2. The building blocks of the WCO Data Model

The term ‘WCO Data Model’ is a promotional name given to the overall product, which consists of 6 building blocks. Each of these building blocks will be in separate sections of this eHandbook as explained below:

- **WCO Data Model Version 3.0**
- **XML Schemas / messages Other readers, Guidelines etc.**
- **Message Implementation Guidelines**
- **International Code Standards**
- **Information Models**
- **Harmonized Maximum Data Sets**
- **Business Process Models**

Put simply, the WCO DM consists of a series of harmonized data sets which identify business requirements for each of its various procedures. For each required data element, the data sets provide a detailed set of information (metadata). The data sets have been aligned with the 2005 edition of the United Nations Trade Data Elements Directory (UN/TDED) to the greatest extent possible. Information about these Harmonized Data sets is available in Chapter 7 of this eHandbook and the data sets can be downloaded and viewed on the “Data Sets” section.

The Business Process Models have been established to analyze and optimize business processes. The various models and their functionality are explained in Chapter 8 of this eHandbook and can be explored in the “Business Process Models” section.
The Information Models organize the pieces of information and their inter-relationships. These inter-relationships get expressed in the electronic messages that flow between the Cross-Border Regulatory Agencies and Trade. These models are explained in Chapter 9 of this eHandbook and can be explored in the “Information Models” section.

The WCO Data Model provides Message Implementation Guidelines (MIGs) and sample messages for both XML and UN/EDIFACT to assist Customs Administrations in implementing the WCO DM at a national level. Information regarding these guidelines can be found in Chapter 10 of this eHandbook and in the “Electronic Messages” section.

Finally, International Codes are vital for common exchange of messages. Chapter 11 an introduction to the codes and the section on “Code Lists” provides links and information on common code standards, which are necessary to the electronic transmission of data.