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ICS2 Transition from R2 to R3 strategy

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of the ICS2 Transition from R2 to R3 document is to present the functional and the operational implications of transition from one release to the next one. This document assesses the different options of granting a deployment window to the economic operators part of ICS2 R3 as well as the transition implications for the Member States and the economic operators (EO) already part of ICS2 R2.

The three releases of ICS2 with their different stakeholders require a transition strategy with regard to the readiness of the economic operators required to file their ENS filing for the first time in ICS2 and the ones that already filed their ENS filings in the previous release. The complexity is increased by the possibility for deployment window with regard to the multiple filings since not all parties obliged to file may be connected to the relevant ICS2 release at the same time. This can lead to the situation that for given cases only house level filings exist that are not initiating the full risk analysis sub-process until a carrier filing instantiates the ENS and the related house level filings are linked to it.

It should be ensured that the detailed information regarding the obligation for connection to ICS2 Release 3 from 3 June 2024 on is communicated timely. Therefore, it is assumed that a valid justification for beginning ICS2 operations later than 3 June 2024 within the deployment window for an EO would be the readiness of all involved parties in the specific business model (e.g. house filers and carriers, etc.) and the technical capacity of the service providers to deploy the software for all its clients at the same point in time. Consequently, legal guidance for the application of the deployment window could foresee that carriers should be given priority to house filers.

The subsequent chapters describe the identified practical scenarios affected by a different time of operational readiness of the parties obliged to file ENS particulars in a given transaction in ICS2 Release 3. The document focuses on the legal and organisational level regarding the deployment window for ICS2 Release 3 in order to avoid complex technical solutions for the deployment windows that also impose a high risk with regard to proper operational functionality of the ICS2.

1.2 Scope

This document is applicable to the economic operators for transition from ICS2 Release 2 to Release 3. The technical implications of the ICS2 Transition from R2 to R3 is not in scope of the current document.

1.3 Target Audience

This document is addressed to all parties involved in using and in the development of the system:

- Member States;
- Economic operators;
- DG TAXUD;
- SOFT-DEV (Development contractor).

1.4 Structure of this document

The present document contains the following chapters:

- **Chapter 1 – Introduction:** describes the purpose of the document;
- **Chapter 2 – Definitions and principles:** describes the principles and main definitions relevant to the transition strategy;
- **Chapter 3 – ICS2 transition from Release 2 to Release 3:** describes the implications of the transition from ICS2 R2 to R3 for each business model – rail, road, maritime and express;
- **Chapter 4 – Conclusions;**
- **Chapter 5 – Annexes:** lists additional explanatory information.

1.5 Reference Documents

Ref.	Title	Version
[R01]	UCC Work programme - COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION (EU) 2023/2879 of 15 December 2023 establishing the Work Programme relating to the development and deployment for the electronic systems provided for in the Union Customs Code	

Table 1: Reference documents

1.6 Abbreviations and Acronyms

For a better understanding of the present document, the following table provides a list of the principal abbreviations and acronyms used.

Abbreviation/Acronym	Definition
COFE	Customs Office of First Entry
CR	Common Repository
DG TAXUD	Directorate General for Taxation and Customs Union
EC	European Commission
ENS	Entry Summary Declaration
HTI	Harmonized Trader Interface
ICS2	Import Control System 2
MS	Member State
NES	National Entry System
R2	ICS2 Release 2
R3	ICS2 Release 3
STI	Shared Trader Interface

Table 2: Abbreviations and acronyms

1.8 Definitions

Term	Definition
Member States	These are the countries which are part of the ICS2 project (applying EU customs legislation in the context of entry formalities and ICS2) including the EU Member States, Switzerland, Norway and Northern Ireland (as part of the implementation of the Northern Ireland protocol).

Table 3: Definitions

2 DEFINITIONS AND PRINCIPLES

2.1 Deployment window

A deployment window is a period (several months) which can be granted to the economic operators in order for them to connect to the system and to become operationally ready avoiding a big bang. The deployment window can be granted to the EOs, which are already connected to ICS2 R2 system but have to implement additional functionalities (for example, the case of the express operators lodging F34 ENS filing type as of R3), and also to those, which are connecting to the system for the first time.

The deployment window allowed by the legislation for each ICS2 release is not applicable by default – it needs to be granted by the Member States in close coordination with the Commission. In order to facilitate trade operations the agreed deployment window needs to be aligned across all Member States per mode of transport and business model filing ENS and the sequence of the connection of the different parties. For example, all maritime carriers operating across Member States need to have the same deployment window irrespective in which country they file an ENS filing.

The maximum deployment window possible to be granted to the EOs for new functionalities from ICS2 R2 to R3 is from 3 June 2024 until 1 September 2025 as per UCC Work Programme [R01].

2.2 Principles

- The deployment window for the economic operators of either rail, road or maritime sector, authorized by the relevant National Authorities, needs to be preliminary coordinated between the Member States and the Commission. The deployment window is not applicable by default to the economic operators. There could be different deployment windows approved for each sector.
- The deployment windows need to be agreed and communicated to the economic operators early enough for proper planning, preparation and readiness.
- The agreed deployment window needs to be aligned across the business models and among the Member States and published in due time in order all impacted participants to be able to plan and implement the required technical solutions.
- ICS2 R3 functionality extends ICS2 R2 functionality from the perspective of new economic operators (new ENS filing types are added) with a common database behind. Consequently, there is no data migration envisaged between the two ICS2 releases. There are no new business processes added.
- A pre-requisite for the application of the current ICS2 Transition from R2 to R3 is the full understanding and awareness of the scope of ICS2 R2 and R3.
- Deployment windows are primarily concerned with the operational readiness and, in addition, with the technical connectivity constraints.
- No customized technical solutions will be implemented in ICS2 R2/R3 architecture, processes or information exchanges to facilitate ICS2 transition from R2 to R3.
- Entry formalities for the ENSs, which were lodged in ICS, will be finalised in ICS, irrespective of when the goods arrive at the Customs Office of First Entry.
- ICS is envisaged to be available for 200 days after the end of the ICS2 R3 deployment window (1 September 2025). However, the Member States can take a decision to decommission their national ICS application earlier in case there are no active ENS(s) available.
- The NES implementation on the Member State side is ready for ICS2 R3 as of R2.

3 ICS2 TRANSITION FROM RELEASE 2 TO RELEASE 3

3.1 Impact on economic operators already part of ICS2 Release 2

The economic operators already connected to ICS2 R2 are not impacted by the transition to R3 since there are no changes to the messages or any other functionalities.

3.2 Impact on operators that start filing Release 3 ENS filings

All cargo transported by maritime, rail and road mode of transport is currently covered by an ENS filed in ICS. Until the economic operators, transporting this cargo, connect to ICS2, they need to continue filing their ENSs to ICS.

3.2.1 Rail

The rail sector connects to ICS2 R3 with one complete ENS filing (F51) and a partial ENS filing (F41) for filing the receptacles for the postal consignments. Multiple filing of an ENS will also be introduced for the cargo transported by rail. Therefore, the deployment window for the rail mode of transport can be granted based on the type of filing the carriers and other supply chain actors concerned need to file.

In case of the **complete ENS filing (F51)** filed by the rail carrier, the deployment window can be granted until the end of this window foreseen in the UCC Work Programme [R01].

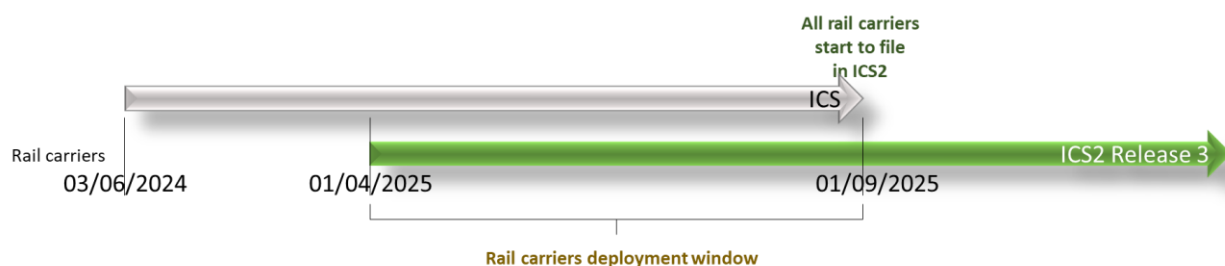


Figure 1 Rail carriers deployment window when complete ENS is filed

The postal operators are already filing F43 and F44 ENS filings for the **postal consignments transported by rail** (F43/F44 messages versions as of R2), which are expected to be complemented by F41 ENS filing by the rail carrier. Since the postal operators are already filing the ENS filings, the rail carrier can start their filing at any time from the launch of the ICS2 Release 3 until the end of the deployment window.

In case **multiple ENS filings** will be used for the cargo transported by rail, the supply chain actors need to connect to ICS2 and start filing in a sequence – first, the rail carrier needs to start filing their master level ENS and only after that party that files house level information (House level filer) needs to start filing. Until carrier starts filing partial ENS in ICS2, they need to continue filing a complete ENS. Multiple filing of the ENS for cargo transported by rail will be deployed at the end of the R3 deployment window. Thus, there are no defined dates when the supply chain actors need to start filing. There will be no deployment window for multiple filing for rail. It is responsibility of the supply chain actors to arrange between themselves correct filing of the ENS.

3.2.2 Road

The road sector connects to ICS2 R3 with one complete ENS filing (F50) and a partial ENS filing (F40) for filing the receptacles for the postal consignments.

In case of the **complete ENS filing (F50)** filed by the road carrier, the deployment window can be granted until the end of this window foreseen in the UCC Work Programme [R01].

The postal operators are already filing F43 and F44 ENS filings for the **postal consignments transported by road** (F43/F44 messages versions as of R2), which are expected to be complemented by F40 ENS filing by the road carrier. Since the postal operators are already filing the ENS filings, the road carrier can start their filing at any time from the launch of the ICS2 Release 3 until the end of the deployment window.

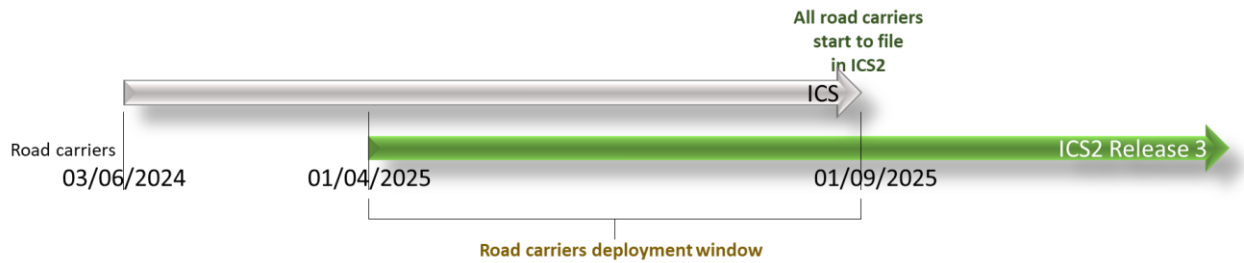


Figure 2 Road carrier deployment window

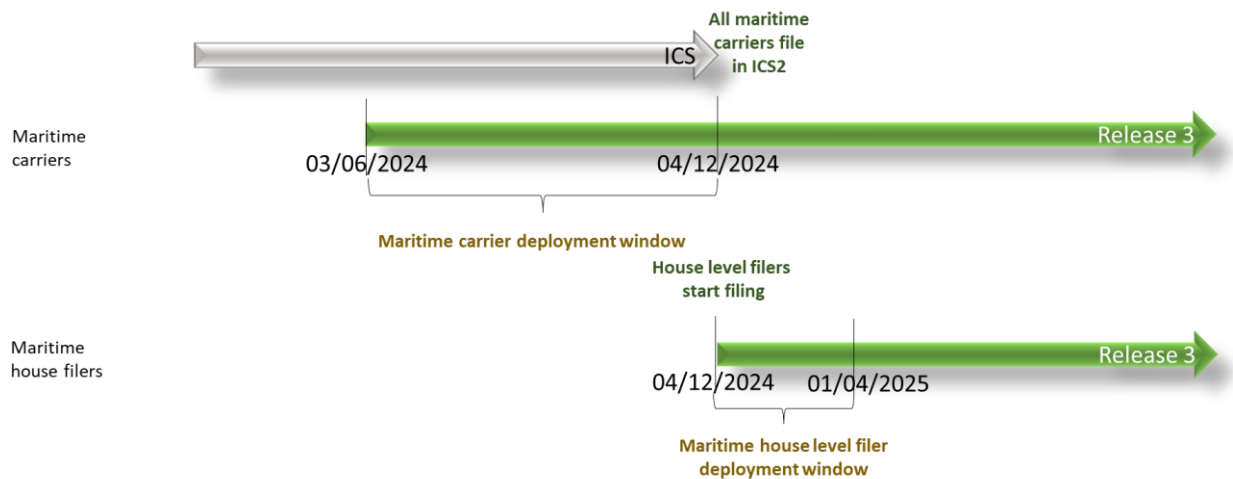
3.2.3 Maritime

The maritime sector connects to ICS2 R3 with the possibility of lodging complete ENS filings (F10, F11) and multiple ENS filings lodged by the carriers (filing ENS filing types F12, F13 or F45) and other supply chain actors (house level filers) (filing ENS filing types F14, F15, F16 or F17). In case there are deployment windows granted to both types of parties, then the two deployment windows should be synchronized and the carriers need to be connected first.

In case of the **complete ENS filing (F10, F11)** filed by the carrier, the deployment window can be granted until the end of this window foreseen in the UCC Work Programme [R01] – 4 December 2024.

In case the **multiple ENS filing** option is used, the carriers will connect to ICS2 first and start filing their master level ENS filings (F12, F13, F45). The deployment window can be granted to maritime carriers from 3 June 2024 until 4 December 2024. Once the carriers are connected to ICS2 the House level filers can start connecting and filing. The deployment window foreseen for the maritime House level filers is from 4 December 2024 until 1 April 2025. Within this period of time House level filers must be connected to ICS2 and file ENS there.

The postal operators are already filing F43 and F44 ENS filings for the **postal consignments transported by the maritime carriers** (F43/F44 messages versions as of R2), which are expected to be complemented by F45 ENS filing by the maritime carrier.



*House level filer = freight forwarder, consolidator, importer, etc.

Figure 3 Maritime carrier and house filer deployment windows

3.2.4 Express consignments on road

The express carriers need to start filing ENSs for the consignments transported via road. The deployment window to file the **complete ENS filing (F34)** can be granted until the end of this window foreseen in the UCC Work Programme [R01].

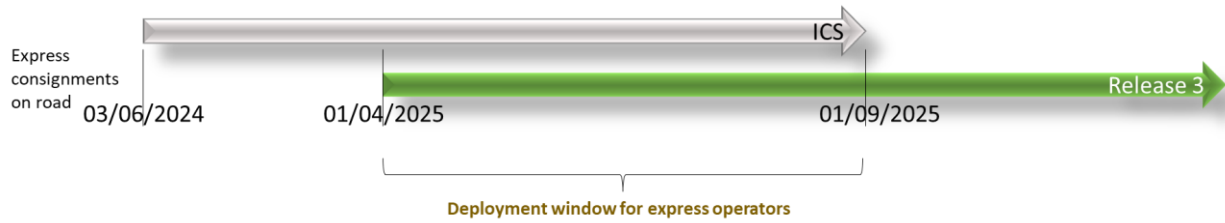


Figure 4 Express operators deployment window for consignments on road

3.2.5 EOs operating several modes of transport

In case the EOs operate several modes of transport, e.g., maritime house level and road carrier, they may choose one go-live date for all their ENS filings. However, this date should not be later than the earliest end date of the deployment windows for their modes of transport. For example, if EO operates as maritime house level and road carrier, their go-live date should be at the latest at the end of the maritime house level filer deployment window – 1 April 2025.

4 CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of ICS2 transition from R2 to R3 strategy is to highlight the aspects of the transition which need to be further aligned and agreed among all involved parties – Member States, the EC and the economic operators. The agreement within due time on the necessary measures to mitigate the possible disruptive cases (due to lack of connectivity to ICS2 R3) for all business models will allow the predictability, transparency and the coordination required for the proper use of ICS2 R3.

5 ANNEXES

5.1 ICS2 R3 ENS filing types

F10	Sea and inland waterways – Complete dataset – Straight bill of lading containing the necessary information from consignee
F11	Sea and inland waterways – Complete dataset – Master bill of lading with underlying house bill(s) of lading containing the necessary information from consignee at the level of the lowest house bill of lading
F12	Sea and inland waterways – Partial dataset – Master bill of lading only
F13	Sea and inland waterways – Partial dataset – Straight bill of lading only
F14	Sea and inland waterways – Partial dataset – House bill of lading only
F15	Sea and inland waterways – Partial dataset – House bill of lading with the necessary information from consignee
F16	Sea and inland waterways – Partial dataset – Necessary information required to be provided by consignee at the lowest level of transport contract (the lowest house bill of lading)
F17	Sea and inland waterways – Partial dataset – Necessary information required to be provided by consignee at the lowest level of transport contract (straight bill)
F20	Air cargo (general) – Complete dataset lodged pre-loading
F21	Air cargo (general) – Partial dataset – Master air waybill lodged pre-arrival
F22	Air cargo (general) – Partial dataset – House air waybill lodged pre-arrival
F23	Air cargo (general) – Partial dataset – Minimum dataset lodged pre- loading in accordance with Article 106(1) second subparagraph of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2015/2446 without master air waybill reference number
F24	Air cargo (general) – Partial dataset – Minimum dataset lodged pre- loading in accordance with Article 106(1) second subparagraph of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2015/2446 with master air waybill reference number
F25	Air cargo (general) – Partial dataset – Master air waybill reference number lodged pre-loading in accordance with Article 106(1) second subparagraph of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2015/2446
F26	Air cargo (general) – Partial dataset – Minimum dataset lodged pre- loading in accordance with Article 106(1) second subparagraph of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2015/2446 and containing additional house air waybill information
F27	Air cargo (general) – Complete dataset lodged pre-arrival
F28	Air cargo (general) – Complete dataset lodged pre-loading – Direct air waybill
F29	Air cargo (general) – Complete dataset lodged pre-arrival – Direct air waybill
F30	Express consignments – Complete dataset lodged pre-arrival
F31	Express consignments on air cargo general – Complete dataset lodged pre-arrival by the express operator
F32	Express consignments – Partial dataset – Minimum dataset lodged pre-loading in accordance with Article 106(1) second subparagraph of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2015/2446
F33	Express consignments on air cargo general – Partial dataset – House air waybill lodged pre-arrival by a person pursuant to Article 127(6) of the Code and in accordance with Article 113(1)
F34	Express consignments on road – Complete dataset lodged pre-arrival
F40	Postal consignments – Partial dataset – Road Master bill of lading
F41	Postal consignments – Partial dataset – Rail master transport document information
F42	Postal consignments – Partial dataset - Master air waybill containing necessary postal air waybill information lodged in accordance with the time-limits applicable for the mode of transport concerned
F43	Postal consignments – Partial dataset – Minimum dataset lodged pre- loading in accordance with Article 106(1) second subparagraph of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2015/2446
F44	Postal consignment – Partial dataset – Receptacle identification number lodged pre-loading in accordance with Article 106(1) second subparagraph of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2015/2446
F45	Postal consignments – Partial dataset – Sea and inland waterways

F50	Road mode of transport
F51	Rail mode of transport

Table 4: ICS2 R3 ENS filing types

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