

ICS2 Phase 3 Road movements into Northern Ireland

Frequently Asked Questions – October 2025

Contents

General information on ICS2 and Entry Summary Declarations (ENS)	1
Trader Support Service (TSS)	2
Onboarding for road carriers	2
Data requirements in ICS2	3
Amendments in ICS2	4
Responsibilities for submitting ENS declarations into ICS2	5
Accessing ICS2 for non-TSS users	6
Submitting arrival and presentation notifications into ICS2 for goods moving into NI by road	7
Sending or receiving goods moving from Great Britain to the European Union	7

General information on ICS2 and Entry Summary Declarations (ENS)

What is ICS2?

ICS2 is the new IT system for submitting Safety and Security declarations (also known as Entry Summary or 'ENS' declarations) for goods entering Northern Ireland (NI). ICS2 is used for the:

- Lodging of pre-arrival entry summary declarations
- Notification of arrival of goods
- Presentation of goods

Which modes of transport does ICS2 cover?

ICS2 covers all modes of transport and is being implemented in phases. All freight moved by air and bulk maritime, as well as Business-to-Business (B2B) parcels moved into NI, already use ICS2 to make ENS declarations. You don't need to make ENS declarations for parcels moving to and from consumers (i.e. private individuals) in Northern Ireland.

Are ICSNI and ICS2 going to continue to run in parallel?

Once the ICS2 deployment window ends on 31 December 2025, ICS2 requirements will be fully implemented, and you will no longer be able to submit ENS declarations into ICS NI.

What is an ENS / ENS filing?

An Entry Summary declaration (ENS) filing is a pre-arrival notification of goods entering a territory. It's a legal requirement designed to enhance security and facilitate risk assessment.

The ENS declaration provides details about the cargo, including the shipper, consignee, commodity codes, and other relevant information. This allows HMRC to assess potential risks and ensure compliance with regulations before the goods arrive. The full list of information needed can be found here:

- [UCC Delegated Act](#) - Annex B, Section 5 onwards

- [EUDCM 7.0](#) – Information on ICS2 data requirements can be found in the ‘Source text’ section of UCC Annex B tab

Is there any connection between ICS2 and CDS? Can the info from the SFD be pulled across to the ENS? Why is there so much duplication?

ICS2 and CDS are separate systems which are not interoperable, and the information submitted into these systems is used for different purposes. The same data may be reused in both systems, for example, if you use TSS to submit your declarations they will collect data for both as part of a single declaration so you only have to submit the data once to TSS, and they will use this data to complete both the ENS declaration in ICSNI/ICS and SFD in CDS on your behalf.

What are the Windsor Framework requirements and what does this mean in relation to ICS2?

ENS declarations have been required for movements of freight into Northern Ireland since 2021. ICS2 is simply replacing the existing ICSNI system for submitting ENS declarations and is already in use for cargo/freight and parcels moved into Northern Ireland by air or bulk maritime. From 31 December 2025 at the latest, any freight or parcels moved into Northern Ireland by road (including roll-on roll-off ferry movements) will need to transition from ICSNI to ICS2. The Windsor Framework introduced new requirements for B2B parcel movements into NI to submit ENS declarations, but this does not impact the ICS2 system itself.

Are ICS2 and S&S GB interoperable? Can I use the same S&S data for both systems?

S&S GB is used to submit Entry Summary declarations for movements into Great Britain, while ICS2 is used for movements into NI. Whilst the information required for both systems is largely the same, ICS2 has introduced a new dataset with additional data elements being added. Where relevant, the same data can be included in both declarations but will need to be entered separately as ICS2 and S&S GB are not interoperable.

Trader Support Service (TSS)

Will the Trader Support Service be extended beyond 2025?

Yes. The UK government remains committed to making it as easy as possible to move goods between Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

In February, HMRC launched a competitive procurement for the next phase of the TSS. The procurement exercise is ongoing, and we anticipate that the successful provider for the service from 2026 will be announced in December 2025.

HMRC will work with our partners to ensure there is no disruption for traders using the TSS as we move into 2026.

Onboarding for road carriers

When do I need to onboard to ICS2?

Road carriers moving goods into Northern Ireland (including by accompanied and unaccompanied roll-on roll-off movements) or those submitting declarations on their behalf, have until 31 December 2025 to onboard to ICS2. The existing Import Control System Northern Ireland (ICSNI) will remain available until then. You should work with your supply chain to make sure you're ready to use ICS2 as soon as possible and no later than 31 December 2025. You can

find out more here: [Make an entry summary declaration using the Import Control System 2 - GOV.UK](#)

Those already using ICS2 for road movements should continue to do so, and those who expect to be ready to migrate to ICS2 before 31 December 2025 should continue preparations and migrate as planned.

What will happen if someone tries to import goods into Northern Ireland by road without submitting an S&S declaration into ICS2 from 31 December 2025?

Those who are ready for ICS2 are encouraged to start making declarations now. If you are not ready to make S&S declarations into ICS2, you should take action as soon as possible, and no later than 31 December 2025.

We will continue to support carriers and hauliers to prepare. Once ICS2 becomes mandatory from 31 December, there may be penalties for those who do not comply.

Why are some EU Member States allowing businesses to onboard from 1 June 2026 instead of 31 December 2025? Why isn't the UK delaying onboarding to June 2026 in respect of NI?

The offer of an extension to June 2025 is linked to additional delivery requirements. The UK has not chosen to undertake any additional delivery or requirements in respect of NI, and therefore can only delay onboarding until 31 December 2025.

Data requirements in ICS2

What information do I need to provide? What are the new data fields?

As well as the current data fields, ICS2 has some new data requirements including:

- Accurate description of your goods
- Commodity Code (6 digits)
- Buyer and Seller information
- Place of Acceptance/Delivery

What are stop words?

ICS2 is improving data quality through the introduction of 'stop-words'. Stop-words are words that, when used in isolation in the goods description, will trigger the ENS declaration to be rejected. To avoid rejections, an accurate goods description must be provided and must contain more details than just the generic stop-words. List of stop words: [Guidance on acceptable and unacceptable terms for the description of goods](#)

How do I ensure the correct comm code is applied? Will there be a drop down to choose from (commodity code), how to know what to include if you've only got a goods description?

A 6-8 digit commodity code at item level is required for all ENS declarations. Without this, ICS2 will reject the declaration. You must make sure that the relevant information is provided to the person in the supply chain who will be completing the ENS declarations, at the correct time. This will ensure your goods continue to move as smoothly and efficiently as possible.

For help with comm codes, you can use the NI Online Tariff Tool (OTT) to identify the appropriate commodity codes: https://www.trade-tariff.service.gov.uk/xi/find_commodity.

If goods are being moved on behalf of a trader who uses the TSS, the trader can give the declarant access to their Trader Goods Profile (TGP), which contains information on their regular movements, including commodity codes, to help the flow of information.

How many commodity codes can be included in one ENS?

ICS2 accepts up to 9999 goods items.

Where multiple goods are being consolidated to 6-digits what is the goods description that should be used?

ICS2 requires item level information. A minimum of a 6-digit commodity code is required on the ENS declaration, along with a plain language goods description that is precise enough for customs authorities to identify the goods. The goods description should accurately reflect the specific items being transported, but it should not require multiple ENS declarations for a single HS code containing various descriptions, nor should multiple different HS codes be used for identical goods descriptions.

For example:

- **Commodity Code:** 3004.90 (Medicaments consisting of mixed or unmixed products for therapeutic or prophylactic uses, put up in measured doses or in forms for retail sale)
- **Goods Description:** Cough syrup

Multiple goods descriptions can be listed under a single commodity code, provided they all align with the classification. For instance, under the commodity code 3004.90, acceptable descriptions could include:

- **Cough syrup**
- **Medical syrups for pain relief**
- **Antiseptic liquid for throat infections**

The description should be sufficiently clear and specific enough to identify the goods.

What is the place of acceptance?

The place of acceptance is the 'place at which the goods are taken over from the consignor'.

If I have multiple places of acceptance or delivery, how do I write them all in?

If header level information is different for the itemised information, then the place of acceptance/delivery should be provided at item level. If two items under the same HS code have different place of acceptance or delivery, then they should be itemised separately.

Amendments in ICS2

What can people do if data is not available before the deadline?

You must make sure that the relevant information is provided to the person in the supply chain who will be completing the ENS declarations, at the correct time. This will ensure your goods continue to move as smoothly and efficiently as possible

What should I do if there is traffic / breakdowns / unforeseen circumstances and have to board a later ferry to that listed in my ENS declaration? Do I need a new ENS?

HMRC appreciates the 'just-in-time' supply chain nature of some movements and that in the course of organising these movements, the ferry used to transport the goods into NI can change

at very short notice. HMRC has therefore agreed not to require an amendment/new ENS for movements between GB-NI in the case of last-minute changes as we can access the new ferry information through GVMS. Carriers/hauliers must still provide accurate vessel information in the ENS to the best of their knowledge at the time of submission and you must include your ENS MRN in the GMR.

What do I need to do if the information included in my ENS changes at the last minute?

You must ensure your ENS declarations are complete and accurate. If any information changes, such as the amount of goods or the time of arrival, your declarations can be amended at any time until the goods arrive. If you are using TSS, your declarations can be amended up to 4 hours before arrival.

There is some information that can't be amended once the ENS declaration has been submitted. Further information on these data elements can be found in [Annex B of the Operational Guidance](#). If any of these non-amendable elements do need to be corrected, you will need to invalidate your original declaration and submit a new declaration with the correct information.

HMRC may ask you to amend your declaration if it becomes apparent during the risk assessment process that the data provided is inaccurate or of insufficient quality for risk assessment purposes.

You can't amend your declaration in some circumstances, for example if you've been informed that Border Force intend to examine the goods, or the goods have already been presented to customs. You also can't amend any particulars that have been lodged by another party.

What if I need to swap from accompanied to unaccompanied?

If moving from accompanied to unaccompanied you would need to submit a new ENS declaration, as you would need to provide the F10 dataset (maritime).

Alternatively, if moving from unaccompanied to accompanied you would need to submit a new ENS declaration, as you would need to provide the F50 dataset (Road).

Responsibilities for submitting ENS declarations into ICS2

Who must file an ENS declaration and when?

The legal requirement to submit a declaration lies with the carrier. This is the operator of the active means of transport on, or in, which the goods are brought into the customs territory. For movements into NI this means:

Goods travelling by air: If your goods are travelling by air or sea, the legal requirement is with the party that has contracted and issued the bill of lading or an air waybill, for the carriage of the goods:

- For air, this means the airline is responsible
- For sea, this means the shipping company is responsible

Goods travelling by roll-on roll-off (RoRo): If your goods are travelling by roll-on roll-off:

- the haulage company is responsible for lodging the declaration for accompanied goods
- the ferry operator is responsible for lodging the declaration for unaccompanied goods

It is the carrier's responsibility to make sure that the declaration is submitted within the legal time limits, and it must only be done by a representative or third party with the carrier's knowledge and consent.

Accessing ICS2 for non-TSS users

How can businesses access the Shared Trader Portal (STP) if they are not submitting ENS declarations through the TSS?

To access the Shared Trader Portal (STP) and Shared Trader Interface (STI), businesses need to be registered in the national/central Unified User Management and Digital Signatures (UUM&DS) system. Businesses have the option to use the EU Customs Trader Portal or develop their own IT system and connect directly to ICS2 via the Shared Trader Interface (STI). Specific steps include:

1. **EORI Registration:** Businesses must apply for an Economic Operators Registration and Identification (EORI) number from HMRC if they do not already have one. EORI numbers starting GB are not recognised by ICS2. [Get an EORI number: If you move goods to or from Northern Ireland - GOV.UK](#)
2. **UUM&DS Registration:** Businesses need to request a user account and password for the identification and authorisation service of the EU Customs Trader Portal, as well as requesting the associated ICS2 roles. For EORI numbers starting with XI, you'll need to email: admin.uum@hmrc.gov.uk
3. **UUM&DS Authentication:** Access to the EU Customs Trader Portal is managed through the UUM&DS system, requiring businesses to authenticate with their EORI and appropriate roles.
4. **Role Assignment:** Businesses need to be assigned specific roles within the STP, such as "Economic Operator Declarant (EO-DECL)" or "Economic Operator Representative (EO-REP)", [according to the EU Taxation and Customs Union](#).
5. **National Service Desk:** For access to STP-related roles, businesses should contact admin.uum@hmrc.gov.uk.
6. **Accessing the Portal:** Once authenticated in the EU Customs Trader Portal, businesses can access the STP.

Is a declarant/representative that uses an IT Service Provider (ITSP) to lodge an ENS in the ICS2 system obliged to register a digital certificate in UUM&DS?

No. Only parties that operate an AS4 access point as a technical 'Sender' of ENS declaration filings must register a digital certificate in UUM&DS. A Sender is understood as a system actor in the context of the ICS2 system and is authenticated and authorised from the system security point of view to exchange messages with the STI. The declarant/representative that uses an IT Service Provider (ITSP) doesn't need a digital certificate registered in UUM&DS. Only the declarant/representative EORI included in the business payload of the messages needs it.

Submitting arrival and presentation notifications into ICS2 for goods moving into NI by road

How will goods be arrived/presented in ICS2 using TIMS?

ICS2 Arrival and Presentation notifications can be facilitated by the Trader Integration Micro Service (TIMS) for RoRo movements into Northern Ireland using GVMS ports. If you are ready to submit ENS declarations into ICS2 you should continue to do so. However, you will not be required to submit Arrival and Presentation of Goods notifications into ICS2 for goods moving via GVMS until the release of TIMS at the earliest. HMRC will provide a further timeline for TIMS release in due course.

Once TIMS has launched, ICS2 Arrival and Presentation notifications will be submitted automatically on your behalf. To enable this, you must include all relevant S&S Movement Reference Numbers (MRNs) in your Goods Movement Reference (GMR):

- If you use TSS, ask them to add all the relevant S&S MRNs to your GMRs.
- If not, make sure you add the S&S MRNs, when prompted, into the Goods Vehicle Movement Service (GVMS) when you are creating your GMRs.

If you don't use TIMS, how can you arrive/present your goods in ICS2?

If you do not include your S&S MRNs in your GMR, TIMS will not be able to submit ICS2 Arrival and Presentation of Goods Notifications on your behalf. In these cases, you must submit these notifications yourself.

- **Submitting Arrival Notifications outside TIMS:** These are submitted through the EU Shared Trader Interface or Shared Trader Portal. This can be done through either registering to use the EU Custom Trader Portal User Interface or setting up your own system to system build. Further information can be found [here](#).
- **Submitting Presentation of Goods Notifications outside TIMS:** These must be submitted through HMRC's Presentation of Goods API. To connect, either:
 - develop software in-house (learn more about the [Import Control System Presentation of Goods API](#))
 - use a software developer or IT provider

Sending or receiving goods moving from Great Britain to the European Union

Where can I find more information on ICS2 if I'm moving goods from Great Britain to an EU country?

If you move goods from Great Britain into the EU you may need to use ICS2 now depending on the country you are moving goods into. A list of all ICS2 territories and the date from which ICS2 becomes mandatory for road and rail movements is available at the bottom of this link:

[Guidance for the submission of an ENS for road and rail during the ICS2 and NCTS P6 derogation period.](#)

If you are moving goods by transit you will need to meet safety and security requirements for the relevant system (ICS, ICS2 or NCTS6-TSADs) of the country you are moving goods into.

ICS2 Phase 3 Road movements into Northern Ireland – Frequently Asked Questions – October 2025 – v1.0

You must check with the customs authority of the EU Member State you are moving goods into for details on which systems to use and any specific ICS2 processes to follow (for example, use of the ELO system for movements into France).