

Information note on

AEO/ C-TPAT Mutual Recognition decision between the EU and the U.S.

Matching procedure between EORI number and MID numbers

On 4 May 2012, the European Union (EU) and the United States (U.S.), through a decision of the EU-U.S. Joint Customs Cooperation Committee (JCCC), agreed on mutual recognition of the Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (C-TPAT) program in the United States (U.S.) and the Authorised Economic Operator (AEO) programme of the European Union (EU) [insert link to JCCC Decision]. According to the JCCC decision, the EU and the U.S. will take favourably into account in their risk assessment, for the purpose of the conduct of inspections or controls, the respective membership status of certified trusted traders. The favourable treatment provided by mutual recognition will result in lower costs, simplified procedures and greater predictability for transatlantic business activities.

The aim of this note is to explain to EU AEOs the steps that need to be followed in preparation for the practical implementation of EU-U.S. mutual recognition.

An automatic mechanism has been agreed between the EU and the U.S for the exchange of relevant data of the AEOs holding a certificate with the safety and security component (AEOS or AEOF). As the U.S. customs targeting systems can only grant benefits based on the information that is linked to a Manufacturer's Identification Number (MID), there is a need for a "matching procedure" to associate the EU EORI (Economic Operators Registration and Identification) numbers with MID numbers.

For this purpose, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) has created a web application where EU AEOs must register their EORI number and associate this number with their MID number(s). The application will be activated once the exchange of relevant AEO data and testing is completed. The exchange of relevant AEO data will take place from July 2012 on. The Commission will notify AEOs through this website once the web application is activated. Once it is activated, the web application can be accessed using the following link: <https://mrctpat.cbp.dhs.gov>.

All operators holding an AEO certificate with the safety and security component (AEOS or AEOF) that have given their consent to the exchange of information with third countries for the purposes of mutual recognition and that wish to benefit from the treatment foreseen by the EU-U.S. JCCC decision establishing mutual recognition will need to register via the web application and to provide the required data.

The detailed procedure to be followed is described in the attached PowerPoint presentation provided by CBP. Please note the following additional points:

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Manufacturers and/or suppliers need an MID number when exporting goods to the U.S. Thus an EU AEO already exporting to the U.S. should have an MID number attributed to it. In case an EU AEO does not have knowledge of its MID number(s), the AEO is advised to contact its business partner in the U.S. to find out what MID number(s) has/have been attributed in the U.S. for this company;

- In the event that an EU AEO has more than one MID number it is necessary to match the operator's EORI number to each of these MID numbers in order to benefit from favourable treatment irrespective of the specific MID number used in the USA ;

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- When the EU AEO is requested by the web application to fill in its "primary address" the EU AEO must indicate the address provided to customs for the purpose of mutual recognition (i.e. the so-called MRA address). In case an AEO is not aware of which address was provided for this purpose, the EU AEO is advised to contact the National Customs administration that issued the AEO certificate.

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Once the match between the EORI number and the MID number(s) has been established, the AEO will automatically receive the favourable treatment provided by U.S. customs, subject to the AEOs U.S. business partner indicating that MID number when importing into the U.S.

For further information AEO operators are invited to contact their national Customs administration.