rules),

FURTHER NOTING that certain other elements of the UN/EDIFACT rules are in the nature of guidelines, use of which is highly recommended (e.g. message design guidelines),

RECOMMENDS that Members of the Council and all members of the United Nations Organisation or its specialised agencies, and Customs or Economic Unions should apply the UN/EDIFACT rules as defined in the Annex to this Recommendation, and future updated versions of these rules for the preparation of electronic messages to be interchanged between Customs administrations and between Customs administrations and other trade users.

REQUESTS Members of the Council and all members of the United Nations Organisation or its specialised agencies, and Customs or Economic Unions which accept this Recommendation to notify the Secretary General of their acceptance, of the date from which they will apply the Recommendation, and of the conditions of its application. The Secretary General will transmit this information to the Customs administrations of all Members. He will also transmit it to any Customs administrations of non-Members or any Customs or Economic Unions which have accepted this Recommendation.

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<sup>1</sup> \* Note : This Recommendation supersedes the Council Recommendation of 21 June 1988 concerning the EDIFACT Syntax rules.

## DEFINITION OF UN/EDIFACT

UN/EDIFACT : United Nations rules for Electronic Data Interchange for Administration, Commerce and Transport. They comprise a set of internationally agreed standards, directories and guidelines for the electronic interchange of structured data, and in particular that related to trade in goods and services, between independent computerised information systems.

Recommended within the framework of the United Nations, the rules are approved and published by the UN/ECE in the United Nations Trade Data Interchange Directory (UNTDID) and are maintained under agreed procedures.

UNTDID includes :

- the EDIFACT Syntax rules (ISO 9735);
  - Message design guidelines;
  - Syntax implementation guidelines;
  - the EDIFACT DATA Elements Directory, EDED (a subset of UNTDED);
  - the EDIFACT Code List, EDCL;
  - the EDIFACT composite data elements Directory, EDCD;
  - the EDIFACT standard segments Directory, EDSD;
  - the EDIFACT UNSMs Directory, EDMD;
  - Uniform Rules of Conduct for the Interchange of Trade Data by Teletransmission (UNCID);
  - Explanatory material, as appropriate.
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