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SUBSIDIARY BODY REPORTS

TRADE FACILITATION AND ELECTRONIC BUSINESS

Renewal of UN/CEFACT sub-groups¹

Note by the secretariat

Summary

The Guidelines and Procedures of the Committee on Trade (see document ECE/TRADE/C/2007/15) require each sub-group to submit a description of “the scope of the work” and “the work planned to be undertaken” for the next two-year period.

In line with these procedures, and fully aligned with the UNECE “Guidelines for the Establishment and Functioning of Teams of Specialists within UNECE” (document ECE/EX/2), this document is a request from United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT) to the Committee on Trade for the renewal of its five sub-groups.

This document is for endorsement and for subsequent submission to the UNECE Executive Committee for approval.

¹ This document was submitted late for document processing as clearances from relevant parties were received late.

1. This document outlines the activity scope and the specific work to be undertaken during the next two year period by the five permanent groups of the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT): the Applied Technologies Group (ATG), the Information Content Management Group (ICG), the Legal Group (LG), the International Trade and Business Processes Group (TBG) and the Techniques and Methodologies Group (TMG). This information was taken from the updated mandates and terms of reference for these groups, which were approved by UN/CEFACT in an intersessional approval process.
2. The activities of the five permanent groups are based on the mission, objectives and programme of work of UN/CEFACT, as laid down in the Mandate and Terms of Reference of UN/CEFACT (TRADE/R.650/Rev.4) and the Programme of Work of UN/CEFACT (ECE/TRADE/C/2007/20). The focus in all groups is on the development of standards, specifications and guidelines that can be implemented globally.
3. Membership in the permanent groups is open to technical experts, as outlined in the Mandate and Terms of Reference of UN/CEFACT and the relevant paragraphs in the mandates of each Permanent Group. Members are nominated by their respective head of delegation. In addition, heads of delegation may invite technical experts from their constituency to participate in the work. Experts are expected to contribute to the work based solely on their expertise and to comply with the UN/CEFACT Code of Conduct (TRADE/R.650/Rev.4, Annex II, Section VIII).

A. The Applied Technologies Group (ATG)

1. Purpose Statement

4. The Applied Technologies Group (ATG) is responsible for the creation and maintenance of the trade, business and administration document structures that are based on a specific technology or standard. The function of the ATG is to design, assemble and produce syntax-specific solutions based on identified business and/or technical requirements from the UN/CEFACT groups.

2. Mission Statement

5. The ATG creates and maintains the United Nations trade, business and administration document structures that are deployed by a specific technology or standard, such as UN/EDIFACT, United Nations Layout Key, UNeDocs or XML.

3. Activities

6. The activities of the ATG will cover:

- (a) Designing, assembling and producing specific syntax-based solutions based on identified business requirements from the International Trade and Business Processes Group (TBG) and utilizing reference libraries maintained by the Information Content Management Group (ICG);
- (b) Designing, assembling and producing specific syntax-based solutions and standards based on identified technical requirements from the various groups inside the UN/CEFACT forum;

- (c) Maintaining specific syntax-based solutions through the application of Data Maintenance Requests against existing publications;
- (d) Developing and maintaining data-type catalogues for core component development work that can be used by all syntax solutions;
- (e) Developing and maintaining design and production rules and guidelines governing the specific syntax-based solutions;
- (f) Liaising with appropriate bodies.

4. Technical issues

7. The technical issues that ATG will address include:

- (a) Rules for transforming UMM-compliant models into specific syntax solutions;
- (b) Rules for transforming CC/BIE-conformant components into specific syntax solutions;
- (c) UML profile(s) for specific syntax-based solutions;
- (d) Context application rules including an extension and restriction methodology;
- (e) Design rules for creating optimised syntax based solutions;
- (f) Managing, versioning and maintaining UN/CEFACT specific syntax-based solutions.

5. Key deliverables

8. The key deliverables of ATG are:

- (a) Technical assessment and maintenance of syntax-specific solutions through the application of Data Maintenance Requests against existing publications (e.g. UN/EDIFACT directories, reference libraries);
- (b) A series of coherent, consistent and normalised syntax solutions that are aligned with domain reference models for publication in a designated UN/CEFACT information repository by the Information Content Management Group (ICG):
 - (i) UN/EDIFACT messages and their support directories;
 - (ii) Extended Mark-up Language (XML) Schemas;
 - (iii) United Nations Electronic Trade Documents (UNeDocs);
- (c) Procedures for the maintenance of the syntax solutions;
- (d) Mechanisms for ensuring the quality of the syntax solutions;
- (e) Technical specifications detailing the design and production rules, guidelines and checklists that shall be applied when developing and maintaining the various syntax solutions;
- (f) Syntax-specific UML profiles as appropriate to ensure consistent transformation of UMM-based UML models into syntax expressions;

- (g) Data type catalogues;
- (h) Proposals, including draft recommendations for review and approval by the UN/CEFACT Plenary;
- (i) Maintenance of recommendations/technical specifications, in liaison with TC154;
 - (i) UNECE Recommendation 1 (UN Layout Key), maintenance of the technical aspects;
 - (ii) ISO 9735 - UN/EDIFACT Syntax.

9. The key deliverables of the ATG are:

- (a) Syntax-specific naming conventions and design rules, including context application rules and specific syntax rules for message assembly;
- (b) Transformation rules and, where appropriate, scripts for producing specific syntax-based solutions;
- (c) UML profile for modelling specific syntax-based solutions;
- (d) Specific syntax schemas for message structures and reusable components;
- (e) Specific syntax schemas for describing Business Process and Information Models and Code Lists, to include Core Components and Business Information Entities, as stored in the Registry/Repository;
- (f) Syntax-specific expressions of the Core Component Technical Specification Unified Context Methodology;
- (g) Syntax-specific expressions to support current and future work of the TMG, TBG, and ICG;
- (h) Procedures for processing change requests against specific syntax deliverables;
- (i) Technical Assessment Checklist for specific syntax deliverables;
- (j) Technical Assessment of all specific syntax deliverables.

6. Functional expertise of membership

10. Membership is open to experts with broad knowledge in the area of various implementation syntaxes, protocols and mechanisms for the packaging of data for exchange, the functions of UN/CEFACT, and its groups. Members are expected to be recognised experts in the field of design practices and technical assessment.

7. Liaison

11. The ATG will liaise with external groups as necessary to conduct its work. Liaison will be conducted, through the FMG and in line with the UN/CEFACT Liaison Policy, at the discretion of the Group, who may choose to appoint a member of the team to conduct liaison activities.

B. The Information Content Management Group (ICG)

1. Purpose Statement

12. The Information Content Management Group (ICG) ensures the release of quality technical specifications for e-business.

2. Mission Statement

13. The ICG ensures that all technical specifications (UNECE recommendations, business requirements specifications, directories, libraries or repositories, core components, syntax-specific implementations (such as UN/EDIFACT, XML, etc.) are released in accordance with the procedures detailed herein and are to the highest quality level. The purpose as defined in its mandate is to ensure the release of quality technical specifications for e-business.

3. Activities

14. The activities of the ICG cover:

- (a) Management of the UN/CEFACT information repositories and libraries for electronic business and Recommendations that fall within its scope as listed in section 2 (of the ICG Mandate);
- (b) Technical conformance and the registration of the UN/CEFACT business requirements specifications;
- (c) Normalization and maintenance of the base syntax neutral information components that serve as the building blocks for the development of standards for implementation;
- (d) Technical conformity and registration of syntax-specific information objects and components.

4. Technical issues

15. The technical issues that the ICG will address include ensuring that quality technical specifications for e-business are produced by UN/CEFACT. In this context it shall be primarily responsible for the management, categorisation and normalisation of reusable information blocks. This content would be retained in a series of libraries (open repository) detailing the base information structures and components. The content of the libraries will be generated through analysis of existing information blocks as used by various industries today in conjunction with the core component library content. The Group is responsible for ensuring that the information models undergo normalization to align them with the domain reference models developed by the TBG. The ICG is also responsible for the reusable process and information blocks contained in the UN/EDIFACT Data Element Directory, all Code Directories, and including the Business Process, the Business Object and the Core Component generic Libraries.

5. Deliverables

16. The deliverables of the ICG are:

- (a) A series of coherent, consistent and normalized reference libraries comprising the business requirements, information objects and code lists that are aligned with the domain reference models and serve as the building blocks for the development of standards for implementation;
- (b) The release of validated and approved syntax-specific information objects and components;
- (c) Processes and procedures for the maintenance of the libraries;
- (d) Mechanisms for ensuring the quality of the library contents;
- (e) Proposals, including draft Recommendations for review and approval by the UN/CEFACT Plenary;
- (f) Maintenance of Recommendations;
 - (i) UNECE Recommendation No. 3 - ISO Country Code for Representation of Names of Countries
 - (ii) UNECE Recommendation No. 5 - Abbreviations of INCOTERMS
 - (iii) UNECE Recommendation No. 7 - Numerical Representation of Dates, Time, and Periods of Time
 - (iv) UNECE Recommendation No. 8 - Unique Identification Code Methodology – UNIC
 - (v) UNECE Recommendation No. 9 - Alphabetical Code for the Representation of Currencies
 - (vi) UNECE Recommendation No. 10 - Codes for Ship's Names
 - (vii) UNECE Recommendation No. 15 - Simpler Shipping Marks
 - (viii) UNECE Recommendation No. 16 - United Nations Code for Trade and Transport Locations (UN/LOCODE)
 - (ix) UNECE Recommendation No. 17 – Payterms
 - (x) UNECE Recommendation No. 19 - Codes for Modes of Transport
 - (xi) UNECE Recommendation No. 20 - Codes for units of measure used in international trade
 - (xii) UNECE Recommendation No. 21 - Codes for Types of Cargo, Packages and Packaging Materials
 - (xiii) UNECE Recommendation No. 23 - Freight Cost Code
 - (xiv) UNECE Recommendation No. 24 - Trade and Transport Status Codes
 - (xv) UNECE Recommendation No. 28 - Codes for Types of Means of Transport.

6. Functional expertise of membership

17. Members are expected to be recognised experts in the field of semantics of business practices and codification; information modelling in the application of reusable design practices and/or syntax conversant with the rules defined for the syntax solutions supported by UN/CEFACT.

7. Liaison

18. The ICG will liaise with external groups as necessary to conduct its work. Liaison will be conducted, through the FMG and in line with the UN/CEFACT Liaison Policy, at the discretion of the Group, who may choose to appoint a member of the team to conduct liaison activities.

C. The Legal Group (LG)

1. Purpose Statement

19. The purpose of the Legal Group (LG) is to analyse current legal processes and issues within the mission and objectives of UN/CEFACT, to identify legal constraints that adversely affect the mission and objectives of UN/CEFACT, and to propose practical improvements to these legal processes and issues.

2. Mission Statement

20. The LG undertakes current legal processes and issues within the mission of UN/CEFACT in accordance with its mandate. The strategy is to identify legal constraints that adversely impact on the UN/CEFACT mission and objectives and to propose practical improvements to these legal constraints.

3. Activities

~~21.~~ The activities of the LG are the legal processes and issues within the mission, objectives and Programme of work of UN/CEFACT and its groups.

4. Technical Issues and Deliverables

22. The technical issues and deliverables of the LG are:

- (a) Analysis, research and review of legal processes and issues;
- (b) Identification of constraints to more effective legal processes and procedures;
- (c) Practical proposals for the removal of such constraints;
- (d) Development, publication and promotion of guidelines supporting best legal practice;
- (e) Contributions to and, where appropriate, efforts to influence related work in other organizations such as UNCITRAL, UNCTAD, WTO, OECD and the ICC;

- (f) Provision, as required, of practical legal advice and assistance to the work being undertaken by other UN/CEFACT permanent and ad hoc working groups and contributions to the formation of the legal aspects of policy;
- (g) Proposals, including draft Recommendations for review and approval by the UN/CEFACT Plenary;
- (h) Maintenance of Recommendations;
 - (i) UNECE Recommendation No. 12 - Measures to Facilitate Maritime Transport Document Procedures (in cooperation with TBG)
 - (ii) UNECE Recommendation No. 13 - Facilitation of Identified Legal Problems in Import Procedures
 - (iii) UNECE Recommendation No. 14 - Authentication of Trade documents other than by signature
 - (iv) UNECE Recommendation No. 26 - The commercial use of Interchange Agreement for EDI
 - (v) UNECE Recommendation No. 31 - Electronic Commerce Agreement
 - (vi) UNECE Recommendation No. 32 - E-Commerce Self-Regulatory Instruments (Codes of Conduct).

5. Functional Expertise of Membership

23. Membership is open to experts with broad knowledge in the area of legal issues arising within the work programme of UN/CEFACT and the functions of UN/CEFACT and its groups.

6. Liaison

24. The LG will liaise with external groups as necessary to conduct its work. Liaison will be conducted, through the FMG, and in line with the UN/CEFACT Liaison Policy, at the discretion of the Group, who may choose to appoint a member of the team to conduct liaison activities.

25. Four different types of co-operation have been identified:

- (a) Common work (projects) and common tools;
- (b) Complementary work and different methods (co-ordination required);
- (c) Separate work but common tools and methods (co-ordination required);
- (d) Separate work and different methods (interface needed).

Table 1. Liaison arrangements of the Legal Group

Name of organisation	Level of co-operation (from 1 to 4)
Techniques and Methodologies Group (TMG)	1
Information Content Group (ICG)	1
International Trade & Business Processes Group (TBG)	1
UNCITRAL	2 to 3
UNCTAD	2 to 3
ICC	3
EU	3
WTO	3 to 4
National ECA/EDIA bodies	3 to 3
National trade facilitation bodies	2 to 3
International Chamber of Shipping (ICS)	4
International Maritime Organisation (IMO)	4
National/Regional standardisation bodies	4
WCO	4

D. The International Trade and Business Processes Group (TBG)

1. Purpose and Mission Statement

26. The purpose of the International Trade and Business Processes Group (TBG) is to be responsible for the simplification of international trade procedures, business and governmental process analysis, and best practices, using the UN/CEFACT Modelling Methodology where appropriate to support the development of trade facilitation and electronic business solutions. This purpose is demonstrated through:

- (a) Identification, simplification, harmonisation and alignment of public and private sector practices, procedures and information flows relating to international trade transactions both in goods and related services;
- (b) Specification of common business and governmental processes and reference models;
- (c) Harmonization of cross-industry business and governmental processes;
- (d) Documentation of business and governmental requirements;
- (e) Raising awareness of work of the International Trade and Business Processes Group (TBG).

2. Technical issues

27. The technical issues that TBG will address include:

- (a) UN and UNECE Recommendations, implementation guidelines and other relevant instruments for trade facilitation including best practices and implementation guidelines;
- (b) Business and governmental domain definitions;
- (c) Development and maintenance of common business and governmental processes (including reference models);
- (d) Development and maintenance of Core Component definitions;
- (e) Harmonised business and governmental requirements e.g. harmonised cross-domain process models and core components;
- (f) Identification of factors constraining more effective business practices/processes;
- (g) Analyse international trade procedures and identify barriers/constraints;
- (h) Create and maintain a Master International Trade Transaction (ITT) Framework;
- (i) Validation of technical specifications;
- (j) Documented business and governmental requirements for changes to syntax solutions;
- (k) Improvement of the grammatical quality of the deliverables including a controlled vocabulary.

3. Deliverables

28. The key deliverables of the TBG are:

- (a) Draft UN and UNECE Recommendations and other relevant instruments for trade facilitation including best practices and implementation guidelines;
- (b) Business and governmental domain definitions;
- (c) Common business and governmental processes (including reference models), Business Requirement Specifications (BRS) and Requirement Specification Mapping (RSM) documents;
- (d) Core Component and Business Information Entities definitions;
- (e) Cross domain business and governmental projects;
- (f) Harmonised business and governmental requirements e.g. harmonisation of cross-domain process models and core components;
- (g) Validated technical specifications;
- (h) Documentation of business and governmental requirements for changes to syntax solutions, e.g. EDIFACT messages;

- (i) Forum seminars, presentations and other artefacts to support awareness of the TBG activities.

4. Functional Expertise of Membership

29. Members of this group primarily are process, procedure and modelling experts in the international trade and e-business arenas. The group combines business domain and information experts to ensure cross-domain harmonization, especially at the industry implementation level.

5. Liaison

30. The TBG will liaise with external groups as necessary to conduct its work. Liaison will be conducted, through the FMG and in line with the UN/CEFACT Liaison Policy, at the discretion of the Group, who may choose to appoint a member of the team to conduct liaison activities.

E. The Techniques and Methodologies Group (TMG)

1. Purpose and Mission Statement

31. The Techniques and Methodologies Group (TMG) provides all UN/CEFACT Groups with Meta (base) Collaborative Business Process, Information, Context, and Communications Technology specifications, recommendations and education. The TMG also functions as a research group evaluating new information and communication technologies (ICT), as well as techniques and methodologies that may assist UN/CEFACT and its groups to fulfil their mandate and vision in trade facilitation and e-business.

2. Activities

32. The activities of the TMG will cover:

- (a) Development and maintenance of methodology, design rules and guidelines governing the syntax independent modeling of collaborative business processes on semantically focused Business Oriented View (BOV);
- (b) Development and maintenance of methodology, design rules and guidelines governing the syntax independent modelling of business information data on semantically focused Business Oriented View (BOV);
- (c) Development and maintenance of methodology, design rules and guidelines governing the syntax independent modelling of context specific logic and categorization on semantically focused Business Oriented View (BOV);
- (d) Formation of liaisons with ATG, TBG, LG, and ICG in order to support current and future requirements of these groups;
- (e) Formation of liaisons with appropriate bodies.

3. Technical Issues

33. The technical issues that TMG will address include:

- (a) UN/CEFACT Modelling Methodology Meta Model
- (b) UN/CEFACT Modelling Methodology - Reference Guide (N090)
- (c) UN/CEFACT Modelling Methodology - User Guide
- (d) UN/CEFACT Modelling Methodology - Implementation Guide
- (e) UN/CEFACT Modelling Methodology - Content Management Guide
- (f) Business Collaboration Schema Specification
- (g) Common Business Process Catalogue Specification
- (h) Core Component Technical Specification supported by:
 - (i) Core Component User Guide
 - (ii) Core Component Message Assembly
 - (iii) UML Profile for Core Components
- (i) UN/CEFACT Unified Context Methodology
- (j) E-Business Architecture Technical Specification supported by:
 - (i) E-Business Glossary
- (k) ebXML Business Process Specification Schema
- (l) Unified Business Agreements and Contracts Technical Specification (in cooperation with the LG)

4. Deliverables

34. The key deliverables of the TMG are:

- (a) UN/CEFACT Modelling Methodology (UMM) Specification
- (b) UMM User Guide
- (c) UMM Introductory Presentation
- (d) Business Collaboration Schema Specification
- (e) Common Business Process Catalogue Specification
- (f) Core Component Technical Specification
- (g) Core Component Message Assembly
- (h) UML Profile for Core Components
- (i) CCTS User Guide
- (j) Unified Context Methodology
- (k) eBusiness Architecture Specification

- (l) Glossary
- (m) Proposals, including draft recommendations for review and approval by the UN/CEFACT Plenary

5. Functional expertise of membership

35. Membership is open to experts with broad knowledge in the area of existing business process, information, context and communications specifications, architecture, as well as current techniques and methodologies used within UN/CEFACT, technological developments, and the functions of UN/CEFACT and its groups.

6. Liaison

36. Five criteria are established for cooperation with other international organizations and bodies:

- (a) Interdependence of work item(s) between TMG and referenced group;
- (b) TMG work item(s) depend on (is/are linked to) work item(s) of referenced group;
- (c) Referenced group's work item(s) depend on (are linked to) work item(s) of TMG;
- (d) Referenced group's work item(s) are of interest to TMG research;
- (e) TMG work item(s) may be of interest to referenced group.

37. Organizations and bodies involved in the different aspects of the TMG and the levels of co-operation with them in accordance with the above-mentioned criteria are indicated in Table 2.

Table 2. TMG liaison matrix

Name of organization	Level of cooperation
1. CEFACT - TBG	1
2. CEFACT - ICG	3
3. CEFACT - ATG	3
4. CEFACT - LG	5
5. OASIS – ebXML TC	3 (JCC)
6. JTC1/SC32 (Open-edi)	1
7. W3C	4-5
7. Object Management Group (OMG)	4+5
8. Network Management Forum (NMF)	5
9. Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF)	4
10. Open Application Group (OAG)	4+5
