

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General 26 March 2024

Original: English

Economic Commission for Europe

Administrative Committee for the TIR Convention, 1975

Technical Implementation Body

Seventh session Geneva, 4 June 2024 Item 5 (b) (ii) of the provisional agenda eTIR conceptual, functional and technical specifications: Version 4.4: New proposals

New amendment proposals

Note by the secretariat

I. Introduction and mandate

1. This document presents potential amendments to be included in the eTIR specifications, version 4.4, identified during the development of the eTIR international system, the eTIR National Application and conformance tests.

II. Possible amendment proposals

A. Sequence number of TIR operations

2. In version 4.3 of the eTIR specification, in each message allowing the exchange of information related to TIR operations, the "sequence number" of the TIR operation is a required data element, which, together with the Guarantee reference, uniquely identifies each TIR operation¹.

3. The sequence number of each TIR operation has to be calculated by customs on the basis of the declared itinerary and, possibly, taking into account relevant changes in the itinerary accepted under the fallback procedure.

4. As long as no changes to the itinerary are accepted under the fallback procedure, the calculation of the sequence number of a TIR operation is rather straightforward and can be implemented in customs Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) systems and the eTIR international system alike. However, as soon as a change in the itinerary affecting the number of TIR operations of a TIR transport is accepted under the fallback procedure,

¹ The TIR operation class also contains the "Registration number" attribute, which must be unique within the country issuing it. However, there are no rules in the eTIR specifications which would ensure the unicity of this number internationally. Consequently, at this stage, it cannot be used as identifier of the TIR operation.



none of the ICT systems is able to calculate the correct sequence number of a TIR operation before the change of itinerary is adequately registered in the relevant systems, and, therefore, customs officers, on the basis of the information available on the accompanying document, are required to manually amend the sequence number calculated by their systems.

5. Consequently, if a customs officer in one country indicates an incorrect sequence number a correct message from another customs administration would be refused if indicating the same sequence number.

6. At its sixth session, TIB considered two proposals by the secretariat (a) to remove the sequence numbers from TIR operations messages, or (b) to add a rule forbidding changes, addition or removal of loading and unloading places under the fallback procedure.

7. On the one hand, TIB noted that, with the first option, considering that nothing ensures that two countries don't use the same national references in the course of a TIR transport, further clarifications are required to ensure that TIR operations can be uniquely identified. It also noted that even if the sequence number of TIR operations would not have to be provided in eTIR messages, under, or after, a fallback procedure, systems or customs officers would still have to ensure that a change of the itinerary, which would lead to an increase of the number of TIR operations, would be possible considering the guarantee coverage, i.e. the maximum number of TIR operations. TIB also acknowledged that, under the fallback procedure, customs officers which would be requested to accept a change of the itinerary might need to know the maximum number of TIR operation of the used guarantee, an information currently absent from the accompanying document.

8. On the other hand, TIB noted that the second option would remove flexibility and possibly lead to issues in case of a refusal to start which would require the holder to return to a country that had to revert to the fallback procedure.

9. In conclusion, acknowledging that the identification of the sequence number of a TIR operation could lead to practical problems after an amendment of the itinerary under the fallback procedure, TIB mandated the secretariat to prepare a refined proposal for its next session.

10. The secretariat will present a refined proposal at the session.

B. Unicity of customs office code

11. Version 4.3 of the eTIR specifications relies on the global uniqueness of customs office identifiers, e.g. when checking a customs office in the ITDB by means of the I19 messages, the only parameter used to retrieve information about a customs office is the customs office identifier. However, currently, each customs administration is responsible for generating identifiers for its customs offices, thus ensuring the unicity of customs office identifiers only at national level. This problem does not apply to countries, such as the member States of the European Union, who have prefixed the customs office identifiers with a two-digits country code.

12. TIB might wish to consider and discuss the issue as well as possible solutions, inter alia, the following two solution identified by the secretariat:

- Defining (within the TIR Convention or the eTIR specifications) and applying an internationally standard format for TIR customs office identifications which would ensure the global unicity of TIR customs office identifiers, e.g. by prefixing nationally defined identifiers with the ISO 3166-1-alpha-2 country code.
- Amending eTIR messages to include a country code attribute, which will refer to the country in which the customs office is located, together with each customs office identifier, in order to create an internationally unique identifier by combining the national customs office identifier and the country code.

13. At its sixth session, TIB acknowledged that the unicity of customs office codes is a requirement for the proper functioning of the eTIR system and generally supported the idea of creating a standard format for the customs office codes which would ensure their unicity.

TIB further mandated the secretariat to request TIRExB to consider including rules regarding to the format of customs office codes used in the ITDB and agreed to revert to this issue at its next session, possibly, with additional information from the World Customs Organization (WCO) and an analysis of the implications of the required changes by the secretariat.

14. TIB might wish to be informed about the considerations of TIRExB on the matter and consider that, at this stage, WCO recommends that the customs office codes should be a concatenation of UN/LOCODE and a user code.

C. Use of the accompanying document in non-interconnected countries

15. At its sixth session, TIB noted that, at its ninety-eighth session (October 2023), the TIR Executive Board (TIRExB) welcomed an informal document transmitted by the Government of Türkiye, on a possible new Explanatory Note to Annex 11 introducing the usage of the eTIR accompanying document(s) en route or at destination in countries that have not yet interconnected with the eTIR international system.

16. TIB further noted that, at its ninety-nineth session (December 2023), TIRExB remained positive toward the idea underlying the Explanatory Note but also stressed that before it would be submitted to AC.2 various issues would have to be addressed, inter alia, that a clear procedure regarding this new usage of the accompanying document should be included in the eTIR specifications. To that end, the TIRExB suggested that TIB should be involved in preparing the required amendment which would clarify all the conceptual, functional and technical details that would allow to put in practice this new provision.

17. TIB mandated the secretariat to prepare, for its next session, a document further describing the procedure which allows for the usage of the accompanying document to continue the eTIR procedure in countries that are not yet interconnected with the eTIR international system.

18. In order to make progress on the matter, the secretariat, with the assistance of the Government of Türkiye, prepared the following clarification regarding the special procedure which could be possibly be later introduced in the eTIR specifications.

1. Procedural details

19. In order to enable the application of the special procedure, the following requirements shall be ensured:

(a) eTIR International System should contain an updated list of countries interconnected and non-interconnected to the eTIR International System. This list will be used by the eTIR International System to check if this special procedure shall be activated.

(b) Upon registration of the declaration data (I7), if the itinerary contains countries non-interconnected with the eTIR International System, the eTIR International System should calculate the number of TIR operations which will take place in non-interconnected countries (including any TIR operation resulting from a partial unloading) and return this number to the country of departure as part of the "I8 – Record Declaration Data Results" message. This calculation can be done on the basis of the declared itinerary, which lists all customs offices of departure, destination and en route.

(c) On the basis of the above calculation, the customs office of departure will print (or generate) two copies of the accompanying document for each TIR operations in a noninterconnected country, as well as the standard copy for the holder. A slightly amended accompanying document allowing for this special procedure is presented in Annex I. If the customs office of departure is not in position to print the document, the holder will print all generated copies of the companying document.

(d) The customs office of departure will date, stamp and sign box 17 of each copy of the accompanying document.

(e) Each customs office involved in the transport (including those of interconnected countries) will be date, stamp and sign the "FOR FALLBACK

PROCEDURE" section of the holder's copy of the accompanying document. Unless the actual fallback procedure has to be used, if the final country along the itinerary (country of destination) is interconnected, the customs offices of this country will not need to sign and stamp the accompanying document, because the standard eTIR procedure can resume.

(f) While customs offices of entry, exit or intermediate destination of interconnected countries must date, stamp and sign the holder's copy of the accompanying document, shall no retain any of the copies intended for the non-interconnected countries. They can also check the holder's copy to obtain information related to TIR operation in non-interconnected counties, if any. In the course of the special procedure, the holder's copy of the accompanying document fulfils the same function as the counterfoils of the TIR Carnets.

(g) When the eTIR procedure requires to reprint the accompanying document (e.g. after a change of seals), the customs offices en route or of intermediate destination in interconnected countries are only required to print (or generate) a new copy for the holder and attach it to the previous one. They shall however manually amend the copies for the non-interconnected customs offices. This ensures that non-interconnected countries will still be in a position to see the date, stamp and signature of the customs office of departure applied on the proposed box 17 in the revised layout of the accompanying document. In other words, only the customs offices of departure (initial or intermediate) should print (or generate) the copies of the accompanying documents for non-interconnected customs offices.

(h) In non-interconnected countries, each customs office shall date, stamp and sign the holder's copy of the accompanying document and retain one copy the accompanying document for each TIR operation it will start or terminate, which they shall also date, stamp and sign, in case those documents would end up being used for a claims procedure. Therefore, the number of copies that need to be processed depends on the role of the customs office, as well as the situations described in the paragraphs regarding any partial unloading. In summary, the number of copies retained by the customs offices of non-interconnected countries is similar to the vouchers taken off during the paper-based TIR procedure (i.e., offices of entry, exit and final destination retain one copy, while offices of intermediate destination retain two copies). Sample scenarios in Annex II further clarify this requirement.

(i) No customs office of departure shall be situated in a non-interconnected country and non-interconnected countries shall not be allowed to accept any amendment to the declaration since non-interconnected countries do not have the means to transmit any amendment to the declaration data to the eTIR International System (and by extension, to the interconnected countries).

(j) Throughout the special procedure, any customs office changing or applying new seals shall indicate the new seals in the relevant field in the box they will date, stamp and sign in the "FOR FALLBACK PROCEDURE" section of all remaining copies of the accompanying document.

(k) Throughout the special procedure, when customs prescribe a different customs office of exit, the change shall be indicated in all the remaining copies of the accompanying document by striking the existing information and entering the new information by hand. In non-interconnected countries, the prescribed customs office of exit shall be on the border as the customs office of exit declared in the itinerary.

(1) For accidents/incidents, the certified report on the verso side of the accompanying document should continue to be used.

(m) If a holder wishes to make a partial loading in a non-interconnected country, the holder should either use the paper-based TIR procedure for the entire transport, or put the goods under the eTIR procedure and declare the intermediate customs office of departure in the non-interconnected country as the final customs office of destination of eTIR procedure, and start a new transport with a paper TIR Carnet.

(n) Partial unloading in a non-interconnected country declared at and recorded by the customs office of departure of an interconnected country will be reflected on the accompanying document. The customs office of partial unloading (intermediate destination) shall strike out and sign the relevant consignment(s) by hand, similar to the existing procedure on the TIR Carnets, on the good manifest of all the remaining copies of the accompanying document, including on the copy they will retain.

2. Authenticity of the accompanying document

20. If there are doubts on the authenticity of the accompanying document or on the stamps and signatures, customs officers of non-interconnected countries can log in to the ITDB to access the declaration and TIR operation data registered in the eTIR international system as well as the information about the holder and the guarantee. However, with regard to the declaration data the information shared via the ITDB shall be limited to the information contained on accompanying document, i.e. not including optional information recorded by the country of departure. This information will allow non-interconnecting countries to ensure that the accompanying document is valid, the guarantee is in use and the transport has been duly processed by the previous customs offices along the itinerary.

21. It should also be noted that, checking the status of a TIR transport in the ITDB is not mandatory and it is proposed as an additional and optional control mechanism if there are doubts about a specific transport or its accompanying document. Processing the copies of the accompanying document by the customs offices is the only procedure required for the completion of the transport.

22. Customs authorities (and ITDB users) of non-interconnected countries should only be able to access the transport and operations data of a specific transport if they are declared as part of the itinerary, following the existing rule in the eTIR specifications.

3. Claims procedure

23. As the vouchers detached from a TIR Carnet, the copies of the accompanying document retained by the customs office of non-interconnected countries will provide the required evidence for the claim procedure.

4. Reservations

24. In the paper-based TIR procedure, reservations are indicated on box 27 of the voucher No. 2 of the TIR Carnet, and can also be indicated by placing an "R" on the item 5 on the counterfoils which accompanies the entire transport and therefore visible by customs authorities of other countries. With that in mind, the revised accompanying document in Annex I has been amended to allow the indication of any reservation along the transport. In parallel, if a reservation is made by a customs office terminating a TIR operation, the indication should be entered by the customs authorities on the holder's copy and on the copy that will be taken by the customs office terminating the TIR operation, in case the country of the customs office terminating the TIR operation is not interconnected. Interconnected countries should also enter the same information in the relevant eTIR message (i.e termination (I11) of TIR operation).

5. Refusal to Start TIR Operation in Non-Interconnected Countries

25. In case a customs office of entry of a non-interconnected country refuses to allow the vehicle to enter its territory, in line with the current version of the eTIR specifications, this customs office should stamp and retain two copies of the accompanying document, and indicate in all the remaining copies of the accompanying document the reason to refuse the entry of the transport on the "reservations" section. If this vehicle returns to a country that is also non-interconnected, the eTIR procedure should be ended since non-interconnected countries should not add new countries to the itinerary. Therefore, if the holder wishes to pursue the rest of the TIR transport, a new paper-based TIR Carnet should be used for the remaining journey.

6. Annex 10

26. The customs offices of final destination in non-interconnected countries shall continue to use the control mechanism described in the Annex 10 to the TIR Convention for transmitting termination data to the guarantee chain.

III. Considerations by TIB

27. TIB might wish to consider the above issues and, possibly, instruct the secretariat to present more concrete proposals at one of its next sessions.

Annex I

Amended layout of the accompanying document

(Changes are in bold)

Figure I.1

Accompanying document – Recto

	1. eTIR guarantee number and barcode						
2. Customs office(s) of departure	3.(a) Name of the international organization 3.(b) Name of the issuing association						
Itinerary and national references	4. Holder identification number						
	5. Country/Countries of departure 6. Country/Countries of destination						
7. Registration No(s). of road vehicle(s)	8. Documents attached to the manifest						
GOODS MANIFEST	1						
9. (a) Load compartment(s) or container(s) (b) Marks and Nos. of packages or articles							
FOR FALLBAC	K PROCEDURE						
Officer's signature and customs office date stamp: New seals: Reservations: Officer's signature and customs office date stamp: New seals: Reservations: Officer's signature and customs office date stamp: New seals: Reservations:	Officer's signature and customs office date stamp: New seals: Reservations: Officer's signature and customs office date stamp: New seals: Reservations:						
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Figure I.2 Accompanying document - Verso

1.	Customs office(s) of de	parture			2.	TIR	CA	RNE	Г		iiiii ii
					3.	Name	of the inte	ernational	organi	zation	
4.	Registration No(s). of r Identification No(s). of r				5.	Holder	(identifica	ation numb	ber, na	me, address a	nd country)
6.	The customs seal(s) is	/are iı	ntact	not intact	8.	Remar	ks				
7.	The load compartment	(s) or in	ntact	not intact							
9.	No goods appeared	to be missing		goods indicat				missing (N	1) or ha	ave been	
10.	(a) Load compartment	(s) or 11 N		type of packa			mn 12	12.	40	Demender (site	
	container(s) (b) Marks and Nos. of packages or article		escription o	f goods	-			M or D			e particulars of sing or destroyed
	 Date, place and circur Date, place and circur Measures taken to ename affixing of new sea 	able the TIR opera		tinue			descriptio	n			
	transfer of load (se						·				
16	5. If the goods have beer	transferred: desc Registration No		ad vehicle(s) Approved Yes N		ner(s) su	bstituted	No. of ce of app		of se	and particulars als affixed
	(a) vehicle	Identification N	0.							/-	
	(b) container									//////	
17.	. Authority which drew up	o this certified repo	ort		18.	Endorse	ment of i	next Custo	oms off	ice reached by	the TIR transpor
											\ /

Annex II

Sample scenarios

I. Sample Scenario 1

The itinerary of a TIR Transport is declared as follows:

- 1. Departure (Customs office A1- Country A Interconnected)
- 2. Exit (Customs office A2- Country A -Interconnected)
- 3. Entry (Customs office B1- Country B -Not interconnected)
- 4. Exit (Customs office B2- Country B -Not interconnected)
- 5. Entry (Customs office C1- Country C -Interconnected)
- 6. Destination (Customs office C2- Country C -Interconnected)

The number of TIR operations in non-interconnected countries is one.

Therefore, Customs office A1 (departure in country A) should print three copies in total (1x2 + 1), and date, stamp and sign box 17 of all three copies and give them to the holder.

Customs office A2 (exit of country A) should only date, stamp and sign in the "FOR FALLBACK PROCEDURE" section of the holder's copy and return it to the holder.

Customs office B1 (entry in country B) should date, stamp and sign in the "FOR FALLBACK PROCEDURE" section of all three copies and take a copy.

Customs office B2 (exit of country B) should date, stamp and sign in the "FOR FALLBACK PROCEDURE" section of both of the remaining copies, and take copy (for the termination of the TIR operation) and return the holder's copy to the holder.

Customs office C1 (entry in country C), as well as customs office C2 (destination in country C), if there is no other fallback situation present that requires the processing of the accompanying document, do not need to date, stamp and sign the "FOR FALLBACK PROCEDURE" section of the accompanying document, since there is no more non-interconnected countries left until to the end of the transport and the transport can be processed electronically.

II. Sample Scenario 2

The itinerary of a transport is as follows:

- 1. Departure (Customs office A1- Country A Interconnected)
- 2. Exit (Customs office A2- Country A Interconnected)
- 3. Entry (Customs office B1- Country B -Not interconnected)
- 4. Intermediate destination (Customs office B2- Country B -Not interconnected)
- 5. Exit (Customs office B3- Country B -Not interconnected)
- 6. Entry (Customs office C1- Country C -Not interconnected)
- 7. Destination (Customs office C1- Country C -Not interconnected)

The number of TIR operations in non-interconnected countries is three.

Therefore, Customs office A1 (departure in country A) should print seven copies in total (3x2 + 1), and date, stamp and sign in box 17 of all seven copies and give them to the holder.

Customs office A2 (exit of country A) should only date, stamp and sign in the "FOR FALLBACK PROCEDURE" section of the holder's copy and return it to the holder.

Customs office B1 (entry in country B) should date, stamp and sign the "FOR FALLBACK PROCEDURE" section of three copies, take one copy (for the start of the new TIR operation), while returning the other two (the holder's copy and the copy that will be presented to Customs office B2) back to the holder. If Customs office B1 removes the seals on the vehicle and applies new ones, the ID number of new seals should be manually entered on the "FOR FALLBACK PROCEDURE" section of all the remaining copies of the accompanying document.

Customs office B2 (intermediate destination in country B) should date, stamp and sign the "FOR FALLBACK PROCEDURE" section of four copies in total, taking two of them (the one that is dated, signed and stamped by Customs office B1 for the termination of the TIR operation, and another one for the start of the new TIR operation), returning the other two (the holder's copy and the copy that will be presented to the Customs office B3 customs office) back to the holder. Customs office B2 should manually strike the consignment, strike the seals number and manually enter the ID number of new seals on the "FOR FALLBACK PROCEDURE" section of all the remaining copies of the accompanying document.

Customs office B3 (exit of country B) should date, stamp and sign the "FOR FALLBACK PROCEDURE" section of two copies and take one of them (the copy that is signed and stamped by Customs office B2 the termination of the TIR operation), returning the other (the holder's copy) back to the holder.

Customs office C1 (entry in country C) should date, stamp and sign the "FOR FALLBACK PROCEDURE" section of the three remaining copies, keep one (for the start of the new TIR operation) and returning the other two remaining copies (the holder's copy and the copy that will be presented to the Customs office C2) back to the holder.

Customs office C2 (destination in country C) should date, stamp and sign the "FOR FALLBACK PROCEDURE" section of both of the copies remaining, taking one copy (for the termination of the TIR operation) and returning the other one (the holder's copy) back to the holder. Customs office C2 should then transmit the termination information using the international control system described in Annex 10 to the TIR Convention.

III. Sample Scenario 3

The itinerary of a transport is as follows:

- 1. Departure (Customs office A1- Country A Interconnected)
- 2. Exit (Customs office A2- Country A Interconnected)
- 3. Entry (Customs office B1- Country B Interconnected)
- 4. Intermediate departure (Customs office B2- Country B -Interconnected)
- 5. Exit (Customs office B3- Country B Interconnected)
- 6. Entry (Customs office C1- Country C -Not interconnected)
- 7. Destination (Customs office C2- Country C -Not interconnected)

The number of TIR operations in non-interconnected country is one.

Therefore, Customs office A1 (departure in country A) should print three copies in total (1x2 + 1), and date, stamp and sign in box 17 of all three copies and give them to the holder.

Customs office A2 (exit of country A) should only date, stamp and sign the "FOR FALLBACK PROCEDURE" section of the holder's copy and return it to the holder.

Customs office B1 (entry in country B) should only date, stamp and sign the "FOR FALLBACK PROCEDURE" section of the holder's copy and return it to the holder. In case the seals of the vehicles are taken off and new seals are applied (as a result of a physical examination), Customs office B1 should print three new accompanying documents, date, stamp and sign in box 17 of all of the documents and give them to the holder. The new holder's copy should be attached to the old holder's copy, while the old versions of the other

two copies that were printed for country C (not interconnected country) should be discarded and replaced with new ones.

Customs office B2 (intermediate departure in country B), after the receipt of the I8 message from the eTIR International System, should print three new accompanying documents. The new holder's copy should be attached to the old holder's copy, while the old versions of the other two copies that were printed for country C (not interconnected country) should be discarded and replaced with new ones. Customs office B2 customs office should date, stamp and sign box 17 of all three new copies and give them to the holder.

Customs office B3 (exit of country B) should only date, stamp and sign the "FOR FALLBACK PROCEDURE" section of the new holder's copy and return it to the holder.

Customs office C1 (entry in country C) should date, stamp and sign the "FOR FALLBACK PROCEDURE" section of all three new copies, taking one (for the start of the new TIR operation) and returning the other two remaining copies (the holder's copy and the copy for Customs office C2) back to the holder.

Customs office C2 (destination in country C) should date, stamp and sign the "FOR FALLBACK PROCEDURE" section of both of the copies remaining, taking one copy that is also signed and stamped by Customs office C1 (for the termination of the TIR operation) and returning the other one (holder's copy) back to the holder. Customs office C2 should then transmit the termination information using the international control system described in Annex 10 to the TIR Convention.