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OTIF

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# IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UTP TAF

# IN THE NON-EU OTIF CONTRACTING STATES

The process of allocating organisation codes and involvement of the non-EU OTIF CS in the development of the TAF requirements

# 1. BACKGROUND

At its 10<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Committee of Technical Experts (CTE) adopted the UTP TAF, which is equivalent to Commission Regulation (EU) No 1305/2014 of 11 December 2014 on the technical specification for interoperability relating to the telematics application for freight subsystem of the rail system in the European Union[1] (TAF TSI). At the same time, the CTE asked the Working Group Technology (WG TECH) to develop practical arrangements with the EU Agency for Railways (ERA) so that the non-EU OTIF CS that apply the UTP TAF can be involved in the development of the IT provisions relating to the UTP TAF/TAF TSI.

The UTP TAF lays down binding provisions, but there is no deadline for the completion of implementation.

This document concerns two subjects:

- Establishment of the reference file in accordance with 4.2.11.1 of the UTP TAF, which contains the coding of all the entities involved in the international operation of freight trains.

- Representation of non-EU Member States that apply the UTP TAF in the work of relevant governance bodies responsible for the implementation and development of the TAF requirements and/or ERA´s technical appendices.

# 2. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE REFERENCE FILE

## 2.1. INTRODUCTION

There are numerous codes within UTP TAF which are needed to support data exchange. Among them is the organisation code, which provides a unique identifier for organisations in the various applications used in an exchange of information in the scope of TAF. The operation of freight trains in accordance with TAF is practically impossible without the reference files and codes, which must be available and accessible to all stakeholders[2] (IMs, RUs, locomotive provider, freight transport customers, etc.).

## 2.2. DESCRIPTION OF THE GENERAL PROCESS

To ensure data quality, the UTP TAF requires centrally stored and administered reference files to be a repository for relevant codes. These relevant codes and reference files ensure the consistency of data interpretation across various application systems. It should be noted that the core text of UTP TAF itself refers to several appendices that are published and regularly updated on the website of ERA, including the data and message model in XML files. In other words, although all functional requirements could be applied through UTP, the system might be useless if the technical appendices are not applied as well.

The process of allocating the organisation codes depends on where the companies are based. At present, the UIC allocates organisation codes to applicants, no matter whether they are based in the OTIF Member States or elsewhere (worldwide), updates them every two months and publishes them on the UIC website[3]. After validation by the UIC, the codes are transferred to RailNetEurope (RNE)[4] and notified to ERA, which then updates ERA´s TAF company code file. For this process, applicants

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[1] Official Journal of the EU: OJ L 356, 12.12.2014, p. 438–488.

[2] Stakeholders in the meaning of UTP TAF means: *"any person or organisation with a reasonable interest in train service delivery"* (Appendix II of UTP TAF – Glossary).

[3] http://uic.org/rics

[4] RNE – the Association set up by a majority of European IMs and Allocation Bodies in order to develop platforms for the international exchange of information.

must pay UIC the corresponding fees (for assigning the codes and for annual administration). The code itself is a four digit numerical unstructured code[5].

Within the framework of the fourth railway package, ERA will set up the organisation reference file to identify each company that has been registered in ERA´s registers. There will be two types of registration. The first, where ERA will allocate the company an organisation code at the company's request, and the second, in which ERA will register this code in ERA´s TAF/TAP TSI company code reference file, but only after the explicit request of that company. For the second type of registration, the company also has to pay ERA the corresponding fees (for the code allocation and code administration).

## 2.3. TASKS OF THE STAKEHOLDERS (ORGANISATIONS)

The RUs and IMs in each country are assumed to have their own IT systems (e.g. to track wagons, maintain the fleet, internal business production system, consignment note system, infrastructure information system, etc.). Each of these systems generates different messages. Therefore, in the first step towards implementing the UTP TAF, these systems must be aligned according to TAF requirements. This means aligning the processes and content of the messages generated by the systems in accordance with UTP TAF, which defines the following message modules:

- Consignment note data

- Path request

- Train preparation

- Train running forecast

- Service disruption information

- Train location

- Shipment estimated time of interchange/arrival

- Wagon movement

- Interchange reporting

- Data exchange for quality improvement.

This first step of the implementation process, i.e. its adaptation, would be carried out mostly by the internal IT departments or by external companies which develop the IT systems for IMs, RUs and other stakeholders involved in TAF.

In some of the OTIF CS, the state-owned railway companies bring together the various stakeholders (e.g. IMs, RUs, wagon keepers, etc.) under one roof. Nevertheless, it can be assumed that technically, these entities are different and that communication between them has to be ensured as effectively as in the liberalised railway markets, which consists of many IMs, RUs and wagon keepers.

The alignment of IT systems goes hand in hand with the installation of the common interface. The common interface is mandatory and has to be installed by every IM, RU and all other stakeholders involved in TAF (e.g. all centrally stored supporting databases). Using the common interface will ensure that all the systems which are needed to implement the UTP TAF can communicate with each other through standardised message formats. Installation of the common interface in non-EU railway companies is essential in order to connect some of the IT platforms.

In addition to adjusting the legacy systems so that they can generate the prescribed UTP TAF messages, and implementing the common interface, the supporting databases have to be installed within different stakeholders involved in UTP TAF. Besides these databases, there are also some

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[5] For further information please see ERA´s technical document ERA-TD-103 (TAF TSI – Annex D.2: Appendix C – Reference Files)

international platforms which help to distribute the messages internationally and which were developed in accordance with TAF requirements.

## 2.4. TASKS OF THE NON-EU OTIF CS

The non- EU OTIF CS must ensure that the stakeholders, i.e. the companies on their territory, are aware of the UTP TAF and that if the IT investments and developments in the scope of the UTP TAF are made, they are made in a harmonised and compatible way, in compliance with the UTP TAF. If the CS applies the UTP TAF, it is recommended that they designate the TAF National Contact Point (NCP) on a voluntary basis, which would then be, in practical terms, the link between the stakeholders of that CS and the TAF Steering Committee.

# 3. REPRESENTATION OF THE NON-EU OTIF CS AND THEIR ORGANISATIONS IN THE WORK OF RELEVANT GOVERNANCE BODIES

## 3.1. INTRODUCTION

For entities concerned by the implementation of TAF based in the non-EU OTIF CS that apply UTP TAF, it is essential that, in view of the fact that they have obligations under the UTP TAF, they should also be in a position to influence the future implementation of or amendments to the relevant TAF requirements, in line with the same principles that apply to entities from EU OTIF CS. This includes their participation or representation in the work of the Steering Committee, the relevant ERA working groups, including the Change Control Board, or in specific change management processes to amend ERA´s technical documents.

This participation will be subject to cooperation arrangements to be established between the OTIF Secretariat and ERA.

## 3.2. THE STEERING COMMITTEE

The purpose of the Steering Committee (SC) is to facilitate implementation of the UTP TAF through discussion between the partners involved. It is composed of the representative bodies of the railway sector[6], ERA and the EC. If necessary, other parties may also attend the SC. The non-EU OTIF CS that apply the UTP TAF may participate or be represented in the work of the SC. The practical arrangements for such participation should be established.

## 3.3. THE CHANGE CONTROL BOARD

The purpose of the Change Control Board (CCB) is to identify and to manage change requests, constraints, responsibilities and procedures and to track them through to completion. In other words, the CCB is the controller of the Change Management Process. It is composed of the representatives of ERA, the rail sector representative bodies and Competent Authorities. If necessary, other parties may also take part in the CCB. Although these procedures will be managed at EU level, the non-EU OTIF CS that apply this UTP may be present or represented in the work of ERA´s working groups by entities that represent the interests of their rail sector, including the CBB. The practical arrangements for such participation should be established.

## 3.4. THE SPECIFIC CHANGE MANAGEMENT PROCESS FOR ERA´S TECHNICAL DOCUMENTS AS LISTED IN APPENDIX I OF THE UTP TAF

The (general) change management process is defined in 7.1.2 of UTP TAF. However, based on a specific request from stakeholders to amend the documents listed in Appendix I to UTP TAF, i.e. ERA´s technical documents, ERA establishes (specific) change control management following the

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[6] The representative bodies from the railway sector act at European level in accordance with Article 3(2) of Regulation 881/2004/EC ("the rail sector representative bodies")

criteria listed under 7.2.2. Requests may be submitted via the Competent Authorities, rail sector representative bodies, the OTIF Secretariat or the TAF TSI Steering Committee.

To clarify the above, the following table shows who participates at the meetings of the relevant governance bodies and who initiates the specific change management process:

| UTP TAF reference | Competent Authority (National Safety Authority) | ERA | DG MOVE (European Commission) | OTIF Secretariat | Bodies representing the rail sector |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7.1.4. The Steering Committee* | | X | X | | X |
| 7.2.1. The Change Control Board* | X | X | | | X |
| 7.2.2. Channels of initiation of the specific change management process | X | X | | X | X |

* Other parties may take part in the SC or CBB

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