

**RECOMMENDATION^[1] OF THE CUSTOMS CO-OPERATION COUNCIL^[1],
CONCERNING A
UNIQUE CONSIGNMENT REFERENCE (UCR) FOR CUSTOMS PURPOSES
(26 June 2004)**

THE CUSTOMS CO-OPERATION COUNCIL

HAVING REGARD to the global nature of international trade

DESIRING to contribute to the security and facilitation of the international movement of goods through Customs and other administrative procedures and to reduce the burden associated with international trade procedures to a minimum

DESIRING to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of Customs Administrations in dealing with international trade transactions

RECOGNIZING the increasing importance for international Customs co-operation to ensure better Customs compliance and facilitation of legitimate trade

RECOGNIZING the efforts and investments made in particular by the private sector in modern logistics, inventory control, manufacturing and information systems

TAKING ACCOUNT of existing standards developed by the International Standards Organization (ISO) and the United Nations on unique numbering systems

RECOMMENDS that Members of the Council and members of the United Nations Organization or its specialized agencies, and Customs or Economic Unions, should adopt and implement a Unique Consignment Reference (UCR) in close consultation with their trade bodies and transportation industries which should be,

- used for all international trade transactions;
- applied at consignment level, with a consignment being identified as "the total number of items specified in the commercial contract between the supplier and the customer and transported in a single or in multiple shipments";
- used as an access key for audit, consignment tracking, information consolidation and reconciliation purposes;
- able to uniquely identify data related to individual international trade transactions between a supplier and a customer at both the national and international level for a sufficient period of time in accordance with national data retention rules;
- associated with other relevant trade or transport references to establish an origin to destination information and documentation trail for the individual consignment, in case that the UCR, as defined in the accompanying Guidelines is not already used as the transport reference;
- issued for all consignments by or on behalf of the party having initiated the international trade transaction;
- used in all relevant communications by all parties involved in the entire supply chain with regard to Customs and all other relevant regulatory agencies ;

^[1] Customs Co-operation Council (CCC) is the official name of the World Customs Organization

FURTHER RECOMMENDS that the Unique Consignment Reference as specified in this Recommendation and its accompanying Guidelines be structured in accordance with :

- ISO Standard 15459 Part 1 and Part 2 on unique identification (The ISO license plate) and future updated versions;

or where this standard is not yet applied

- other relevant standards or industry specific reference numbers not exceeding 35 alphanumeric characters enabling a unique origin-to-destination information and documentation trail of the entire international trade transaction.

REQUESTS Members of the Council and members of the United Nations Organization or its specialized agencies, and Customs or Economic Unions which accept this Recommendation to notify the Secretary General of the Council 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 of the Council. He will also transmit it to the Customs administrations of the members of the United Nations Organization or its specialized agencies and to Customs or Economic Unions that have accepted this Recommendation.

FURTHER REQUESTS the Secretary General to work with relevant international organizations such as the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe to ensure that this Recommendation is being reflected in their respective instruments and recommendations.

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^[*] Note : This Recommendation supersedes the Council Recommendation of 30 June 2001 concerning the Unique Consignment Reference Number.