



IPCSA

International Port
Community Systems
Association



IPCSA INSIGHTS 2024

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I Reflecting on the Achievements of IPCSA in 2024: Celebrating Progress and Raising Awareness for the Vital Role of PCSs and SWs

By Nico De Cauwer, Secretary General, IPCSA



IPCSA Members meeting 2024, Photo credit: Port Tanger Med Port Authority

Looking back on what IPCSA – the management team together with all of its members – delivered in 2024, it fills me with pleasure that we can reflect on quite some achievements next to our daily focus on underlining the importance and creating awareness of the pivotal role of PCSs and SWs.

We assisted the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) by conducting assessments and awareness workshops with five IMO-missions – in Togo, Ivory Coast, Iraq, South Africa and Guinea. Further ongoing support and advice to global organisations such as the WCO and to regional ones as the EU Commission through its respective DG's MOVE and TAXUD, are again clearly present and valued.

Also, early in 2024 we launched our Sustainability working group, which will continue its work up to the end of 2025, to create a set of guidelines as to how IPCSA members can create community value through electronic services with a sustainable focus.

We succeeded in approving global 'Port Community Systems Guidelines' at the IMO level, which resulted in the official IMO Circular FAL.5/Circ.54.

We participated with other global organisations, including IAPH, chainPORT, DCSA and TIC4.0, in the 'Supply Chain Resilience in Ports'-project and co-published a first report on Port Call Optimisation through Data Quality. And we are very proud to have put the first four modules together for our 'IPCSA PCS Masterclass', which we will announce and advertise further in early 2025.

Last, but not least I'm immensely proud we kicked off our unique IPCSA Foresight project, where we dive into future-thinking scenarios to study the impact of PCSs and SWs in various domains and levels.

The huge support of all of you and the confidence I feel that the Association is on the right path to support our members all over the world convince me and give me the strength to continue my work as your Secretary-general to guide and lead the IPCSA family in the coming years.



Of course, we can't get around the volatile, fast-evolving societal impact on global trade caused by the continuous fragile balance in the world's geopolitical situation accompanied by a hugely fluctuating macro-economic situation. In that respect, 2024 was again a turbulent year, the current forecasts for 2025 are not putting us at ease, and we face a tremendous battle to gain more control over climate change.



But there is room for optimism. I have huge confidence that our members, just as during the global pandemic a few years ago, will be adaptive and resilient enough to invest in a sustainable, cybersecure digital transformation and to put the right solutions in place for better global trade solutions. We join forces to meet all these challenges – because today, collaboration is more important than ever.

From pioneering projects to collaborative efforts that spanned the continents, we have shown that together, we can overcome challenges and create lasting impact. Your dedication and hard work have been the cornerstone of our success and for that, we are deeply grateful.

The entire management team at IPCSA looks forward to your continued support and welcomes your thoughts and ideas on how IPCSA can improve even more in supporting you as members, as we will continue to adapt to changing needs and to act in the common interest of all our members.

I would like to thank you for all your dedication in 2024. I'm excited about the opportunities that lie ahead and confident that we will achieve even greater heights within our Association.

Nico De Cauwer

Secretary General

"If 2024 has proved anything, it is that our industry is an ever-changing landscape, and not only in terms of our day to day business operations; the increased use of AI and digitalisation also brings unique challenges for all our members in the spheres of both software and cyber security. Our Secretary General has been at the forefront of ensuring workshops are delivered to assist the membership in meeting not only these challenges, but wider ones in terms of compliance and ever-changing legislation across borders. Our executive team are highly focuses, professional individuals, who are committed to the IPCSA cause and to you, the members."

Steve Lamb

Vice Chairman

"I would like to highlight some of the initiatives mentioned by our Secretary General, but it would be unfair to single out some over others, as each holds its own significance and value. Instead, I want to focus on expressing my gratitude to the people who make our success possible: Nico, Inga, and Hans, whose dedication and hard work keep the association thriving. I also wish to acknowledge Steve, whose unwavering support and collaboration have been invaluable from the very beginning."

Javier Gallardo

Chairman

II IPCSA Expands Global Reach with New Members: SOHAR, GUCE CI, Nigerian Port Authority, and Port of Neom

In 2024 IPCSA expanded its global membership, particularly focusing on regions like West Asia and Africa. This expansion reinforces IPCSA's pivotal role as a leading international entity for digital information exchange in the logistics sector. Recently, IPCSA has welcomed four significant new members: SOHAR Port and Freezone, Guichet Unique du Commerce Extérieur de Côte d'Ivoire (GUCE CI), Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), and Port of NEOM. This growth significantly enhances IPCSA's influence, particularly in Africa, while also strengthening its network in West Asia.

SOHAR Port and Freezone, located in Oman in the West Asia, is a joint venture between Asyad Group and the Port of Rotterdam. Known for its rapid growth, SOHAR is embracing its new membership with IPCSA to introduce a Port Community System (PCS) that will interconnect major Omani ports with airports and economic zones. This initiative is part of SOHAR's strategy to bolster its role in global trade and to enhance digital logistics solutions, aiming to become a key hub in the international supply chain.



More information available at:
soharportandfreezone.om

In Africa, **GUCE CI** joins IPCSA as a web-based platform facilitating seamless communication and document issuance for trade and transport operators. Since its inception, GUCE CI has been pivotal in dematerializing and streamlining import, export, and transit activities, connecting numerous stakeholders including customs, banks, and transport operators. Through IPCSA, GUCE CI aims to further improve these processes, enhancing efficiency and reducing costs.



More information available at:
[GUCE CI Digital Brochure – ENG](#)

The Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA) is also a new African member of IPCSA. Currently developing a PCS in collaboration with IPCSA and the International Maritime Organisation, NPA is working towards integrating this system into Nigeria's National Single Window project. This development promises to enhance the efficiency of port operations in Nigeria, positioning the NPA as a leader in port digitalisation in the region.



More information available at:
<https://nigerianports.gov.ng>

In West Asia, the **Port of NEOM** joins IPCSA, poised to become a next-generation maritime and logistics hub in Saudi Arabia. Located in Oxagon, the port is expanding its capabilities for various cargo types and is committed to sustainability, planning to operate on 100% renewable energy. The Port of NEOM aims to support economic diversification and trade within Saudi Arabia, integrating advanced logistics into its operations.



More information available at:
<https://www.neom.com/en-us/our-business/port-of-neom>

These new members are not only advancing their digital agendas but are also contributing to IPCSA's mission of facilitating trade and economic diversification through enhanced digital systems. The collaboration and knowledge sharing among IPCSA's global network continue to foster innovation and efficiency in the logistics industry.

Press releases on our Members joining IPCSA in 2024 are available at:
<https://ipcsa.international/news-and-events/news/>

III IPCSA working domain – Standardisation – message and B2G Interfaces/Lead: Nico De Cauwer, IPCSA



The main goal of the Standards-domain is to support international organisations with advice and guidance on the development of standards. This includes:

- **IMO** – Supporting and providing input into revisions of existing and future guidelines, policies and taking a leading role in the development of the IMO Reference Model.
- **WCO** – Participating in the WCO

DMPT where appropriate

- **UN/CEFACT** – supporting UN/CEFACT standards and guidance
- **ISO** – Actively participating in ISO standards and Technical Committees including TC154 and TC8.
- **SMDG** – Engaging and sharing information with SMDG and its members

3.1. IPCSA Collaboration with IMO

Considering the different global associations with a focus on standardization, IMO is the main global organisation where considerable focus lies for us as Association. Our contributions on FAL 47 back in March 2023 which originated and concluded into the coordination of installing an official Correspondence Group for drafting PCS Guidelines, next to and on top of the already existing MSW-guidelines, resulted in 2024 into a submission for FAL 48 and subsequently to the approval of these guidelines in the FAL Committee meeting. See below for more in-depth detail on the proposed and approved PCS Guidelines.

IPCSA wants to explicitly thank Morocco to have taken this initiative forward on IMO-level, and to specifically thank Tarik Naciri from PortNet as lead of the IMO Correspondence Group.

Also, in 2024 several requests came from IMO towards the Secretary-General for assistance in needs assessments and awareness workshops with regards to advice on the implementation on Maritime Single Windows. Secretary General Nico De Cauwer together with former (and retired) CIO of the Port of Bilbao Txaber Goiri conducted an awareness workshop in Durban, South-Africa, bringing all the maritime stakeholders together, public and private, to report on current situation, possible way forward and consolidate recommendations for South-Africa to comply with IMO regulation on an electronic Maritime Single Window.

Other members were asked and delegated to IMO missions in Togo and Ivory Coast (Guillaume Ostermann, MGI/Marseille), Guinea (Tarik Naciri, PortNet/Morocco & Guillaume Ostermann, MGI/Marseille) and Iraq (Youssef Ahouzi Tarik Naciri, both PortNet/Morocco & Houmed Mohamed Ali, DPCS/Djibouti).

In 2024 IPCSA also submitted a data set regarding more detailed data elements in the processing of dangerous goods in ports. See below for more details.

As of January 1st, 2024, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) has a new Secretary General. Mr. Kitack Lim from the Republic of Korea is succeeded by Mr. Arsenio Dominguez from Panama. This transition presented a prime opportunity to engage with the new Secretary General to highlight the crucial role of digital transformation in the maritime shipping industry.

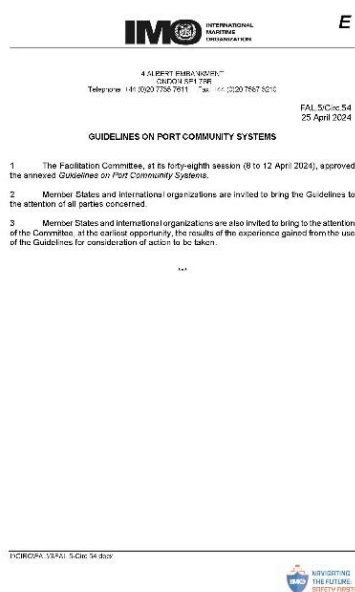
A meeting between the International Port Community Systems Association (IPCSA) and Mr. Arsenio Dominguez is scheduled for the first quarter of 2025.

A lot of countries are seeking a way to comply with IMO's regulation on MSW-obligation as from January 1st, 2024, with nice example of Curaçao Port Authority who became an IPCSA-member in 2023 with MSW-regulation as one of their main drivers.

Secretary General Nico De Cauwer was asked to conduct a 2-days workshop to create awareness amongst all related stakeholders within public authorities and private companies to present in detail on the regulation, to emphasize on the importance of bringing the community together to discuss a joint and generally approved way forward to start and plan for a roadmap to set up and comply with IMO regulation on Maritime Single Window.

Following concrete actions towards IMO have been completed in 2024:

3.1.1. Guidelines for Port Community Systems (PCS)



In 2022, IPCSA along with Morocco, Djibouti, and FONASBA, proposed to the IMO FAL the development of guidelines for Port Community Systems (PCS) to aid Member States. These guidelines aim to enhance the maritime supply chain by providing a comprehensive approach to trade facilitation, thus increasing the visibility and support for PCS operators globally. The guidelines also seek to address challenges in implementing maritime single windows, simplify transport and logistics, and reduce redundant processes and data requirements.

Following the approval of this initiative during FAL 46, a Correspondence Group was established under the coordination of Morocco.

This group was tasked with aligning the new guidelines with existing IMO standards and ensuring interoperability between maritime single windows and PCS. The group's work involved representatives from numerous countries and international organizations, with the goal of finalizing the guidelines by FAL 48.

To further support the Correspondence Group's efforts, IPCSA created an internal team of experts, including members from various fields related to maritime logistics and data solutions. More insights on internal experts work are available within IPCSA Insights 2023 available at: <https://www.ipcsa.community/thoughts/2250>

During FAL 48th session, 8-12 April 2024 The Committee approved new guidelines on Port Community Systems. Port Community Systems (PCS) serve as a complementary instrument to the Maritime Single Window (MSW) system.

The PCS guidelines provide common understanding of PCS, the role of PCS within harmonization, standardization and interoperability, interaction between PCS and MSW environments, as well as provide baseline considerations for PCS development.

Key Points:

Purpose and Scope: The guidelines are intended to help Member States overcome challenges in effectively applying the Revised guidelines for setting up a maritime single window (MSW). They aim to simplify overall transport and logistics processes and facilitate practical and measurable collaboration within the maritime community. The development of PCS guidelines will not propose creating a new standard system different from the MSW and will be recommendatory and voluntary in nature. Their development stays within the scope of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) mandate to facilitate harmonization, standardization, and interoperability of different private and public trade and maritime information exchange systems.

Relationship with MSW: While the MSW primarily focuses on Business to Government (B2G) exchanges during vessel port arrivals, stays, and departures for regulatory purposes, PCS guidelines expand to encapsulate exchanges from Business to Business (B2B), Government to Business (G2B), and even potential Government to Government (G2G) interactions. The PCS is seen as a complementary instrument to the MSW, similar to other single windows like customs or trade single windows, and a tool that can help connect maritime single windows of different countries.

Key Content Areas: The document providing these guidelines aims to provide a common understanding of PCS, describe the role of PCS within harmonization, standardization, and interoperability, explain PCS and Single Window (SW) environment interaction, and offer baseline considerations for PCS development.

Target Audience: These guidelines are aimed at public authorities and administrations responsible for developing or modifying SW and PCS environments and Contracting Governments that encourage the introduction of such environments. They are also helpful for consultants and other stakeholders involved in PCS and SW establishment.

The guidelines highlight significant benefits of PCS within the trade facilitation framework for governments, agencies, and the wider community, transforming the global logistics and trade landscape. These multifaceted benefits include:

In Depths:



The Imperative for Digitalization and Efficiency in Maritime Operations: The core motivation for developing PCS guidelines is to address the pressing need for digitalization and optimized efficiency across global supply chains. The document states, "As the maritime industry stands at a transformative juncture, the need for digitalization and optimized efficiency across supply chains becomes paramount." PCS are presented as revolutionary digital platforms that "facilitate seamless interactions and data exchange among diverse stakeholders, enhancing operations for major international ports and empowering smaller hubs globally."

Defining and Understanding Port Community Systems (PCS): A central theme is establishing a common understanding of what a PCS is. The guidelines define a PCS as "a neutral and collaborative digital platform that facilitates the intelligent and secure exchange of information between public and private stakeholders involved in port and terminal operations." It emphasizes that PCS "streamlines and optimizes port operations, enhancing competitiveness," and "serves as a single point of access to diverse port and logistics-related services." A key benefit highlighted is its support for the "reporting-once-only principle," reducing administrative burdens and improving data quality.

Distinction and Complementarity between PCS and Maritime Single Window (MSW): A critical distinction is drawn between PCS and MSW. While MSW primarily focuses on "administrative aspects related to the vessel arrival, stay and departure at the ports, i.e. Business to Government (B2G) exchange of information for regulatory purposes," PCS "goes beyond B2G and covers B2B, Government to Business (G2B) and in some cases Government to Government (G2G) exchanges." The guidelines explicitly state that "the development of a PCS will not duplicate the IMO work on MSW" and that PCS "will be recommendatory and voluntary in nature" and "a helpful tool and a complementary instrument to the maritime single window system." This clarifies their respective scopes and interoperability, noting that "it is good practice to use PCS as a data provider for MSW."



PCS as More Than Just an IT Project: The document emphasizes that implementing a PCS is a holistic endeavor, far exceeding a mere technological deployment. "While the PCS hinges on IT for its operations, classifying it as merely an IT project oversimplifies its scope and impact." Key reasons include:

- **Process Re-engineering:** "Implementing a PCS demands a thorough assessment of existing processes, identifying bottlenecks, and standardizing methods for fluid digital integration."
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** "The success of a PCS is contingent on the active participation of all stakeholders."
- **Training and Change Management:** "Transitioning to a PCS mandates a paradigm shift. Stakeholders need adequate training and support."
- **Governance:** "Establishing a robust governance framework is essential to monitor, manage, and evolve the PCS."

Benefits of PCS within the Trade Facilitation Framework: PCS integration is seen as a "revolutionized the global logistics and trade landscape." The multifaceted benefits include:

- **Supply Chain Integration:** Connecting various stakeholders for "seamless information and goods flow."
- **Data-Driven Decision-Making:** Providing "valuable data and insights... enabling informed decisions."
- **Collaboration and Coordination:** Fostering cooperation "leading to smoother and more efficient operations."
- **Environmental Sustainability:** "Optimizing logistics and reducing port congestion PCS contributes to lower emissions."
- **Facilitation of Paperless Trade:** "Digitizing and automating documentation processes, reducing paperwork, minimizing errors."
- **Streamlined Customs Procedures:** "Reducing manual interventions and paperwork, resulting in faster customs clearance."
- **Improved Revenue Collection:** "Enhancing revenue collection for governments by ensuring accurate and timely collection of customs duties, taxes, and other fees."
- **Enhanced Security and Risk Mitigation:** Enabling "better monitoring and tracking of cargo, reducing the risk of theft, damage, and unauthorized access."

Comprehensive Scope of PCS Services: The guidelines detail a wide array of services that a PCS can encompass, categorizing them for clarity:

- **Maritime Services:** Closely related to e-navigation, including Port Support Service (PSS), Pilotage, Tugs, and Vessel Shore Reporting (VSR). These are typically "implemented by means of a PCS."

- **Port Services (MS4 - PSS):** Examples include berth and mooring details, waste handling, fuel, cargo handling, provisioning, water supply, and support to Customs and Immigration. These often involve interaction between PCS and Port Operation Systems (POS) or Terminal Operating Systems (TOS).
- **Land Services:** Divided into B2B (Terminals, Shipowners/agents, Freight Forwarders, Road/Rail/Air Transport, Cargo Community Systems) and B2G (Vessel Clearance via MSW, Goods Clearance via Trade Single Windows). A key function for road transport is the "Gate Booking System" to manage congestion.
- **Transversal Community Services:** Emphasizes "Community Business Intelligence" using "big data, machine learning and artificial intelligence" to "encourage collaborative decision-making" and demonstrate benefits.
- **Passenger Services:** Crucial for cruise and ferry operations, covering "Crew and Passenger Declaration," "Crew Change Request and Approval," "Landing Certificate Generation and Approval," "Shore Pass Registration," and "Passenger Information and Communication."
- **Airport Services:** Modules like "e-AWB (Electronic Air Waybill)," "e-Booking (Electronic Booking)," "Online Certificate of Origin," "Export/Import Declaration Filing with Customs," and "Truck Dock Appointment Booking." These highlight the potential for intermodal integration of logistics chains.



PCS and the Single Window Environment: The document clarifies the relationship between PCS and the broader "Single Window Environment," including MSW and Trade Single Window (TSW). A PCS can be considered a Single Window system if it meets UNECE Recommendation n°33's "five key elements," notably having a government mandate as the "sole provider of specific regulatory functions." Otherwise, it may function as a "Single Submission Portal." The core principle for these co-existing systems is interoperability, with the PCS ideally acting as a data provider to MSW and integrating with TSW for end-to-end visibility of goods movement.

Baseline Considerations for PCS Development: Detailed considerations are provided for successful PCS implementation:

- **Creating Community:** Fostering "collaboration, trust, and mutual benefits" among stakeholders through engagement, a shared vision, transparent governance, training, incentives, and feedback mechanisms. The establishment of "PCS Steering Committee" and "PCS Working Group forum" is recommended.
- **Legal Framework:** Addressing national and international laws (e.g., electronic signatures, data privacy, competition law) and specifically for PCS, potentially

through "specific PCS regulations" or "actions of certain authorities." It highlights the importance of "Customs Act" and "Maritime Act" revisions for compliance and interoperability.

- **Organizational Model and Governance:** Defining the role of the "PCS Operator" (design, build, finance, operation, maintenance, evolution) and outlining three operating models: public entity (line ministry/port authority business unit or state-owned enterprise), Public-Private Partnership (PPP), or private operator. A robust governance framework, including various committees, is deemed "necessary to drive change management and ensure effective collaboration."
- **Functionality and Services:** Emphasizing "User-Centric Design," "Data Interchange and Integration" (using open standards and APIs), "Real-time Data Exchange," "Tracking and Documentation," "Customs and Compliance," "Security and Access," "Operational Visibility," "Notification and Alerts," "Booking and Scheduling," "Reporting and Analytics," "Mobile Functionality," "Collaboration Tools," "Scalability," "Sustainability," "APIs and Extensibility," and "Continuous Updates."
- **Technology and Cybersecurity:** Stressing "Scalable Architecture" (cloud-based or on-premise), "Interoperability" (international data standards), "Data Management," diverse "Connections and interfaces" (API for large enterprises, web/mobile for SMEs), and the critical need for "cybersecurity by design." This includes adhering to standards like ISO/IEC 27001/2 and IAPH guidelines, implementing "Access control protection measures," and ensuring "High Availability" with redundancy and disaster recovery plans.
- **Ongoing Development:** Recognizing the need for continuous evolution through "Feedback Channels," "Agile Development," "Training and Education," "Innovation Exploration," "Tech Advancement Evaluation," "Performance Monitoring," "Scalability Planning," "Redundancy and Security," "Compliance Updates," "Stakeholder Engagement," "Documentation and Changelog," "Sustainable Funding," and "Market Analysis."



In conclusion, the guidelines provide a comprehensive roadmap for Member States to develop and implement PCS, acknowledging its complexity and multi-faceted impact beyond mere technological deployment. The emphasis on collaboration, clear definitions, legal robustness, and continuous adaptation underlines the holistic approach required for successful PCS integration into the global trade and maritime landscape.

3.1.2. A data set for dangerous goods has been issued to EGDH to be considered for inclusion in the IMO Reference Model.

In October 2024, the 11th session of the Expert Group on Data Harmonization (EGDH #11) commenced with great enthusiasm at the International Maritime Organization (IMO) headquarters in London. This pivotal event marked another step forward in the global efforts to streamline data elements within the maritime shipping industry, a critical sector of international trade.

Among the distinguished participants was Nico De Cauwer, the Secretary-General of the International Port Community Systems Association (IPCSA), who joined the Expert Group in their mission to refine and enhance the "IMO Reference Model." This model serves as a cornerstone for harmonizing data elements that are crucial for efficient maritime operations worldwide.

In a significant contribution to the session, IPCSA submitted a comprehensive data set aimed at expanding the current data elements related to the transport of dangerous goods. This submission, detailed in the document EGDH 11/3/1, seeks to build upon the existing IMO Reference Model by incorporating elements that extend beyond the standard Facilitation (FAL) 7 declaration. These enhancements are also compatible with the PROTECT group's IFTDGN-message, offering broader applicability and integration.

Notably, the proposed data elements align with the European Maritime Single Window environment (EMSWe) regulation, which is already in force across the European Union. This alignment underscores the forward-thinking approach of IPCSA in ensuring that their contributions are in sync with existing regulatory frameworks, thereby facilitating smoother implementation and adoption.

The creation of this submission was made possible through the dedicated efforts of Cor Koert from the Port of Rotterdam. His invaluable support and collaboration were instrumental in shaping the proposal, and IPCSA extends its deepest gratitude to him for his contributions.

Also, in the months before EGDH 11 an extensive review and assessment of the IMO Compendium on Facilitation and Electronic Business and its use was conducted by an independent expert, and on the meeting the provided recommendations on the way forward were discussed and considered. IPCSA was inquired on experts and through its extensive network it proposed to IMO FAL that due to his expertise in the domain and technical skills that Mr. David Roff was the most suitable person to conduct this assessment. David assessed the current framework of the IMO Compendium and made a nice, comprehensive report on the matter.

All related documents the EGDH #11 can be found on IPCSA Community at:
<https://www.ipcsa.community/thoughts/2409>

The discussion of the results in EGDH 11 will lead to several positive elements and evolutions on how the Compendium can be used and be more widespread and known within the maritime industry.

3.2. IPCSA Collaboration with UN/CEFACT



In the last few years, IPCSA had not been present at the UN/CEFACT bi-annual Fora due to various circumstances. However, in 2024, IPCSA has renewed its engagement by attending the Forum in Geneva, aiming to contribute more actively to initiatives where UNECE and the UN/CEFACT subdomain are influential in regional projects.

The 42nd UN/CEFACT Forum was held at the Palais des Nations in Geneva from July 8th to 10th. It was part of the Sustainable and Digital Trade Facilitation Week organized by UNECE. IPCSA's Secretary-General, Nico De Cauwer, participated in the Forum and attended several panel discussions over the three days. The opening policy discussion provided insights and examples of how UN/CEFACT's Multimodal Transport Model (MMT) can enhance sustainable and digital trade, highlighting key elements of the WTO's Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) that advocate for paperless trading.

Subsequent technical sessions explored the implementation of trusted identities in digital trade corridors, the development of the UN Transparency Protocol (UNTP) for specific industries like critical raw materials, textiles, and agriculture supply chains, and investigated solutions at the intersection of sustainability and digitalization. Topics included eBL systems, IoT, and AI, which are shaping the future of global trade in the context of 'Green Digital Trade'.

Between panel sessions, there were also insightful 'learning sessions', notably those in which IPCSA is involved. These included a session by Pamela Mar from ICC DSI on the digitalisation of key electronic documents in global supply chains, and Mikael Renz on the harmonisation of maritime data using the IMO Compendium.

All program sessions and materials are available on UN/CEFACT's website at: <https://unece.org/info/events/event/381496>

3.3. IPCSA Participation in ICC DSI

ICC Digital Trade Standards Initiative (DSI) is a collaborative cross-industry effort to enable the standardisation of digital trade.

DSI is based in Singapore, backed by an international Governance Board comprising leaders from the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), Enterprise Singapore, the Asian Development Bank, the World Trade Organisation and the World Customs Organisation.

DSI will build on work done by various likeminded initiatives, many of which aim to digitise trade, notably through the development of open trade and technology standards to promote interoperability.

The ICC DSI is promoting greater economic inclusion through the development of open trade standards. This will facilitate technical interoperability among the variety of blockchain-based networks and technology platforms that have entered the trade space over the past two years.

“Universal standards will connect existing digital islands and enable market forces to improve customer experience,” said ICC Secretary General John W.H. Denton AO. “As a leading and neutral voice in the industry, it made sense to bring this project under the umbrella of ICC. This will allow the ICC DSI to lead and coordinate efforts in developing standards and protocols to digitise trade.”

“The ICC DSI seeks to coordinate all parties in the standardisation of data formats and processes, rather than duplicate existing efforts. In turn, membership will be open to all organisations across industries and geographies supporting the project’s core mandate, including existing industry associations and initiatives,” explained Steven Beck, Head of Trade Finance at the Asian Development Bank.

The ICC DSI is engaging with the public and private sectors formally through the Legal Reform Advisory Board (LRAB) and the Industry Advisory Board (IAB).

3.3.1. Industry Advisory Board

The ICC Digital Standards Initiative Industry Advisory Board has a cross-regional and cross-industry representation, bringing together leaders with diverse backgrounds and experiences who share a passion for solving key challenges facing trade digitization efforts.

The Industry Advisory Board enables the DSI to engage senior stakeholders within a neutral governed venue to contribute towards standards development, educational development and advocacy for standards adoption.

Nico De Cauwer, IPCSA Secretary General is representing IPCSA within Industry Advisory Board.

3.3.2. Legal Reform Advisory Board

The ICC Digital Standards Initiative Legal Reform Advisory Board (LRAB) has a cross regional and cross-industry representation, bringing together leaders with diverse backgrounds and experiences who share the belief that a globally harmonised, enabling



legal environment is foundational to making digitalised trade a reality. IPCSA has been a member of the ICC Digital Standards Initiative since August 2021.

IPCSA is represented on the Legal Reform Advisory Board by its General Manager Inga Morton.

LRAB seeks to scale up legal reform worldwide and works alongside the DSI Industry Advisory Board, which advocates for the adoption of harmonised digital standards across international supply chains.

In 2023 LRAB held meetings #4 through #8.

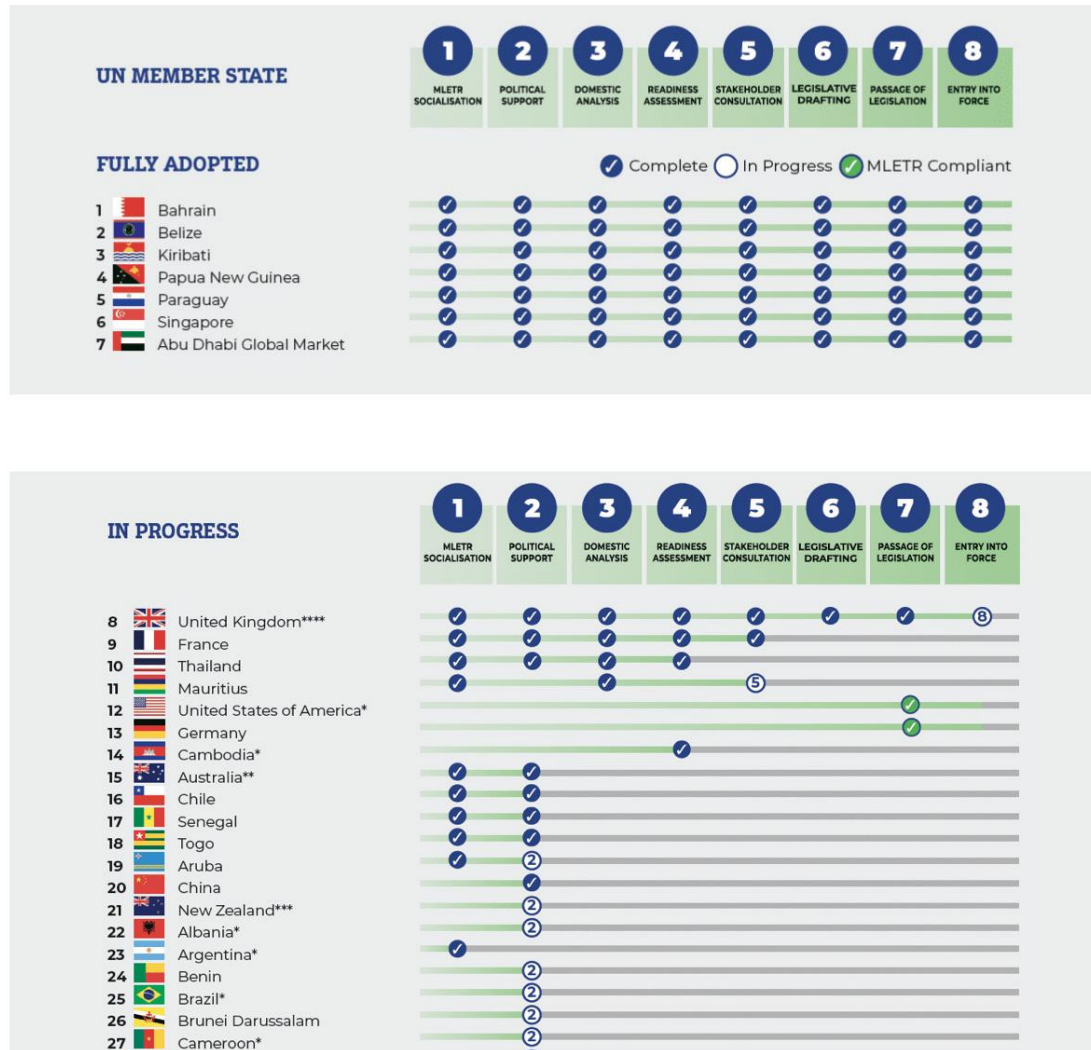
UNCITRAL Model Law on Electronic Transferable Records

The UNCITRAL Model Law on Electronic Transferable Records (MLETR) is a pivotal focus for the Legal Reform Advisory Board (LRAB), aiming to globally advance its implementation. This model law offers a legal framework for using electronic transferable records, acknowledging their functional parity with traditional paper documents such as bills of lading, promissory notes, and warehouse receipts. In logistics, the legal recognition of electronic documents is crucial for maritime and air transport, influencing port and logistics activities. For instance, the UK's Electronic Trade Documents Act, effective from September 2023, legally acknowledges electronic trade documents, including electronic bills of lading, within English law, positioning the UK at the forefront of this legal evolution.

This advancement facilitates the digital transfer of ownership and responsibilities, traditionally managed by paper, accelerating trade and easing administrative loads in ports and supply chains. Numerous G7 countries, along with China, Georgia, Vietnam, and the US, have pledged to align their laws with the MLETR. Specific US states, including four out of the five largest port states, have adopted the new UCC amendment recognizing electronic trade documents. France has also introduced legislation concerning Maritime and River Bills of Lading.

Link to UK's Electronic Trade Documents Act can be found on Official UK Legislation webpage: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2023/38/contents>

MLETR Tracker



The MLETR Tracker is a data base (accessible at <https://www.digitalizetrade.org/mletr>) that monitors the global status of MLETR adoption and alignment. This tracker provides a clear, stage-by-stage roadmap for governments to implement the necessary legal reforms for digital trade. The direct involvement of Customs and Transport experts in the working groups ensures that the specific needs and challenges of the logistics industry are addressed in legal reforms, leading to smoother, legally recognized digital processes. It presents a gradual roadmap for countries through five key stages:

1. **MLETR Socialisation:** Disseminating MLETR knowledge to policymakers via capacity-building events, economic research, or stakeholder consultations.

2. **Political Support:** A jurisdiction's commitment to MLETR adoption through public pronouncements, political declarations, or trade pacts.

3. **Champion Identification:** Designating ownership of MLETR within the government, typically by a specific department.

4. **Working Group Establishment:** Forming a working group with experts from sectors like Finance, Justice, Trade, Customs, Transport, and Digital. This stage involves appointing a lead drafter, defining roles, and promoting collaboration.

5. **Readiness Assessment:** The jurisdiction evaluates or receives technical assistance to identify which laws need modification for MLETR alignment.

In 2024, the two pivotal documents emphasising the importance of interoperability, common standards, and comprehensive digital processes were published. These documents outline strategies to make global trade more efficient, cost-effective, and sustainable by streamlining operations and enhancing collaboration across different sectors. By focusing on these key areas, DCSI aims to pave the way for a faster and more environmentally friendly trading system that benefits all stakeholders.

3.3.3. Insight into the recent guidelines by ICC DSI

3.3.3.1. "Seizing the Moment: Unleashing the potential of trade digitalisation"



The central message is a strong appeal to stakeholders, especially corporate treasury and strategy teams, as well as government policymakers, to adopt and expand digital paperless trade. Recent legal developments, particularly the Electronic Trade Documents Act (ETDA) in English law, in line with the UNCITRAL Model Law on Electronic Transferable Records (MLETR), have established an unparalleled legal framework for digital trade, encompassing 80-90% of international trade transactions.

The report highlights concrete commercial benefits, such as increased profitability, improved liquidity, substantial cost savings, enhanced efficiency, and simplified ESG reporting. It envisions a future where data replaces paper, processes are streamlined, financial transactions occur in real-time, and supply chain trade data flows in standardized formats across interoperable public and private sector systems. This concept extends beyond customs or trade facilitation to cover the entire trade system, integrating sustainability data for complete transparency and accurate ESG reporting.

The focus is on interoperability, common standards, and end-to-end digital processes to fully realise a more economical, faster, simpler, and sustainable global trade system.

Key findings:

Enhanced Efficiency and Speed: The report demonstrates how digitalisation directly impacts the efficiency of border and logistics processes, which are central to PCS and SWO operations [11]. * Case Study 12 (Air Cargo Partnership): Showed an 80% reduction in goods waiting times and a 70% efficiency improvement in cargo reception processes by enabling effective pre-clearance through digital exchange of e-airway bills [28, 29]. * Case Study 14 (Firewood Manufacturer): Achieved an 80% decrease in the time taken for processing import documentation and a 75% per transaction cost reduction for automated customs clearance [30, 31]. * Case Study 6 (Oil Major): Reduced vessel berthing time from three hours to minutes using an e-bill of lading, directly cutting associated costs [32].

Reduced Administrative Burden and Risk: Digitalisation eliminates the need for physical paper documents, thereby reducing administrative costs, courier delays, and the risk of loss, theft, or forgery.

Legal Alignment: The legal recognition of digital documents of title through MLETR-aligned laws (like ETDA) provides a strong legal basis for all transport chain stakeholders to fully digitize their operations, reducing legal uncertainties that might have previously hindered adoption. Governments that do not remove these legal barriers risk becoming uncompetitive.

Greater Transparency and Real-time Monitoring: Digital systems provide real-time visibility of cargo movement to all interested parties, which is not possible with paper. This facilitates better monitoring and decision-making for port and border authorities.

Interoperability and Standardisation: For PCS and SWO, the imperative is to ensure their existing customs and trade facilitation initiatives interoperate seamlessly with newer developments in electronic transactions and finance, creating a truly paperless trade ecosystem. The emphasis on singular, common standards will be crucial for these platforms to exchange information freely with other public and private sector systems].

Commercial Benefits and Economic Prize: Companies embracing digital trade stand to gain enhanced liquidity, risk mitigation, cost reduction, simplified ESG reporting, improved profitability, and broader market access. The economic prize is substantial, with evidence pointing to:

- An 80% cut in trade transaction costs.
- A 50% reduction in the trade finance gap.
- Cross-border processing times cut from 25 days to one day.
- A 35% increase in SME efficiency.

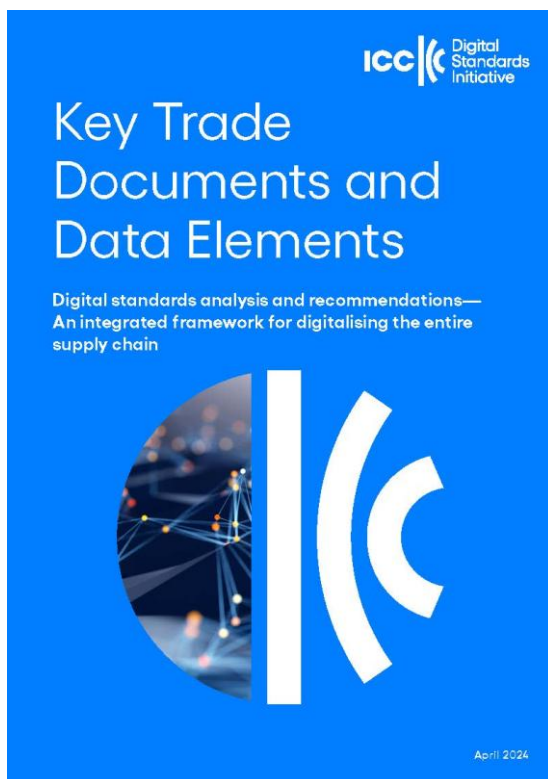
Sustainability: Greater supply chain transparency, improved ESG reporting, reduced ESG risk, enhanced operational resilience, and less waste and paper use.

Data Security and Privacy: While cyber-attacks are a concern, the report notes that a robust approach to data security is necessary for trade, just as for other digital economies, and argues that the risks of paper-based systems are arguably larger .

Upskilling Workforce: The shift demands new skillsets, implying that personnel operating digital platforms will require continuous training and skill development to manage digital processes effectively.

Link to the report " Seizing the Moment: Unleashing the potential of trade available at:
[https://iccwbo.uk/wpcontent/uploads/2024/04/Seizing the moment Unleashing the power of trade digitalisation report.pdf](https://iccwbo.uk/wpcontent/uploads/2024/04/Seizing_the_moment_Unleashing_the_power_of_trade_digitalisation_report.pdf)

3.3.3.2. Key Trade Documents and Data Elements



The Report serves as a guide to how different trade documents and their shared data elements work together across the supply chain, highlighting existing standards rather than developing new ones. It aims to accelerate trade digitalization efforts by analyzing 36 key trade documents and their associated data elements across the entire global supply chain.

Key findings:

Core Purpose: The report aims to accelerate trade digitalisation efforts by analyzing 36 key trade documents and their associated data elements across the entire global supply chain.

Foundational Vision: It emphasises working through the key trade documents that underpin every transaction to ensure seamless data flow using core data elements as connectors. The vision is to achieve a harmonized, interoperable digital trade ecosystem.

Standards: The analysis revealed that less than 200 key data elements are utilized across vital trade documents, with many shared across multiple documents. Crucially, it confirmed the suitability of existing standards, noting that no new data standards need to be developed to digitalize the trade processes covered.

Approach to Digitalisation: The ICC DSI applies principles of "adapt and apply" (highlighting existing standards), "convene and collaborate" (leveraging work from various organizations), and "transparency and accessibility" (providing a simpler, trusted standards baseline for all players).

Deliverables: In addition to the report, a comprehensive trade document analysis and a Key Trade Data Glossary have been developed as an interactive web tool. This glossary is integral for identifying core functions, features, and shareable and interoperable data elements

In depths:

Current state of digitalization

The analysis of the 36 key trade documents reveals a varied landscape of digitalization:

- **21 documents** already possess standardized electronic versions, demonstrating a significant degree of semantic and technical interoperability, indicating they are ready for widespread adoption.
- **6 documents** have multiple electronic standards that currently lack semantic or technical interoperability, necessitating collaboration among standards development organizations to bridge these gaps.
- **9 documents** are in the early stages of standards development, signifying that substantial work is still required to achieve standardization.

Overall, while some progress has been made, particularly with documents like the Air Waybill and Customs Declaration being in advanced stages of digitalization, the report identifies a general lack of overall stakeholder coordination as a barrier to accelerating digitalization across global supply chains.

The four foundational factors

To drive digitalization and interoperability of data sharing along the international supply chain, four foundational factors are identified:

- **Standardization of electronic documentation:** This involves the development, relevance, and applicability of digital standards, often gaining momentum when there's widespread recognition of the need for digitalization and stakeholder collaboration.
- **Legislative and regulatory support:** For documents with regulatory or compliance functions, industry needs assurance that electronic standards meet legal requirements, and ideally, regulators should partner with the industry to drive digitalization.
- **Industry convergence and engagement:** Engaging key users of digitalised processes is essential to educate and drive the adoption of necessary standards, especially for "voluntary" digitalisation where the individual business case for adoption must be clear.
- **Adoption at scale where digitalization takes place across national borders:** Digitalization needs to occur broadly, even in cases where full legislative support might not yet be in place.

These factors are not necessarily sequential but rather interdependent, with widespread stakeholder engagement being crucial for large-scale digitalization.

The cross-cutting

The cross-cutting recommendations emphasize a holistic, cross-sectoral approach to digitalization, focusing on stakeholder collaboration:

- **Digital infrastructure:** Exporters, importers, financial institutions, and logistics providers should actively participate in developing and using digital platforms and exchange protocols compatible with multiple major standards.
- **Streamlining data exchange with global data standards:** All trade actors, including regulatory bodies, should adopt best practices for Key Data Elements as outlined in the Key Trade Data Glossary, leveraging standardized identifiers for enhanced accuracy and reliability.
- **Addressing digital identity challenges:** Promote the use of globally-unique, interoperable identifiers (e.g., Legal Entity Identifier - LEI, Global Location Number - GLN) for legal entities, locations, functions, and objects of trade, aligning with relevant ISO standards.
- **Regulatory collaboration and uniform rules for digital information sharing:** Governments and regulatory bodies should collaborate to establish forward-thinking regulations that bolster digital trade, focusing on secure, verifiable transactions and interoperable frameworks.
- **Digital-first strategy and ecosystem-wide engagement:** Advocate for a digital-first orientation, considering varying market maturity levels and actively supporting initiatives that promote trusted, scalable decentralised data exchange, backed by high-level sponsorship and community advocacy.

Categorisation of the 36 key trade documents

The report categorizes the 36 key trade documents according to the UN/CEFACT Buy-Ship-Pay Model, reflecting different stages of the trade process:

- **Buy (Commercial Processes):** Includes documents like the Purchase Order (intermediate stage of digitalization with various standards) and the Commercial Invoice (intermediate to advanced stage, with widespread e-invoicing platforms).
- **Ship (Transport Processes):** Examples include the Bill of Lading (intermediate, facing interoperability and legal landscape challenges), Air Waybill (advanced, with high e-AWB adoption and IATA ONE Record transition), and Dangerous Goods Declaration (moving towards digital adaptation but with multimodal complexity).
- **Border and Regulatory Processes:** Features documents such as the Customs Declaration (highly digitalized, utilizing the WCO Data Model), Phytosanitary Certificate (advancing with ePhyto adoption), and the ATA Carnet (advanced, with an efficient system for temporary duty-free importation).
- **Pay (Financial Processes):** Includes the Letter of Credit (intermediate, still reliant on paper-based document checking despite digital transmission) and Payment Confirmation (advanced, with Swift network and ISO 20022 adoption).

Specific recommendations for the private sector

The report provides tailored recommendations for various private sector stakeholders:

- **Exporters and importers:** Are encouraged to implement globally recognized standards, use the Key Trade Data Glossary for data element alignment, leverage standardized identifiers, and adopt digital trade documents to streamline international transactions.
- **Freight forwarders and logistics service providers:** Should adopt paperless processes to enhance efficiency and use technology to increase their value-added services, especially with momentum gathering for digital advancements like electronic Bills of Lading.
- **Financial institutions:** Should actively work with industry bodies to promote legal alignment with the UNCITRAL Model Law on Electronic Transferable Records (MLETR), embrace a digital-first approach in product development, and support the adoption of the Legal Entity Identifier (LEI) for efficient cross-border payments.
- **Insurance companies:** Are advised to develop and standardize digital insurance certificates globally to bridge the digital gap between shipping, trade finance, and risk mitigation.
- **Technology solution providers:** Are identified as key innovation drivers and should develop and offer interoperable tools built on standardised semantics and verifiability.

Governments and policy makers

Governments and policy makers play a crucial role in enabling and accelerating digital trade transformation:

- **Creating, adapting, and aligning policies:** They should establish policies conducive to digital trade.
- **Facilitating industry's ability to deliver reusable data:** Support initiatives that allow industry to provide data that can be reused for government processes.
- **Supporting scalable, decentralized data exchange:** Promote initiatives that lead to the evolution of data-centric systems.
- **Prioritizing open standards:** Use standards that render collected data searchable and machine-readable, prioritizing non-proprietary, open-license standards developed by voluntary consensus-based organizations.
- **Collaborating on regulatory processes:** Work with other governments and intergovernmental organizations to create uniform rules that do not prohibit information sharing across global supply chains.
- **Aligning legal systems:** Encourage trade digitalization by aligning legal systems with the UNCITRAL Model Law on Electronic Records (MLETR) and showing visible support for digital trade documentation, including government border processes.
- **Adopting global digital identity standards:** Enable the adoption of standards like LEI, GLN, or GTIN, and ensure interoperability with existing national digital identity standards.

Standardized identifiers

Standardized identifiers, such as the Global Trade Item Number (GTIN) and Legal Entity Identifier (LEI), are highlighted as crucial for achieving efficient, transparent, and trustworthy digital trade:

- **Global Trade Item Numbers (GTINs):** These are globally-unique, interoperable identifiers for trade items, enabling efficient identification and tracking across supply chains. China Customs, for example, has mandated GTINs for certain imported products to streamline declaration processes, reduce manual data entry, enhance accuracy, and expedite clearance.
- **Legal Entity Identifiers (LEIs):** These are unique, global identifiers for legal entities involved in financial transactions, providing transparency about ownership structure. Mandated by over 200 financial regulators, LEIs are expanding beyond regulated use to enhance trust and efficiency in all types of trade. A proof-of-concept demonstrates how embedding LEIs within eSeals on e-invoices can confirm the authenticity of both the document and the sending organization, addressing cross-border interoperability and counterparty trust issues.

These identifiers are seen as transformative tools that facilitate the reuse of business data in government systems, improve goods traceability for compliance, and foster better data quality for informed decision-making.

Link to the full Report is available on ICC webpage at: <https://iccwbo.org/news-publications/news/icc-digital-standards-initiative-launches-complete-framework-for-supply-chain-digitalisation/#top>

IV IPCSA working domain – Customs, Lead by Uwe Liebschner

4.1. EU Customs Systems: ICS2, PoUS, and AES Updates 2024

4.1.1. Import Control System 2 (ICS2) - Phase 3 Focus

ICS2 is the EU's new advance cargo information system designed to enhance security and safety for goods entering the customs territory of the Union. Phase 3, encompassing maritime, rail, and road transport, is a critical step in its full implementation.

Key Developments and Timelines:

- **Go-Live:** ICS2 Release 3 went live on **June 3, 2024**, for maritime, rail, and road transport.
- **Upcoming Releases: August 2024 (Release 3.0.0.0):** Implemented corrections from the Known Error List (KEL). (In production as of August 26, 2024)
- **September 2024 (Release 3.0.1.0):** EO conformance enhancements and further KEL corrections. (Planned for production on October 28, 2024)
- **December 2024 (Release 3.0.2.0):** Will enable Parallel Processing of messages and changes related to unavailability. (Estimated production end of December 2024)
- **Q1 2025 (Release 3.1.0.0):** New message changes, further KELs from CFSS 2.04, and CTSS. (Planned production end of Q1 2025)
- **Q3/Q4 2025 (Release 3.2.0.0):** Implementation of multiple filing for rail. (Planned production Q4 2025)
- **Operational Guidance and Known Issues:**
 - **Pre-arrival Guidance:** New guidance for the "pre-arrival" period is available, detailing security and safety referrals, fallback procedures, and communication channels.
 - **Maritime Phase 3 Guidance:** Still **not available**, despite long-standing announcements. The EU Commission attributes this to "a reassessment of internal prioritisation."
 - **Conformance Testing:** Mandatory for each phase, requiring a separate test run for Phase 3.
 - **Service Desk Support:** IPCSA and trade representatives have requested significant improvements to "service desk support," with the EU Commission promising further discussion with Member States (MSs) as National Help Desks are responsible for clients.



- **Multiple Filing:** The EU Commission is developing a video trailer to explain multiple filing in ICS2 (requested by IPCSA) and working on functionalities for multiple filing in road transport (2025).
- **Ro-Ro Business Processes:** Open questions remain regarding these processes; clarifications are hoped for after the summer break.
- **E-Learning:** "ICS2 Processes for Maritime" e-learning is available since May 22, 2024, on the Customs and Tax EU Learning Portal. Rail and road e-learning are under preparation.
- **Business Continuity:** An ICS2 Business Continuity document and KEL 1.40 are available. In case of ICS2 system unavailability, Economic Operators (EOs) should

continue to lodge messages and *not* resend the same messages multiple times or use "split consignment" or "re-entry" indicators without a real business need. If no response is received within 30 minutes, EOs should contact their National Service Desk.

ICS2:
The new EU Customs Advance Cargo Information System

The European Union is implementing a new customs pre-arrival security and safety programme, underpinned by a large-scale advance cargo information system – Import Control System 2 (ICS2).

WHAT IS ICS2?
ICS2 is a new IT system created to collect data about all goods entering the EU prior to their arrival. Economic Operators (EOs) will have to declare safety and security data to ICS2, through the Entry Summary Declaration (ENS).
The system aims to better protect Europe's single market and its citizens with new customs safety and security measures and will facilitate free flow of trade through improved data-driven customs security processes, adapted to global business models.

WHO IS DIRECTLY AFFECTED BY ICS2?
EXPRESS CARRIERS
POSTAL OPERATORS INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE EU
FREIGHT FORWARDING AND LOGISTICS COMPANIES
AIR CARGO CARRIERS
MARITIME, RAIL AND ROAD TRANSPORT CARRIERS
FINAL CONSIGNEE ESTABLISHED IN THE EU (for goods received by sea)
REPRESENTATIVES OF ALL AFFECTED EOs

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF ICS2?
➤ Increasing the protection of EU citizens and the internal market against security and safety threats.
➤ Allowing EU Customs authorities to better identify high risk consignments and intervene at the most appropriate point in supply chain.
➤ Supporting proportionate, targeted customs measures at the external borders in crisis response scenarios.
➤ Facilitating cross-border clearance for the legitimate trade.
➤ Simplifying the exchange of information between EOs and EU Customs Authorities.

Core Principles of ENS Lodgement (from ICS2 Operational Guidance):

- **Requirement:** All goods entering the EU customs territory, including "freight remaining on board" (FROB), must be covered by an Entry Summary Declaration (ENS) unless specifically waived.
- **Waivers:** Certain goods (e.g., items of correspondence not containing goods, military goods covered by specific forms, diplomatic mail, goods in transit through territorial waters/airspace without stopping) are exempt.
- **Place of Lodgement:** ENS must be lodged at the customs office of first entry. For multiple filings, partial or minimum datasets should be lodged with the known or determined customs office of first entry (e.g., based on consignment destination if first entry point is unknown).
- **Time Limits:** Strict time limits apply based on the mode of transport (e.g., 24 hours prior to loading for containerized sea cargo, 4 hours prior to arrival for long-haul air flights, 1 hour prior to arrival for road).
- **Responsible Party:** The carrier is primarily responsible, but the importer, consignee, or any person able to present the goods to customs may lodge the ENS. In complex scenarios like vessel-sharing agreements, the bill of lading issuing carrier is responsible. Other parties holding necessary particulars (e.g., freight forwarders) may be required to provide them.
- **EORI Number:** Mandatory for EOs performing customs formalities (declarant, representative, carrier, consignee if EORI assigned).

- **Data Requirements:** ENS contains particulars for security and safety risk analysis. It can be a single submission or several partial submissions (multiple filing). A complete ENS has a declaration level, master consignment level, house consignment level, and goods shipment level. "Only one ENS can be lodged per master level transport contract issued by the carrier."
- **ENS Filing Types (F-codes):** Various F-codes exist for different transport modes, cargo types (air cargo general, postal, express), and filing scenarios (complete, partial, minimum data sets for pre-loading).
- **Linking and Completeness:** Multiple ENS submissions are linked using a "unique linking key" (ULK) comprising the transport document reference number, carrier EORI, and supplementary declarant/declarant EORI. A "linking expiration timer" is set to ensure completeness; missing filings trigger notifications.
- **Re-entry:** If a vessel/aircraft leaves and re-enters EU territory (or passes through a third country), a new ENS with a "re-entry indicator" must be lodged for all goods remaining on board. If the transport contract changes in the third country, a completely new ENS is required.
- **Split Consignment:** For maritime and air transport, if not all cargo can be loaded on the same means of transport, a new ENS (with "split consignment indicator" and reference to the original MRN) must be lodged for the remaining part. This is not applicable for road or rail.
- **Risk Analysis:Pre-loading Risk Assessment:** Focuses on aviation security risks ("bomb-in-the-box"), applicable only to air cargo. Triggered immediately after the minimum pre-loading data set (PLACI) is lodged. Can lead to "High Risk Cargo and Mail screening" requests or "Do Not Load" (DNL) orders.
- **Pre-arrival Risk Assessment:** Assesses a wider range of safety and security threats for all modes of transport. Triggered once a valid ENS is submitted. Can result in "Request for Information" (Rfi) or "Request for Amendment" (AMD) to mitigate risks. For maritime deep sea containerized cargo, a DNL can be issued at this stage.
- **Assessment Complete (AC) Notification:** Sent once risk assessment is finalized. While optional for EOs to receive, it is highly recommended. AC may still be followed by Rfi or DNL if new intelligence arises.
- **Amendments and Invalidation:** EOs can amend their ENS filings but not those lodged by other parties. Amendments are not possible after customs intend to examine goods, find particulars incorrect, or goods are presented. Certain unique identifiers or linking elements cannot be amended, requiring invalidation and re-submission. ENS can be invalidated if goods are not brought into the EU, either upon application or automatically after 200 days.
- **Declarations Instead of ENS:** Possible only via transit declarations submitted through NCTS P6 in opting-in MSs, where ENS particulars will be extracted. Full data set is required; multiple ENS filing is not possible via this method.
- **Arrival Notification:** Required for sea-going vessels or aircraft upon arrival at the customs office of first entry. Must reference the ENS(s) by MRN, master transport document, or "entry key."
- **Presentation:** Goods must be presented to customs immediately upon arrival. Presentation notifications are submitted to national presentation systems,

which then feed into ICS2. Controls can be notified in advance for AEO(S) status holders.

4.1.2. Proof of Union Status (PoUS) System

The PoUS system is an IT solution for re-engineering customs processes related to proofs of Union status, aiming for efficiency, effectiveness, and uniform application across Member States.

Functionality:

- Allows customs authorities to store and exchange proof of Union Status document data.
- Enables EOs to interact with customs authorities in any MS consistently regarding proofs of Union Status.
- The PoUS Specific Trader Portal (PoUS STP) facilitates electronic communication, with EOs receiving notifications via EUCTP.
- The PoUS Back Office (PoUS BO) manages proof at customs offices.

Phases and Dates:

- **Phase 1 (T2L/T2LF):** In production since **March 2023**. This phase supports registration and use of T2L/T2LF.
- **Phase 2 (CGM - Customs Goods Manifest):** Planned go-live on **August 15, 2025**. This phase will provide functionalities to indicate and prove customs status using the CGM. Alignment with eMSWE parallel implementation is ongoing.
- A first PoUS STP/BO delivery for Phase 2 was made, but parallel installation/testing with Phase 1 versions is currently not possible in ITSM.
- The next delivery in **January 2025** will allow simultaneous installation in the same environment.
- **System-to-System (S2S) Connection - A Major Issue:**
- A significant concern for trade is the current **lack of Machine-to-Machine (M2M) / System-to-System (S2S) connection** for PoUS. The EU Commission initially stated this functionality was not explicitly requested.
- Following "a number of complaints and written requests," the Commission has initiated an investigation into developing and implementing this "necessary functionality as soon as possible."
- **Suggested Steps for S2S:T2L/F Phase 1 S2S:** Already implemented and in use since March 2024; an extension to enable S2S is requested by 10 MSs and trade associations.
- **CGM Phase 2 S2S:** DG TAXUD is "considering the possibility of a transitional window during which MS traders could continue to use existing paper-based procedures until MS NMSWs are ready." The plan is to be ready by **August 2025**, with rollout aligned to eMSWE final dates.

Resources:

- E-learning for PoUS is available.
- The PoUS information page is one of the first projects to use the EU Commission's redesigned web structure.

4.1.3. Automated Export System (AES)

The AES is crucial for accurate data exchange for exports leaving the EU customs territory.

Situation:

- As of early October 2024, **26 Member States** have officially indicated they will meet the deadlines for the new AES version, operating before the legal UCC deadline.
- **France** has officially stated that it will "definitely not be ready within the set legal deadline."
- **Impact of French Non-Compliance:** Failure would mean "no accurate data exchange between the MSs can take place" and "exports that leave the EU customs territory via France from another MS would not receive an electronic confirmation of exit in the usual sense, or that the issuing of such a confirmation would be disrupted."
- **EU Commission Stance:** The EU Commission is "categorically rejecting" a renewed derogation for France and postponement of the legal deadline. They have "kicked the ball back into the MS's court" for written positions, which *could* lead to a re-evaluation of France's request. **"To be clear: there is currently no plan B!!!"**
- Further clarity is expected at the ECCG meeting at the end of November.



4.1.4. ETCIT and IPCSA Support

ETCIT Initiative:

- The Expert Team on new approaches to develop and operate Customs IT systems (ETCIT) is an EU Commission initiative to streamline IT system development and implementation across MSs.
- Its aim is to "avoid duplication of efforts by stakeholders" and ensure "cost-effective allocation of resources."

- **Phase III** (started April 2022) focuses on further improving future collaboration among MS Customs services, using synergies, and developing/implementing systems cooperatively.

UK Budget Impact on HMRC:

- Recent UK budget planning indicates "significant efficiencies across departments," including **£107 million savings in HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC)** in 2025-26.
- The government is "investing in modernising IT and data systems to improve HMRC's productivity and improve taxpayers' experience."
- Ambitions include "making better use of data and raising the standards of tax advisers who interact with HMRC." This suggests a focus on digital transformation and compliance, despite the budget cuts.

This briefing highlights ongoing efforts to modernize and harmonize customs IT systems across the EU, the challenges of complex multi-stakeholder projects, and the critical importance of timely implementation for trade facilitation and security. The situation with France's AES implementation remains a significant point of concern.

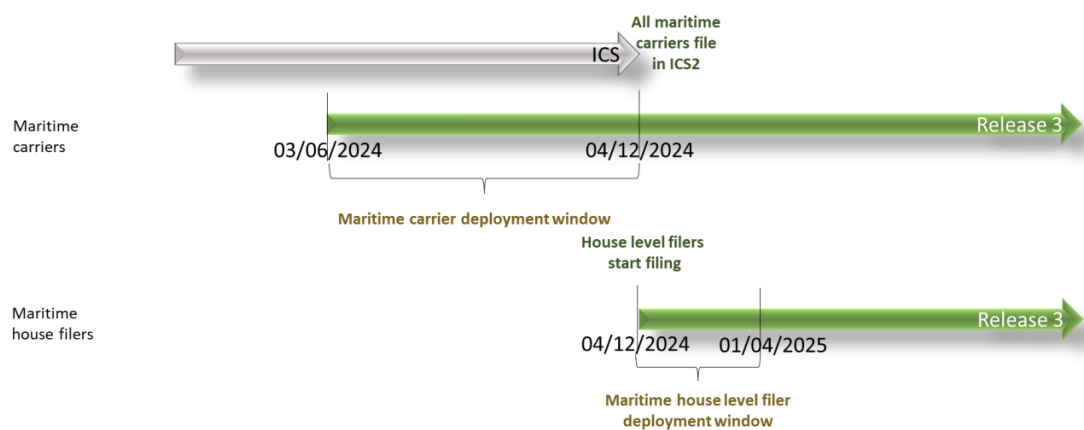
4.2. ICS2 Rel 3 – Project Group meeting, on the 8th Feb 2024

A meeting regarding the ICS2 Release 3 project group was held on February 8, 2024, to discuss the current progress, implementation status, and upcoming milestones. During this meeting, the EU Commission's DG TAXUD ICS2 team provided clarifications and additional information. The main points concluded from the meeting were:

1. Conformance Test Environment: It was confirmed that technical issues and incorrect configurations had previously made the test environment inaccessible or unresponsive. However, the Commission informed us that these problems have been resolved. Since January 31, 2024, the test environment for Conformance Testing (CT) and solution certification by Economic Operators (EOs) is once again accessible, allowing testing to proceed as planned.

2. Deployment Window for EOs: New dates for deployment were announced. The Commission, in collaboration with the Member States, has decided to form different groups for deployment windows. For Release 3, these groups are divided into:

- Maritime Carriers (on master level): June 3, 2024, to December 4, 2024
- Maritime House Filers (multiple filing): December 4, 2024, to April 1, 2025
- Rail/Road Operators: April 1, 2025, to September 1, 2025



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

3. EORI Number Requirement: It is crucial to ensure all parties, especially those involved in multiple filings, have an EORI number for proper identification throughout the process. IPCSA suggested creating an informational video focusing on the multiple filing scheme, including field examples and clarifications on using the EORI number. While the Commission has agreed to consider how best to provide this information, any changes in EORI number usage must be addressed with the legal team at TAXUD and the EORI team. Based on previous experience, it's unlikely that requests for changes would succeed, given that the entire ICS2 setup and risk profiling relies on EORI numbers for identification.

4. Operational Guidance Update: The final version of the "Operational Guidance for Maritime and Inland Waterways" is currently under internal review by the Commission, with an official publication deadline set for May 30, 2024.

4.3. EU Customs Reform - joined statement of the private sector and meeting with the rapporteur of the EU Parliament



During 2024, we have been actively engaged in discussions regarding the content and legal framework of the EU Customs Union reform. Multiple rounds of discussions, devoid of trade activities, have taken place to elucidate the ideas behind the modernization concept to the Member States. In some instances, trade representatives were consulted for their opinions, and the EU Commission conducted surveys and received written feedback. To prevent any potential misjudgement, trade associations unified to compile a comprehensive statement highlighting the key concerns and issues. This statement was

presented to various officials within EU institutions and representatives of the Member States.

IPCSA co-signed the letter, acknowledging the current opportunity for enhancing collaboration between the EU Commission and the trade community. The unified statement amplified the business community's voice, particularly in this critical phase of shaping the Customs Union's future.

The submission of the statement prompted an invitation to a collaborative meeting initiated by the parliament's rapporteur, Mr. Dirk Gotink. This meeting occurred on the 11th of December in Brussels, where approximately 100 customs officials and trade representatives gathered to hear significant perspectives from the EU Commission, Member States, and to express their views and inquiries. During the Q&A session, IPCSA's Customs Lead, Uwe Liebschner expressed concern about a regression in trust levels, especially regarding cooperation with trade prior to drafting legal provisions. Specifically, he echoed the sentiment of many Member States regarding the unclear explanation of the EU Data Hub's operation and full scope, as mentioned in the legal text. "This lack of clarity forces all stakeholders to adapt to a system whose details, investment requirements, costs, data flow changes, responsibilities, and consequences are not yet fully understood. This situation underscores the necessity of the industry's collective statement and the forum with EU Parliament officials and Member States, including Directors of Customs."

More information available on IPCSA Community at:
<https://www.ipcsa.community/thoughts/2502>

4.4. PSCG - Private Sector Consultative Group at the WCO - Code of Ethics and Conduct

In 2005, the Secretariat of the World Customs Organization (WCO) agreed to establish a group designed to inform and advise the WCO on trade matters from the perspective of the private sector. At that time, "Terms of Reference" were set up and subsequently confirmed by the council.

Since 2021, the International Port Community Systems Association (IPCSA) has been a member of the Private Sector Consultative Group (PSCG), contributing to various topics and work groups such as "green customs," "SAFE framework of standards," "business continuity measures," and "trade facilitation measures," among others.

Now, in 2024, following the election of a new Secretary General and the initiation of work on a new strategy for the WCO, a process to redesign the overall structure of the WCO has been introduced. Among the numerous tasks within this redesign process, the collaboration between the WCO Secretariat and the private sector has been emphasized as critically important. This involves reviewing existing rules and adapting them if necessary. This review has revealed the absence of a jointly agreed framework for the 'Terms of Ethics and Conduct.' Consequently, an internal PSCG working group has drafted an initial document on 'Terms of Ethics and Conduct,' drawing on proposals from the WCO Secretariat.

The Code outlines the standards of behaviour and ethical principles that PSCG Members are expected to uphold, ensuring that all discussions and decisions align with WCO values. It is developed around **seven key principles** and a set of **concrete provisions**, all of which PSCG Members must comply with.

Key Principles include:

- Acting with **honesty, integrity, and fairness** in all dealings.
- Upholding the **highest ethical standards** in all activities, acting professionally and having a reasonable basis for recommendations.
- Engaging to maintain and enhance professional competence, being **objective, transparent, and performing duties with the highest level of care and diligence**.
- Endeavoring to provide **accurate information** in all communications and reports.
- Not allowing **personal financial interests to supersede their responsibilities** within the PSCG work.
- Treating all individuals with **respect and dignity** and ensuring fair treatment.
- Concrete provisions that PSCG members/representatives are obliged to observe include:
 - **Gifts, Rewards, Hospitality and Discounts:** Members shall not offer, solicit, or accept items of monetary value from entities seeking to benefit from PSCG/WCO decisions, nor engage in financial transactions using non-public information obtained through PSCG work.
 - **Avoiding Conflicts of Interest:** Members shall offer objective and unbiased advice, disclose any potential conflicts of interest, and abstain from decision-making or inputs where such conflicts exist.
 - **Confidentiality and Use of Official Information:** Members must treat confidential or sensitive information relating to the WCO, PSCG, its activities, and membership as confidential, seeking written approval before disclosure to third parties outside of the PSCG and WCO members.
 - **Use of WCO property and services:** Members must protect and conserve WCO property and not use it for unauthorized activities.



By accepting membership, each PSCG member agrees to adhere to this Code. Non-compliance may lead to disciplinary action, including termination of membership. Updates and amendments to the Code will be promptly communicated to all PSCG members.

V IPCSA working domain – Digital Transport and Logistics Forum, Led by Evelyn Eggers, Dakosy

5.1. Introduction

The Digital Transport and Logistics Forum (DTLF) is a critical initiative by the European Commission established in 2015 to spearhead the digital transformation of the transport and logistics sector. It serves as a platform for public and private stakeholders to collaborate on technical, organizational, and legal principles necessary for full-scale digital interoperability and data exchange. A central focus of DTLF's efforts is the implementation of Regulation (EU) 2020/1056 on Electronic Freight Transport Information (eFTI), which aims to make paperless freight transport by 2030 a reality. Through its various subgroups, the DTLF is developing the foundational frameworks, specifications, and guidelines to achieve significant administrative cost reductions, improved efficiency, and more effective enforcement of transport rules across the EU.

Established in 2015, the DTLF operates under mandates, with the first concluding in 2018 and the second currently ongoing. Calls for applications for new members were launched in December 2023 following the expiration of current members' terms.

IPCSA successfully submitted an application for membership in the DTLF, nominating Evelyn Eggers, a member of the IPCSA Executive Committee, as a regular representative, and Nico De Cauwer, the IPCSA Secretary General, as an alternate representative. IPCSA's appointment within the DTLF Plenary has been confirmed for a five-year term starting on 15 June 2024.

The DTLF's work is primarily channeled through three main subgroups, each addressing a critical aspect of digital freight modernization:

5.2. Key Areas of Work and Subgroups

Subgroup 1 – Paperless Transport

This subgroup is central to the DTLF's ambition to replace traditional paper documents and plastic cards with electronic information exchanges for compliance with transport rules and contractual agreements.

- **Objective:** To assist the European Commission in "defining and implementing initiatives that would replace the use of (paper) documents with electronic information exchanges for proving compliance with transport rules."
- **Current Focus:** Assisting the Commission in exploring and preparing implementation specifications for the eFTI Regulation. This involves four dedicated teams:
- **"Data" Team:** Defining "the common eFTI data set and eFTI data subsets."
- **"Functional" Team:** Providing input for functional specifications of the eFTI environment, including rules for authorities to access data, eFTI platforms, and service providers.
- **"Technical" Team:** Advising on the "functional and technical architecture of the future eFTI environment."

- **"Implementation and Certification" Team:** Setting up "rules for the certification of the eFTI platforms and eFTI service providers."

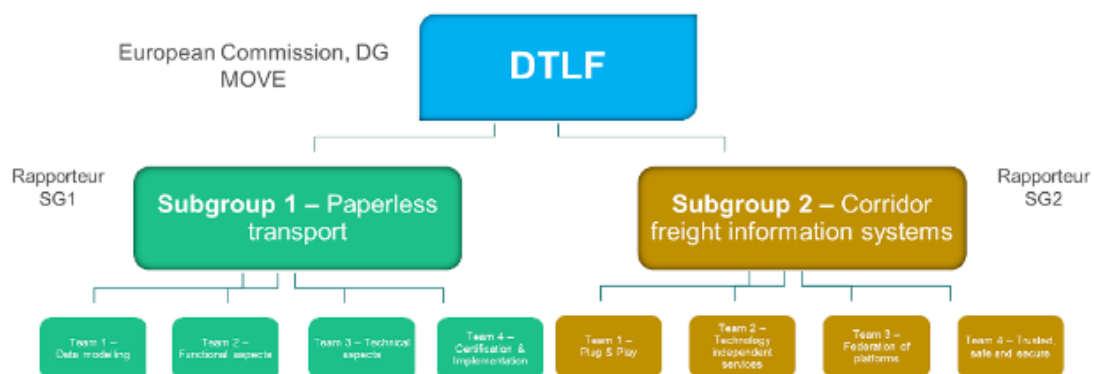
Subgroup 2 – Corridor Freight Information System

- Addressing the challenge of "Lack of interoperability and fragmentation of various data sharing systems," this subgroup aims to create a unified framework for information sharing in multimodal transport and logistics.
- **Objective:** To "create a common framework for information sharing in multimodal transport and logistics chains." This framework will "integrate existing or emerging platforms into a federated network, allowing all private and public players to easily connect and share data in a neutral and trusted environment."
- **Expected Outcomes:** Full supply chain visibility, innovation, cost reduction, and contributions to societal challenges like safety, security, and sustainability.
- **Building Blocks (Teams): Plug and Play:** Concepts and procedures for stakeholders to connect and share data.
- **Technology Independent Services:** Platform services supporting common processes and business interoperability.
- **Federation of Platforms:** Ensuring interoperability between different platforms, regardless of underlying technology.
- **Trusted, Safe and Secure:** Establishing a neutral governance structure for secure and trusted data sharing.
- **Supporting Projects:** The work of Subgroup 2 is supported by the EU-funded projects **FEDeRATED** and **FENIX**.

Subgroup 3 - Electronic Freight Transport Information (eFTI) Delegated Acts

This subgroup is specifically dedicated to consulting experts from Member States on the adoption of delegated acts under the eFTI Regulation.

Without the appropriate legal foundation that EU member states must implement, the data exchange advocated by the electronic Freight Transport Information (eFTI) will not function effectively. The revolutionary approach of eFTI in its first phase requires EU authorities to accept digital forms by August 2026. In phase two, which is yet to be scheduled, businesses will be mandated to submit data electronically.



A detailed summary of the progress up to the end of the DTLF's second mandate, prepared by Evelyn Eggers from Dakosy, IPCSA's lead in the Digital Transport and Logistics

Forum, is available within IPCSA Insights 2023. Available on the IPCSA Community platform at: <https://www.ipcsa.community/thoughts/2250>

5.3. eFTI Summary:

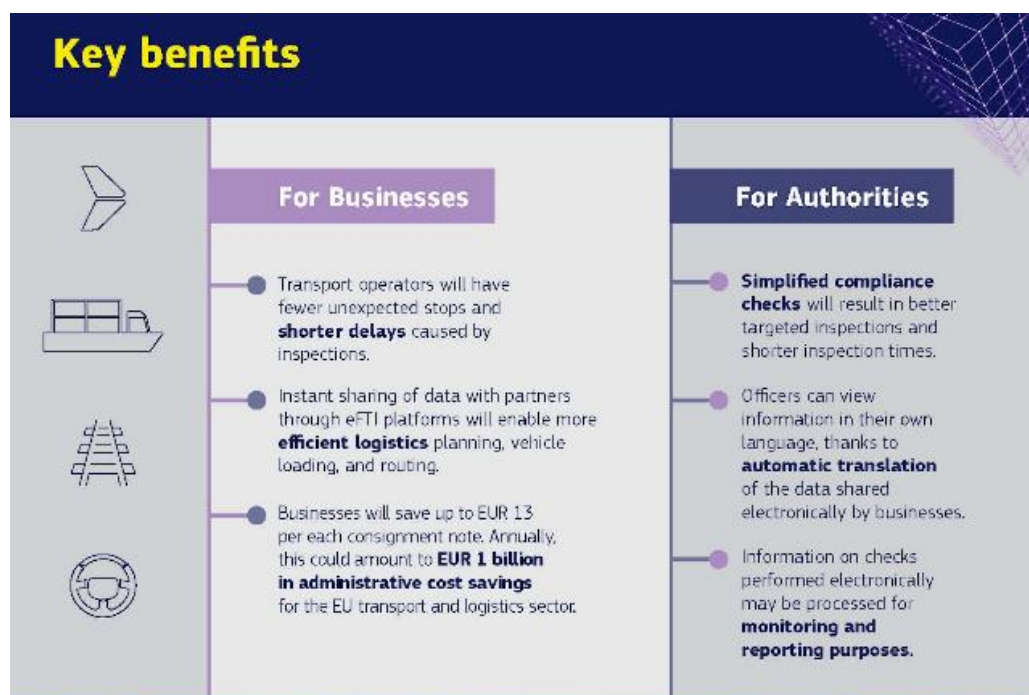
Core Objective - Digitalization of Freight Transport Information

The central theme of the eFTI Regulation is the digitalization of information exchange for freight transport. This move away from paper-based documents is a fundamental shift, with the

Benefits of eFTI

The regulation is driven by the potential for significant benefits across various stakeholders:

- **Environmental Impact:** A key benefit highlighted is "less carbon emissions" due to reduced paper usage and potentially more efficient logistics.
- **Administrative Burden Reduction:** The eFTI aims to "reduce administrative burden" for businesses involved in freight transport. This includes streamlining checks and making information more readily available.
- **Efficiency and Cost Savings:** The regulation anticipates "faster and cheaper processes" and "less costs for businesses", implying significant efficiency gains through digitalized information.
- **Improved Enforcement and Transparency:** For authorities, eFTI promises "better enforcement" and "better prevention of fraud", as digital information is more easily verifiable and traceable. The regulation aims for "more effective and efficient controls by enforcement authorities".
- **Enhanced Information Availability:** The system will ensure "more reliable and accurate information for authorities" and "better access to information for businesses", fostering greater transparency and data quality.



Data Source: eFTI infographic

Scope and Application

- **Types of Transport:** It applies to "all modes of transport" including road, rail, air, and inland waterways. This comprehensive approach ensures a harmonized digital framework across the entire transport sector.
- **Information Covered:** The regulation specifically targets "regulatory information exchange between economic operators and enforcement authorities". This focuses on information required for compliance and checks during transport operations.
- **Geographic Scope:** The regulation applies to "transport operations within the EU".
- **Mandatory Electronic Format:** A crucial aspect is that "economic operators must make available freight transport information to enforcement authorities in electronic format". This signifies a shift from optional to mandatory electronic provision of information.

Key Components and Requirements

The eFTI Regulation introduces several critical elements to facilitate this digital transformation:

- **eFTI Platforms:** The regulation mandates the use of "certified eFTI platforms" for storing and processing freight transport information. These platforms are central to the secure and standardized exchange of data. The source mentions that "eFTI Platforms are a central element for enabling the exchange of freight transport information".
- **eFTI Service Providers:** "eFTI Service Providers" will offer services for data handling and exchange through these certified platforms.
- **Harmonized Data Sets:** To ensure interoperability and consistency, the regulation requires the use of "harmonised data sets". This standardization is crucial for seamless information flow across different systems and countries.
- **Interoperability:** The regulation emphasizes the need for "interoperability", indicating that different systems and platforms must be able to communicate and exchange information effectively. This includes "interoperability of different IT systems".
- **Security and Authenticity:** There is a strong focus on "authenticity and integrity of information" and "cybersecurity of the eFTI platforms". This ensures the reliability and trustworthiness of the digital data.
- **Certified Bodies:** The regulation outlines the role of "certification bodies" responsible for certifying eFTI platforms and ensuring compliance with the established standards.



Data Source: eFTI infographic

Shift from Paper to Digital

A recurring theme is the transition from paper-based documents to electronic ones. The regulation aims to eliminate the reliance on physical paperwork:

- "End the obligation to carry paper documents."
- The regulation "establishes a legal framework for electronic freight transport information (eFTI)".
- It specifically states that "economic operators will no longer be obliged to carry transport documents in paper form".

Role of Enforcement Authorities

Enforcement authorities play a crucial role in this new digital environment:

- They will have "direct access to specific freight transport information".
- They will be able to "request information in electronic format from economic operators".
- The system aims to allow "more targeted checks" by authorities, leading to "less roadside checks".

Implementation and Future Outlook

- **August 2020:** The journey officially began with the Regulation (EU) 2020/1056 on electronic freight transport information (eFTI) entering into force. This marked the legislative foundation for the entire initiative.
- **2020-2025:** During this five-year period, preparatory work was carried out with the essential support of experts representing both public and private stakeholders. This phase was crucial for laying the groundwork and ensuring diverse perspectives were considered for the practical implementation of eFTI.
- **January 2025:** A significant operational step, as the first eFTI implementing and delegated acts will enter into force. This will allow Member States to begin developing the IT systems that their authorities will use to check eFTI compliant transport information. Essentially, this is when the technical development for public authorities can commence.
- **By December 2025:** The European Commission has plans to adopt the remaining eFTI implementing specifications. These forthcoming specifications are vital, as they will provide the detailed functional and technical requirements

for the IT systems and services that businesses (eFTI platforms and eFTI service providers) will utilize, alongside the crucial rules for their certification. This phase ensures that the technical standards for the private sector are clearly defined.

- **As of January 2026:** This marks the beginning of the operational ramp-up phase. eFTI platforms and service providers can start preparing for operations. Concurrently, Member State authorities may start accepting data stored on certified eFTI platforms for inspection. This period allows for voluntary adoption, testing, and a gradual transition to the electronic system.
- **9 July 2027:** The eFTI Regulation will apply in full. From this pivotal date, Member State authorities must accept information shared electronically by operators via certified eFTI platforms. This signifies the mandatory and universal adoption of eFTI for freight transport information across the EU.

By the time of publishing this book, a series of webinars on the eFTI regulation and its implementing acts were held by the European Commission. These informative sessions provided valuable insights and guidance on the regulatory framework, aiming to enhance understanding and compliance among stakeholders. For those interested in delving deeper into the topics discussed, the presentations are available at: https://transport.ec.europa.eu/transport-themes/logistics-and-multimodal-transport/efti-regulation_en#webinar-presentations

VI IPCSA working domain – Air Cargo, Led by Amar More from Kale Logistics Solutions.

ICAO's Facilitation Panel #13, February 2024 in Montreal, Canada



ICAO's Facilitation Panel (FALP) #13 took place in Montreal, Canada, in February 2024, and saw participation from Secretary-General Nico De Cauwer and IPCSA's Air-domain Lead, Amar More from Kale Logistics Solutions. The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), a United Nations agency, facilitated cooperation among 193 countries, promoting the sustainable growth of the global

civil aviation system through policy and standard development with its Member States and stakeholders. More details about ICAO could be found at ICAO's website: www.icao.int/about-icao.

The Facilitation Panel includes Member States and officially approved NGOs, with IPCSA having attained Observer status in March 2023. The FALP is akin to the International Maritime Organization's Facilitation Committee. IPCSA aims to contribute to ICAO's Security & Facilitation strategic objective, leveraging its extensive experience in port process digitalization and the digital transformation of port services for the air cargo industry. With 2024 designated as ICAO's Year of Facilitation, IPCSA is poised to make a timely impact.

In preparation for the FALP, IPCSA has submitted a working paper to ICAO, proposing the establishment of a Taskforce to develop guidance and regulation on an Aviation Single Window Concept for the air cargo industry. This involves implementing and operating Air Cargo Community Systems as a mandatory measure for all Member States, drawing parallels with IMO's regulation on establishing a required MSW starting January 2024.

“The FALP is invited to:

- Recognize the safety, security, and economic aspects of air cargo and establish a task force to study the IMO FAL resolution, assessing the feasibility of a similar ICAO resolution for States and other civil aviation stakeholders.
- Consider developing an appropriate amendment to Annex 9 in line with the above.
- Develop guidance for implementing Airport Cargo Community systems, assisting Contracting States in modernizing their airports with this digital infrastructure.”

VII IPCSA Initiatives – FORESIGHT



7.1. Foresight initiative

Foresight initiative is an ambitious project dedicated to exploring the future of Port Community Systems (PCS) and Single Windows (SW) with a forward-looking approach extending to the year 2040. This collaborative effort aims to evaluate potential future scenarios and establish a framework and pathway to guide IPCSA members and their organizations in the years to come. Foresight exercises are recognized as vital elements of future planning in many industries, and IPCSA is taking the lead in its sector by creating this first Foresight exercise in support of PCS operators and associated port operations. The goal is to provide added value and expertise to members, assisting them in navigating major challenges. This initiative is considered crucial given the rapid pace of digitalization, the urgent need for decarbonization, geopolitical tensions, supply chain disruptions, and the rise of AI. Without it, there would be a significant gap in industry leadership, hindering essential conversations and innovations.

7.2. Dubai Foresight Workshop: The Inaugural Session

The first in a series of three regional workshops for the IPCSA Foresight initiative was a two-day event held in Dubai. This inaugural workshop was generously **sponsored by IPCSA member Kale Logistics Solutions**. Vineet Malhotra, Co-Founder and Director of Kale Logistics Solutions, stated that "Kale shares a unified vision with IPCSA in transforming the global maritime industry through Port Community Systems and cutting-edge digital solutions". He added that supporting this event aimed "to amplify the industry's collective voice and fortify its role in advancing global trade harmonisation". The workshop focused on exploring the dynamics of change, discovering issues, and understanding high-impact uncertainties.

7.2.1. Discussions based on 'Futures Triangle' methodology

The discussions during the workshop were based on the 'Futures Triangle' methodology, which includes:

- **The Push of the Present:** Examining current trends impacting the industry, what is driving change, and its nature and pace. Factors highlighted included cyber risks, the rapid pace of technological advancements, deglobalization and

localization trends, economic resource issues, natural skill gaps, and supply chain dependencies.

- **The Pull of the Future (Horizon Scanning):** Identifying novel developments and signals of change, what is slowing down or starting, and the visions of powerful actors. Discussions encompassed the future of global trade, the role of AI and its ethical implications, the evolution of the green economy, advanced technologies like teleportation and Hyperloop, and the potential for digital currency exchanges to dominate trade.
- **The Weight of History:** Addressing what is holding back change, including deep structures resisting it, such as prevailing cultural norms, values, legacy systems, and international standards that are slow to evolve. Historical political trust (or "zero trust") was also noted as a significant concern.

Facilitator Will Sambrook of Akenham emphasized, "We cannot predict the future, but we can explore, anticipate and prepare. We certainly can't predict the future of PCS and SW. Instead, we have to think about what futures might exist, and then we can think about what role PCS operators might play in those scenarios".



Main Findings and Key Discussions from the Dubai Workshop

7.2.2. Critical uncertainties and issues for the maritime and port sectors:

The workshop fostered insightful dialogues, leading to the identification of critical uncertainties and issues for the maritime and port sectors:

- **Fragmentation:** This was seen across the global order, institutional structures, and cultural landscapes. While often perceived negatively, it also unveils opportunities for innovation, such as the decentralization and dissemination of information enhancing supply chain efficiency and resilience.
- **Trust:** Trust in data integrity, regulatory bodies, institutional frameworks, and technological advancements emerged as a crucial but uncertain factor. The trajectory of global trust is ambiguous, with possibilities ranging from an increase in trust to a "zero-trust paradigm" where skepticism and verification are the norm.
- **Regulation and Policy:** Participants differentiated between regulatory measures and policies, noting that policies like import tariffs often wield more substantial influence on global trade dynamics than regulations.
- **Climate Change Resilience:** Recognized as a critical issue affecting trade routes and actor positioning, with impacts seen globally, including droughts affecting the Panama Canal and rapidly intensifying hurricanes. The potential of melting ice caps to open new trade routes was also discussed.
- **Cyber Threats:** Identified as a certainty with high impact. The maritime industry is considered a soft target, and the protection of Single Windows adds

complexity. The community is only as strong as its weakest link, making lateral movement a significant risk for cybercriminals.

- **Technological Innovation:** The rapid pace of advancements like AI, 3D printing, drones, and quantum technology presents both challenges and opportunities. The ethical implications of AI and the need for new legislation were highlighted, alongside concerns about technological failures beyond cyber-attacks.
- **Digital Currencies:** The rise of cryptocurrencies was seen as having implications for assigning value to services and commodities, as well as for trade. The potential for the maritime sector to transition to crypto as a new norm was questioned.
- **Energy Costs and Transition:** The discussion highlighted the polarities between low-cost and high-cost energy resources, their impact on production, and the significant shift towards green energy, including hydrogen companies in port areas. Regulations mandating vessels to connect to electricity supplies at ports were also noted for their potential impact on cargo costs.
- The workshop also delved into **polarities** to understand key strategic issues, such as:
 - **Global Collaboration vs. Regionalism/Fragmentation:** This involves decisions about harmonizing policies, creating single currencies, and fostering political unity versus dismantling larger entities and focusing on localized markets.
 - **Technological Evolution:** The challenge of certain countries or regions being left behind if they fail to adapt to rapid advancements, especially in operational technology and AI, contrasting uncontrolled vs. controlled growth.
 - **Data Governance and Ownership:** The debate over whether data usage will be regulated and transparent, providing security, or operate in an unregulated, free-market scenario, posing risks. The need for clear guidelines for data usage was emphasized.

7.2.3. Key Quotes from at the Dubai Workshop:

Vineet Malhotra, Co-Founder and Director, Kale Logistics Solutions:

- On Kale's sponsorship: "**Kale shares a unified vision with IPCSA in transforming the global maritime industry through Port Community Systems and cutting-edge digital solutions. Our collaboration with IPCSA, spanning over five years, has allowed us to bring a unique blend of innovation and automation that drives global maritime trade. By supporting the first Foresight event in Dubai, we aim to amplify the industry's collective voice and fortify its role in advancing global trade harmonisation**".
- On the project's importance: "The Foresight project is exactly what the industry needs at this crucial juncture... Foresight will not only set a new benchmark for IPCSA members but will also serve as a beacon for other industry stakeholders, showcasing a commitment to meeting both current and future industry needs".



- On the future economy: He stated that "there seems to be a shift in the global economy, particularly in top economies and regions, though the exact nature and certainty of this shift are still uncertain. Within this context, governance and data ownership are likely to become significant topics of debate. Who owns the data... is a question that will need addressing".
- On technological change: "The traditional understanding that technology evolves in predictable timeframes no longer holds true, as change is now continuous and unpredictable".

Uwe Liebschner, IPCSA's Foresight Lead:

- On the initiative's aim: **"The aim of IPCSA's Foresight exercise is to consider the possibilities and establish where we see the issues for the future, bring together IPCSA members from all the regions to be involved and integrated in the discussions, and increase communication and personal connections between members. At the end of the exercise, we will establish guidance and recommendations at a very high level, around mitigation and potential solutions. We can't prepare for 100 per cent of potential issues but we can have a broad framework in place to be prepared for future challenges".**
- On challenging standardization: He raised "a provocative question about why the industry continues to focus on achieving a single harmonized standard, given that this conversation has spanned over a decade without significant resolution. He suggested a shift towards utilizing technology to accept and work with existing diverse standards and data formats, rather than expending time on harmonization debates".
- On the nature of change: He "expressed skepticism about the concept of improvement, suggesting that change might not always equate to being better, but rather different".
- On decentralization: He "added that the decentralized nature of information could be advantageous. Instead of relying on a single entity to centralize and manage information, having multiple players involved can simplify processes and enhance the supply chain".
- On gratitude: "Your willingness to travel such distances and bear the associated costs is truly appreciated and not taken for granted. This gathering has reinforced that we made the right choice in selecting this diverse and knowledgeable group. From the outset, the open discussions and mutual respect have been remarkable, transcending any competitive boundaries and focusing on collaboration".



Riasat Ali, Group IT Services Manager at Rak Ports, UAE:

- On guidelines: "Riasat Ali... shared an example from the cybersecurity domain where, in the absence of formalized guidelines, adhering to ISO standards provided a necessary framework, illustrating the importance of having a formalised guideline to follow even if it's not the latest".



- On diverse perspectives: "From my viewpoint, one of the most valuable contributions was the focus on the Middle Eastern perspective, which was encouraging. In past sessions I've attended, the emphasis was often on Western or European viewpoints. This time, there was a noticeable inclusion of Middle Eastern insights, which I believe added depth to the discussions".
- On green energy impact: "As we've probably discussed before, moving towards green energy will also significantly reduce the reliance on fossil fuels. This shift means that the impact on PCs and ports will be considerable, as vessels transporting oil will no longer be necessary. This change represents a major transformation in the way we manage energy resources and logistics".

Rommel Edwards, Manager, Digital Innovation and Development, Barbados Port Inc.:

- On perspective from a smaller country: "Being from a smaller country, I often find that certain issues carry different meanings for us compared to people from larger, more developed nations".
- On broadening his understanding beyond IT:



- "There's so much more to consider beyond IT and digital concerns. I've become more aware of issues like climate governance and even discussions that stretch into space exploration—topics I hadn't deeply considered before. This experience has opened my eyes to more tangible challenges".
- On key issues affecting Port Community Systems and Maritime Single Windows: He emphasized that even with a large IT component, the main issues affecting them lie outside IT, highlighting: "First, **legislation**: very often, the technology is way ahead of the legislation... Second, **governance**: again, due to leaps and bounds in the tech, the task of governing the ethical use of the tech is a challenge. Third, **cybersecurity**: global events pre and post-Covid have clearly demonstrated that the maritime industry is a soft target for cybercriminals". He also added that the protection of Single Windows adds complexity, stating, "The community is as strong as its weakest link".

- On environmental challenges: He noted that "Changes in weather patterns are adversely affecting many aspects of the maritime sector. For example, **storms are becoming more intense**" and cited Hurricane Beryl as an example of rapid intensification that countries were unprepared for.
- On cryptocurrency: He considered cryptocurrency, stating, "**once thought to be a fad and temporary, it appears to be here to stay**. This has implications for how we assign value to services and commodities as well as for the way we trade. It is anyone's guess as to whether the maritime sector will transition to crypto as the new norm".
- On measuring improvement: He "highlighted the subjectivity in measuring improvement and suggested that **setting standards and measuring conformity could provide a more objective assessment of progress**".
- On the social aspect of the workshop: "Meeting new people and seeing familiar faces in this group has been a refreshing experience".

Warsama Guirreh, Djibouti PCS:

- On networking: "Reflecting on the Dubai workshop, I realized that while everything has been said, **there was a unique opportunity for me to reconnect with old friends and forge new relationships with all of you**".
- On industry fragility: "We used to think that the industry was robust, but **it's clear now how fragile it can be. At the first sign of instability, everything tends to fall apart**".
- On building a resilient future: "We are hopeful that through these interactions, **we can build a more resilient future**. By improving trade with the implementation of PCs and the single windows feature, **we aim to provide a unified system for importers and exporters to complete all their processes efficiently**". He hopes to achieve this goal through ongoing interactions in upcoming meetings around the world.
- On data sharing: He stated that a polarity revolves around "**a highly liberal approach, emphasizing the comprehensive sharing of data with everyone**". This policy-level initiative aims to share information for regional benefit, citing collaboration with insurance companies utilizing PCS data to assess risk for premiums, such as container returns. He added, "**As PCs, we possess a wealth of information that interests numerous parties, all striving to enhance logistics overall**".
- On data utilization beyond boundaries: He observed that "beyond regional and national boundaries, **entities are utilizing information in ways we never imagined possible and are generating profits from it**. Instead of focusing on regions, it's now about interested parties. An interested party requesting access to information means that data companies are able to sell information about



various transactions occurring in trade". He concluded this point by raising "the issue of limited sharing versus open sharing'.

Javier Gallardo, Chairman of IPCSA:

- On the initiative's purpose: **"As an association, we believe we have a commitment to our members to assist them by providing valuable information that enables them to navigate the future of Port Community Systems. For this reason, it is essential to pause and take the time to reflect on the current situation and how the future – new technologies, political, economic, social and environmental factors – will continue to reshape the playing field".**
- On thinking ahead: "The Foresight exercise is thinking about 2040, which is not a huge amount of time away—thinking about things that might become mainstream influencers by the time we get there".
- On the nature of change: "While IPCSA's objectives within this initiative extend beyond digitalisation, it is important to note that the changes will manifest in many ways, impacting not just digital transformation but also the way business is conducted and the relationships between individuals and entities".
- On trust: "Javier Gallardo raised an important point about understanding trust as a global concept or as tending towards a zero-trust model. In today's landscape, especially regarding security and communication, there's a shift towards establishing a zero-trust approach, where trust must be continuously verified rather than assumed".
- On polarities: He highlighted two possible directions: "On one hand, there is a push for more global collaborations, which could lead to the establishment of larger, interconnected markets... On the other hand, there is a contrasting perspective that favors regionalism and fragmentation".
- Reflecting on the outcome: "I carry the hope that we'll have the chance to address these challenges in time. Earlier, I felt a bit pessimistic due to the unstable circumstances we faced. However, I now see that all of us are at least trying to contribute to creating and improving a better world. So, I carry hope with me".



The Dubai workshop concluded with participants recognizing the remarkable diversity within the group and how varied perspectives are essential for fostering creativity and innovation. The discussions moved beyond just IT and digital concerns, highlighting broader issues like climate governance and geopolitical shifts. The next IPCSA Foresight workshop will take place in Morocco, sponsored by IPCSA member PORTNET, on May 21-22, 2025, with a focus on building scenarios and understanding implications.

In essence, the IPCSA Foresight initiative acts like a **lighthouse for the global maritime industry**, not predicting the exact path through the unpredictable seas of the future, but rather illuminating potential storms (challenges) and calm waters (opportunities) ahead. By gathering diverse experts and using structured foresight methodologies, it helps chart a broad course, allowing individual ships (member organizations) to better prepare their crews and navigate the evolving currents towards 2040.

Full workshop Report and more information on Foresight initiative is available at: <https://ipcsa.international/initiatives/initiatives-foresight/>

VIII IPCSA Initiatives – SUSTAINABILITY



IPCSA has launched its sustainability initiative in 2024, reflecting the growing importance of sustainability in the logistics sector. This initiative acknowledges that sustainability is no longer a concern solely for Port Authorities but for all stakeholders in the supply chain, including Port Community Systems (PCSs) and Single Windows, which are increasingly integrating sustainability into their digital services. The focus is driven by global trends, movements, and regulations aimed at improving the planet and climate through energy transition and emission reductions, fostering sustainable economic growth via fair pricing and supply chain resilience, and increasing integrity and trust within the supply chain.

8.1. Main Goals of the IPCSA Sustainability Initiative:

IPCSA has set itself the goal of sharing knowledge and insights of successful sustainability strategies and practices for Port Community Systems, together working towards emission free and resilient port logistics. By compiling useful trend analyses, guidelines, and data standards, IPCSA aims to integrate sustainability into the operational framework of a PCS. The outcomes and insights from this working group, along with the developed 'Sustainability Guidelines,' will offer practical insights and tangible results for IPCSA members.

8.2. Structure

The IPCSA Sustainability initiative began with the establishment of a **Working Group comprised of IPCSA members** who are keen to develop a working program, define

the scope, and create an action plan. **Stephanie van den Berg, Lead for Sustainability at Portbase**, chairs this working group.

The working group is structured into four specialized sub-groups, each with a designated lead:

- **Group 1: Sustainability Trend Radar and Rules & Regulations**, led by Frédéric Gilletta, Haropa Port
- **Group 2: Best Practice Sharing**, led by Lucie Charmeteau, Haropa Port.
- **Group 3: Data Sharing for Sustainability Impact**, led by Stephanie van den Berg, Portbase.
- **Group 4: Data Standards & Analytics for Sustainability**, led by Marlene Herbold, dbh. IPCSA actively encourages more members to join these working groups to contribute their knowledge and insights.

8.3. Activities within 2024:

Several key activities marked the IPCSA Sustainability initiative in 2024:

- **Working Group Kick-off Meeting (April 10, 2024):** This initial meeting introduced working group members, presented Portbase's sustainability strategy, and aligned on the group's goals and scope.
- **Presentation at IPCSA Members Meeting Tanger Med (May 15 & 16, 2024):** The sustainability initiative was officially presented to a wider audience, with Stephanie van den Berg providing an update and an interview on the role of PCSs in sustainability.
- **IPCSA Sustainability Workshop (October 23, 2024):** Hosted by HAROPA



[Video courtesy of Tanger Med Port Authority](#)

PORT, this workshop involved fruitful discussions, leading to the setting of specific goals for 2025 and solidifying the working group structures.

Specific goals for the Guidelines to be developed during 2025, which were set during the Le Havre workshop in October 2024, include:

- **Sustainability Trend Radar and Rules & Regulations:** Sharing trend and impact analyses of upcoming trends, knowledge, and experiences to apply the latest technologies for sustainability, and publishing the business impact of legal changes and requirements affecting PCSs and their communities.
- **Data Standards & Analytics for Sustainability:** Defining and sharing standards and data services for communicating emissions among parties, and providing examples of how PCS services can contribute to emission reduction and positive environmental impact.
- **Data Sharing for Sustainability Impact:** Identifying what data needs to be shared within the community to enhance sustainability impact, potentially through existing or new PCS services or external partnerships.

- **Best Practice Sharing:** Facilitating knowledge exchange through sustainability guidelines, workshops, and webinars to help members learn how other PCSs implement sustainability strategies, and providing guidance on business recovery planning for emergency situations.

- **Insights from Portbase's Strategy:** As a leading contributor, Portbase shared its own sustainability strategy (2023-2025), which highlights how a PCS can contribute to sustainability. Portbase's mission emphasizes seamless, sustainable, and secure trade facilitated by data sharing. Portbase's strategy focuses on positive impact across three areas: its own organization, its service portfolio, and the broader port logistics ecosystem.

Le Havre

IPCSA

SUSTAINABILITY WORKSHOP



When:
23rd of October
2024

Where:
71 Quai Colbert - 76600 -
LE HAVRE - FRANCE


Agenda and more information available at:
https://www.ipcsa.community/calendar_events/705

Who can sign up? IPCSA Members that are part of Sustainability initiative. If you would like to join Sustainability initiative please contact inga.morton@ipcsa.international

Hosted by: Haropa Port

© Photo by: V. Rustael



© Photo by: W. Le Digne

“We worked with research firm Ecorys to develop the emissions reduction model”, says Stephanie van den Berg. “The model gives companies concrete insight into their potential sustainability gains from using Portbase services, and in particular the emissions reductions they could achieve by participating in our services Notification Import Documentation, Notification Export Documentation and Hinterland Container Notification.”

We express our deepest appreciation to **Jérôme BESANCENOT** and his wonderful team for hosting us at **HAROPA PORT**.

We would also like to thank **Stephanie van den Berg**, IPCSA Sustainability initiative lead (Portbase) and **Martijn Maatman**, Consultant Strategy & Innovation (Portbase) for their incredible passion for sustainability and input into this initiative. We are truly grateful to all IPCSA Members participating in this initiative and sharing their invaluable experience.

More information on Sustainability initiative is available on IPCSA Community at: <https://www.ipcsa.community/groups/53-sustainability-working-group/welcome>

IX IPCSA Initiatives – PCS Masterclasses



In 2024 IPCSA has launched a comprehensive **PCS Masterclass initiative** aimed at enhancing knowledge and skills in the realm of Port Community Systems (PCS)

This educational program reflects IPCSA's long-standing commitment to knowledge dissemination and expertise, which has always been central to its existence.

9.1. IPCSA Masterclass Initiative Explained

For years, IPCSA has been a core source of knowledge and expertise, with various organizations seeking to learn about digitalization initiatives in the port sector, especially concerning Community and Single Window Systems. While the PCS Masterclass concept has been known within IPCSA's membership for many years and was previously organized upon request, thanks to the efforts of Ambassador Hans Rook, its full value had not been entirely exploited. In **2024**, a specific "Product package" was developed to formalize this offering into a complete educational program, consisting of individual courses in-person classes.

This educational initiative underscores IPCSA's clear and steady commitment to:

- **Strengthen IPCSA's role** in influencing the conditions necessary for successful PCS implementations and operations.
- **Increase IPCSA's expansion of knowledge** around the use of Port Community Systems & Single Windows worldwide.
- **Create and promote stakeholders' buy-in** to support the crucial role of PCS & SW in port logistics chains.

The Masterclass Initiative is a testament to IPCSA's unwavering dedication to enhance the conditions needed for the successful implementation and operation of Port Community Systems (PCS) and Single Windows (SW) globally. This educational program aims to fortify IPCSA's influence and expand knowledge on the vital role of PCS in port logistics. Developed in partnership with IDOM, the Masterclass comprises modules delivered over a four-day period, with each on-site session lasting around 4 to 5 hours. The first pilot of the PCS Masterclass is set to launch in 2025.

A heartfelt thank you and deep gratitude are extended to IPCSA Ambassador Hans Rook for his continuous effort and support. Hans has been a cornerstone in the development of this project, playing a crucial role in bringing the Masterclass Initiative to fruition.

9.2. Target Audience

The program is tailored for a diverse range of individuals, including:

- Members who are currently progressing in their PCS journey.
- Members who have already achieved a certain level of maturity in PCS utilization.
- Interested parties who wish to complete their PCS knowledge or are initiating their PCS/SW-journey.

9.3. Comprehensive Modules Covered

The IPCSA Masterclass is structured into **four distinct modules**, covering a diverse range of topics to provide an in-depth and unique training experience on PCS knowledge:

- **Module I: Introduction to PCS & Key Stakeholders**
 - Port Community and relevant stakeholders
 - Guidelines for the construction of a robust Port Community
 - What is a PCS? and How to develop a PCS?
 - Methodologies for Change Management and the creation of a Communication Plan
 - PCS Benefits
 - Capacity building
 - Legal aspects
- **Module II: PCS Governance & Business Models**
 - Governance Models for the Operation of a PCS
 - Business Models and Revenues associated with a PCS
 - Implementation Models
 - Capital & Operational Expenditures
- **Module III: PCS Technology aspects**
 - Overview of the PCS IT Landscape
 - Modern and robust PCS architectures
 - Resilience measures for the Port Community
 - PCS Future Challenges
- **Module IV: PCS processes & Services**
 - Core processes of a PCS
 - Data and process international standards
 - PCS services

More information you can find on the IPCSA website at:

<https://ipcsa.international/initiatives/masterclasses-on-pcs-and-msw/>

X IPCSA Initiatives – Members Exchange Program

In 2024 IPCSA launched new initiative - the IPCSA Members Exchange Program: Fostering Global Collaboration and Knowledge



The IPCSA Members Exchange Program aims at establishing and maintaining strong working relationships among its members. This program focuses on knowledge sharing and facilitates a mutual exchange that allows participants to gain invaluable experience.

10.1. Aims and Benefits

The primary aim of the program is to foster intercompany teamwork experience opportunities. It is designed to provide participants with experience they cannot buy or get from studies, emphasizing that experience requires practice. Key benefits of engaging in this program include:

- The opportunity to learn from colleagues globally
- Gaining new ideas
- Strengthening future-readiness - Empowering ourselves to face the future
- Building a network of "friends all around", signifying the development of global connections
- These visits are described as "gold" for participants, highlighting their immense value

10.2. Target Audience

The program is specifically designed for **IPCSA members**. It targets individuals within these member organizations who are looking to gain practical experience and learn from **colleagues globally**. Participants are encouraged if they find the idea interesting of going abroad and gaining new ideas.

10.3. How to Participate

To join the IPCSA Members Exchange Program, individuals must meet a few basic requirements:

- Register on the IPCSA Community for the "Members Exchange Program" group.
- Fill in the questionnaire and select the topics for exchange.
- Find an exchange partner and collaboratively develop a program for mutual visits.
- Agree on the goals and expected outcomes of the exchange.
- Prepare topic questions and share them between both parties prior to the visit.

The program is facilitated by IPCSA Ambassador Hans Rook, who can be contacted for more information at: hans.rook@ipcsa.international

Through this program, IPCSA provides a unique platform, much like a global apprenticeship, where theoretical knowledge transforms into practical wisdom through direct, hands-on collaboration with international peers. IPCSA Members Exchange Program was presented at the annual Members meeting in Tanger Med.

More information available on IPCSA Community at: <https://www.ipcsa.community/groups/50-ipcsa-members-exchange-program/welcome>

XI IPCSA Events

11.1 The IPCSA Executive Committee

The IPCSA Executive Committee held a series of meetings in 2024 to address policy, strategy, projects, and administrative matters.

11.1.1.Executive Committee Meeting 1-24 (Policy & Strategy, Projects, online), March 14th, 2024

Key discussions focused on the Masterclass initiative, exploring sponsorship opportunities to align with IPCSA's mission, and evaluating the possibilities for organizing Foresight & Regional meetings to tackle regional challenges. The call for Regional Representatives was launched to enhance IPCSA's influence. An update was given on the Sustainability initiative. Additionally, a new initiative, the "Members Exchange Program," was introduced to promote further cooperation among IPCSA Members. Updates on finances and administration were provided.

11.1.2.Executive Committee Meeting 2-24 (Policy & Strategy, Projects/Tanger Med) Hilton Garden Inn Tanger City Center, Tangier, Morocco



The Masterclasses initiative was a primary point of discussion, with contributions from Pedro García Gómez highlighting its progress and future directions. Another significant

topic was the selection of IPCSA Regional Representatives for 2024–2026 aiming to enhance regional engagement and representation. IPCSA Exchange Programme was further discussed, designed to foster collaboration and knowledge sharing among members. Additionally, the meeting addressed the further development of IPCSA Sponsorship packages, exploring opportunities to strengthen financial support and partnerships. Updates on finances and administration were provided.

11.1.3.Executive Committee Meeting 3-24 (Annual Budget & Business Plan 2025, Service Contracts)

Executive meeting in Le Havre focused on several critical issues for the organization's future. Key topics included an examination of the IPCSA Financial

Statement for 2023 and a report from an internal audit. The meeting also discussed standards for disclosures related to associated parties, aiming to ensure transparency and adherence to financial regulations. Updates on financial and administrative matters were also presented.





The IPCSA Business Plan for 2025 was discussed, and the 2025 budget received approval. The committee also considered service contracts for key personnel.

The decisions made during the meeting will have a substantial impact on operations in 2025, such as the approval of the budget and the setting of strategic directions. Importantly, the membership fee for 2025 will remain unchanged from the previous year, with no adjustments for inflation.

11.2. IPCSA Members Meeting 2024: Advancing Global Trade through Digitalization, Sustainability, and Resilience



The IPCSA Members Meeting, held at Tanger Med on May 15th and 16th, 2024, served as a crucial forum for industry leaders and experts to discuss key advancements, strategic initiatives, and collaborative efforts shaping the future of global trade and logistics. The agenda covered a diverse range of topics, from port community system development and digital innovations to supply chain resilience, sustainability, and cybersecurity.



Photo: Courtesy of Tanger Med Port Authority

Javier Gallardo, Chairman of IPCSA and CEO of Portic, Barcelona, said: “We are delighted to hold this members’ meeting in Tanger Med, a location which reflects IPCSA’s expansion far beyond its European roots to a globally established organisation. The crisis in the Red Sea has underlined the strategic location of Tanger Med as a regional and international hub and we look forward to visiting the port and learning more about its operations. ”Agenda highlights include discussions around sustainability and cybersecurity, said Gallardo, along with sessions by IPCSA’s African region members, who will provide a snapshot of their operations and innovations.



Video Courtesy of Tanger Med Port Authority

“I look forward to gaining more knowledge about PCS and Single Window operations in the Africa region and, more broadly, I hope that all those attending will be inspired by the contribution to sustainability made by efficient PCS and digital solutions,” said the Chairman.

IPCSA’s annual meeting represents a momentous opportunity for Tanger Med Port Authority, said Ridouan Boulaich, TMPA Director of Organisation and Information Systems. “This event unites key stakeholders in the PCS sector, fostering an unparalleled exchange of ideas and insights within our region. Not only does it signify a pivotal occasion for TMPA as a member of IPCSA, but it also serves as a platform for us to showcase our facilities and capabilities, thereby fortifying our position as a preeminent logistics hub for Africa and also on a global scale.”

TMPA's partnership with IPCSA is instrumental in advancing the development of the Tanger Med Port Community System, bringing significant enhancements to its operational capabilities and service offerings, said Boulaich.

"We are committed to enhancing global trade efficiencies through strategic collaborations with IPCSA and its extensive global network. Our joint efforts are centred on advancing digitalisation initiatives that simplify and streamline trade and logistics processes," he explained.

Several topics on this year's IPCSA meeting agenda hold significant importance for TMPA. "We are particularly attuned to discussions surrounding AI-enhanced last-mile logistics for sustainability, as they align with our continuous endeavours to incorporate smart technologies and digital transformation strategies into our operational framework. Additionally, the emphasis on enhancing supply chain resilience in ports is of paramount importance to us, as it plays a pivotal role in ensuring the seamless continuity and efficiency of our logistics operations.

"Furthermore, we eagerly await updates from the IPCSA working group on sustainability initiatives, as they complement our unwavering commitment to environmental stewardship and perfectly align with our strategic objectives for sustainable development and operational excellence."

The members' meeting is a tradition going back to IPCSA's founding in 2011, said Nico De Cauwer, Secretary General of IPCSA. "We stick to that tradition and bring our members together at least once a year, so they can exchange valuable thoughts and insights, share experience, practical advice and feedback around specific topics of interest, and discuss views on various matters. This is one of the founding pillars of IPCSA, where members have always been willing to exchange knowledge and expertise in our domain with each other.



[Video Courtesy of Tanger Med Port Authority](#)

"The goal of our meeting is that members return home having learned how to tackle certain aspects of PCS operations within their local communities."

Secretary General Nico De Cauwer added: "We are extremely grateful to Tanger Med Port Authority for hosting our meeting and for TMPA's great enthusiasm and support in making this event a success. The Port of Tanger Med is evolving very quickly. TMPA has a clear vision on how the digital infrastructure needs to follow closely the

‘hard’ infrastructure when it comes to development of the port area. Tanger Med has implemented a state-of-the-art Port Community System which offers the services needed by stakeholders in the community in line with the overall development and expansion of the port’s ambitions and goals. In that sense, the topic and theme of our meeting, ‘PCSs of the future: Sustainable and Resilient’ clearly aligns with TMPA’s future-oriented approach.”

The launch of IPCSA’s Members Exchange Programme is of particular interest, noted De Cauwer. “This initiative will encourage members to visit and interact with each other, on a mutual visit basis with a programme agreed in advance, so that they can learn from each other in the environment of another member.”

He also highlighted the panel session to discuss the African ports’ perspective in their evolution from (trade) Single Windows towards more comprehensive and collaborative PCSs.



New members of IPCSA - GUCE CI (Ivory Coast) and Sohar Industrial Port Company – were introduced at the meeting.



Key presentations:

"Innovation Gateway: Tanger Med PCS Development Perspectives"

Presented by Ridouan BOULAICH, Director of Organisation and Information System & Adil RAISSOUNI, Port Community System Manager (Tanger Med Port Authority)

Tanger Med PCS Development Perspectives Tanger Med PCS demonstrated its robust operational capacity, currently boasting 88 interconnected systems that process an average of 50,000 electronic messages exchanged per day and 10,000 daily operations for 5,000 economic operators. The implementation of "Just-in-Time" logistics is proving to be a game-changer, yielding reduced congestion, significant cost savings (especially in fuel and lube oil), and a decrease in emissions. Furthermore, the presentation highlighted the strategic use of blockchain technology to enhance transparency, security, and transaction efficiency, leading to optimized operational times and reduced costs across the supply chain.



Members Exchange Program

INTERCOMPANY TEAMWORK EXPERIENCE OPPORTUNITIES

Aim = establishing and maintaining working relationships amongst IPCSA members



"New Initiative: 'Members Exchange Program'

Presented by Hans Rook, Program Facilitator

More information is available within the Section X of this book.

"IPCSA Working group Sustainability Update"

Presented by Stephanie van den Berg, Sustainability Manager (Portbase)

More information available within section IX of this Book.



Video courtesy of Tanger Med Port

"Supply Chain Resilience in Ports – Project Update"

Presented by Paul Walter, Strategy Director Digitisation (Port of Rotterdam) & Phanthian Zuesongtham, Head of Division Port Process Solution (Port of Hamburg).

This session underscored the critical need for predictability in supply chains for effective inventory stocking and production planning. Discussions highlighted the importance of standardizing over 20 key timestamps from import and export processes, such as Estimated Time of Arrival (ETA) and Actual Time of Departure (ATD), crucial for

BCOs. The emphasis was on developing a robust digital infrastructure based on standardization, identity brokers, and trust networks, with current initiatives globally, including the EU Data Act and collaborations with major bodies like IAPH and DCSA, paving the way for a more resilient and transparent global logistics ecosystem.

The session emphasized that various global initiatives are converging to establish this new digital infrastructure, including the EU Data Act, the Singapore-Rotterdam trade lane customs, FMC issued ASTM in the Americas, and global consortia like IAPH, DCSA, TIC4.0, and IPCSA, utilizing standards from UN/CEFACT.

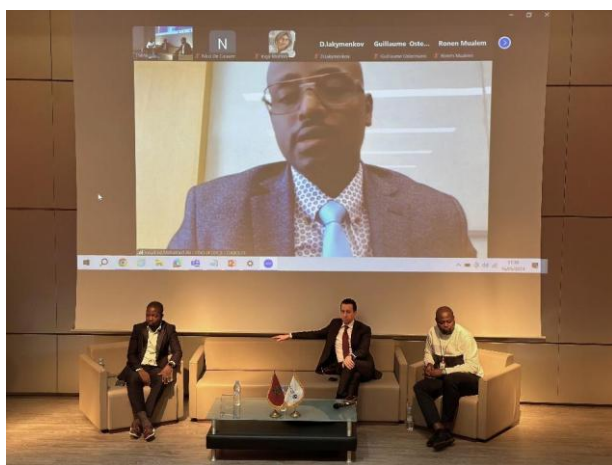
The presentation also touched on Port Call Optimization (PCO) as a significant measure for decarbonization in shipping. It stressed that high-quality data is essential for improved decision-making, increased efficiency, enhanced customer satisfaction, and accelerated data collaboration by fostering trust among partners.

"Cyber Resilience session: "How to leverage the power of ethical hackers to make your PCS more resilient""

Presented by Yannick Herrebaut, Cyber Resilience Manager (Port of Antwerp-Bruges).

The session on cyber resilience starkly illustrated the significant financial risks posed by cyber threats, with the average cost of a personal information record breach at \$178, and illicit platforms generating tens of millions in revenue. To combat this, the Port of Antwerp-Bruges detailed its successful implementation of a bug bounty and responsible disclosure program, leveraging ethical hackers to identify and fix vulnerabilities before malicious actors can exploit them. This proactive approach aims to significantly reduce the economic impact of cyber-attacks by addressing security flaws in development rather than after deployment, safeguarding critical port operations.

"African Ports' perspective: future and evolution of PCSs in African ports" Panel session



IPCSA Secretary General, Nico De Cauwer.

The IPCSA Members meeting held in Tanger Med, a captivating panel session unfolded, focusing on the "African Ports' perspective: future and evolution of Port Community Systems (PCSs) in African ports." The session brought together esteemed participants including Youssef Ahouzi from Portnet, Morocco, Houmed Mohamed Ali from DPCS, Abdoulaye Toure, and Kokou Aka from Guce CI. The discussion was moderated by

The evolution of PCSs in African ports represents a significant opportunity for enhancing operational efficiency, security, and sustainability. By embracing technological advancements. African ports are competitive players in the global maritime industry,

fostering economic growth and improving trade facilitation across the continent. The development and implementation of smarter PCSs can promote sustainability within African ports. By optimising logistical operations and reducing idle times, ports can lower their carbon footprint, aligning with global initiatives to combat climate change. Additionally, pcs can facilitate the transition to greener energy sources by managing and coordinating the logistics of supply and demand more effectively. Another significant aspect of the evolution of PCSs in African ports is the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning. These technologies can analyze vast amounts of data to optimize logistics, predict trends, and improve decision-making processes. For instance, AI can help in predicting vessel arrival and departure times more accurately, allowing for better resource allocation and reducing waiting times. This not only increases efficiency but also reduces costs associated with delays and idle resources.

"AI-Enhanced Last-Mile Logistics for Sustainability: Route Optimization and Demand Forecasting for Reduced Environmental Impact"

Presented by Houmed Mohomed Ali, Chief Operating Officer (DPCS – Djibouti Port Community Systems).



Djibouti Ports Community Systems (DPCS) presented compelling insights into leveraging AI to enhance last-mile logistics for sustainability, a critical area given the environmental toll of current delivery methods. AI-powered solutions, including route optimization algorithms, demand forecasting models, and vehicle fleet management systems, are key to achieving tangible benefits such as reduced carbon footprints, significant cost savings, and improved customer

satisfaction. The strategic deployment of micro-fulfillment centers, for example, offers faster order deliveries and more sustainable, greener options, demonstrating how technology can address challenges like traffic congestion and emissions.

"Secure Container Release Follow-up / State of Play"

Presented by Evelyn Eggers (DAKOSY), Ridouan Boulaich (TMPA), and Nico De Cauwer (Port of Antwerp-Bruges).

Updates on secure container release initiatives highlighted significant progress in increasing safety and security for port employees and customers. Germany's "Secure Release Order" (SRO) is moving from 2023 pilot runs to an expansion of operations by Q3 2024, aiming to replace vulnerable PIN codes with a digital, traceable release procedure. Similarly, Portbase's Secure Chain program is rapidly advancing, with containers from Latin America integrated since April 1, 2024, North America by July 1, 2024, and all deep-sea containers targeted for Q1 2025. Notably, customs inspections are set to see a lead time reduction from 72 to 24 hours, starting April 2024, demonstrating immediate operational improvements.

Portbase's "Secure Chain" program in Rotterdam, supported by the entire Port Community, was also highlighted. This program focuses on:

- Secure Portbase identities for users (MFA) and organizations.
- More secure pre-announcement of truck visits for terminals, with Remote Check In (RCI) implemented at ECT Terminals by March 2024.
- Checking the executing transport-operator at the terminal gate, expected in Q3 2024.
- Customs initiatives to reduce lead time for inspections from 72 to 24 hours and potentially reduce the circle of organizations informed about inspections.

The Secure Chain program aims to replace traditional delivery notes and PIN codes, which are susceptible to criminal payload and PIN code fraud, with a digital release process through Portbase. This involves the ocean carrier releasing cargo through Portbase, authorizing a cargo director, nominating a transport-operator, and pre-announcing pick-up to the terminal. As of May 2024, containers from LATAM were being released through Secure Chain, with North America following by July 2024, and all deep-sea containers targeted for implementation by Q1 2025. Potential scope extensions include feeder/short-sea, other Dutch ports, and inland terminals.

"Update on eFTI4EU: the future of freight transports digital"

Presented by Dmytro Iakymenko & Galina Rozina (DUX Consulting)

The eFTI4EU project provided a comprehensive update on the European Union's initiative to digitalize freight transport information, emphasizing the obligation for all EU Member States' authorities to electronically accept and use harmonized technical specifications for transport data by 2027. This ambitious project aims to reduce administrative expenses, enhance control capabilities, and boost efficiency and sustainability across the continent. The vision aligns with broader digitalization goals, as seen in the "Seizing the Moment" report, which projects that such digital shifts can cut cross-border processing times from 25 days to just one day, offering a powerful incentive for businesses to embrace certified eFTI platforms. The more information of eFTI Regulation available within Section IV of this book.

On behalf of the entire IPCSA community, we express our heartfelt appreciation to Tanger Med Port Authority in Morocco for their outstanding hospitality during the IPCSA Members Meeting on May 15th and 16th, 2024. Your generosity, thorough organization, and the proactive involvement of your team were crucial in ensuring the event was a great success, encouraging meaningful dialogue and partnerships. We eagerly anticipate further collaborations and advancements in global trade facilitation, as we strive together for a more seamless, sustainable, and secure logistics environment.

11.3. Events and workshops focusing on Sustainability, Foresight, and the implementation of the Maritime Single Window

IPCSA events and workshops focusing on Sustainability, Foresight, and the implementation of the Maritime Single Window are comprehensively detailed in the respective sections of this book, highlighting the importance and impact of each initiative.

XII Collaboration, PCS & SW promotion

12.1. IPCSA Leaders Visit Rijeka to Advise on PCS Implementation



IPCSA Secretary General Nico De Cauwer and IPCSA Ambassador Hans Rook visited Rijeka Port Authority and Rijeka Gateway on March 20th and 21st to offer initial high-level advice on progressing their Port Community System (PCS) implementation. On the first day, the IPCSA representatives met with the Rijeka Port Authority to discuss the current status, challenges, and expectations. The following day, a round table meeting was organized

with key stakeholders in the PCS environment. Participants included representatives from the Port Authority, Rijeka Gateway, shipping lines, agents, terminal operators, inland carriers, customs, and others. IPCSA provided insights into the PCS environment and facilitated discussions among stakeholders.

12.2. IPCSA at TOC Europe 2024, 11 - 13 June 2024, Rotterdam Ahoy Centre

TOC Europe 2024 is a major trade fair and conference centered on port, ship, and terminal technology, taking place in Rotterdam, Netherlands, from June 11-13. This event is essential for professionals in the container supply chain, offering a platform for decision-makers, experts, and solution providers to network and discover the latest industry advancements.



Photo credit: TOC Europe

Attendees include port and cargo supply chain professionals, such as C-level executives, engineers, automation specialists, and digitalization experts. The event focuses on port logistics, container terminal management, handling technology, automation, digitalization, and sustainable technologies. This year, IPCSA Ambassador Hans Rook was participating in a panel discussion on digitalizing maritime trade.

12.3. PMAC Annual General Meeting: 26–28 June 2024, Paramaribo, Suriname

The Port Management Association of the Caribbean (PMAC) aims to enhance the proficiency of member ports and improve the quality of services provided to users through the exchange of experience, training, information, and ideas.



Photo credit: PMAC

Most Caribbean ports are PMAC members, and IPCSA is proud to be a strategic partner. Our contribution centers on our expertise in Port Community Systems (PCS) and Single Window (SW) setup and usage, supporting digital advancement across the region's ports.

PMAC hosts its Annual General Meeting each early summer, and in 2024, it took place in Paramaribo, Suriname. This event is an essential opportunity for us to engage with our Caribbean members, understand their priorities, and share updates on our ongoing initiatives, including the Foresight Group, the Sustainability Workgroup, and our Masterclass program.

This year's primary focus is the implementation of the IMO Maritime Single Window (MSW). In support of this, our Secretary General conducted a two-day visit to our IPCSA member in Curaçao to engage with port stakeholders and government agencies, providing in-depth information and exploring the most effective approach for implementing MSW by the Port Authority.

As a strategic partner, IPCSA also participates in the Port Digitalization Working Group. Looking ahead to the next Annual Meeting in Curaçao, the group will address critical themes such as Caribbean port infrastructure modernization and environmental sustainability. Education and change management will be key discussion points, and we remain committed to supporting IPCSA/PMAC members through our expertise and Masterclass offerings on PCS and SW systems.

12.4. IPCSA at Smart Digital Ports of the Future, 24th and 25th September, Rotterdam

The Smart Digital Ports of the Future (SDP 2024) conference was once again hosted in Rotterdam, bringing together industry leaders and innovators to delve into the transformative technologies revolutionizing ports into efficient, secure, and sustainable hubs. As always, IPCSA Members were prominently featured among the speakers and participants, contributing their expertise to the event.

This year's discussions highlighted the expanding role of smart port solutions, with a particular emphasis on Port Community Systems (PCS) and their impact on global trade. Umesh Kurlekar from Kale Logistics provided valuable insights into how PCS platforms centralize data, streamline processes, and enhance stakeholder communication. By integrating AI, IoT, and blockchain technologies, PCS are minimizing manual errors, optimizing workflows, and promoting sustainability by reducing resource wastage. (ref. **"TRANSFORMING PORTS INTO PORT COMMUNITY SYSTEMS THROUGH DIGITAL INTEGRATION"**)



Photo credit: Port Technology International

Hans Rook and Nico De Cauwer from IPCSA further examined the influence of PCS on global trade. Their analysis underscored how secure, real-time data exchange improves transparency and operational efficiency, while also decreasing fuel consumption and emissions. This dual benefit of digital innovation was showcased as a key factor in the ongoing advancement of port systems. (ref. **"THE ROLE OF PORT COMMUNITY SYSTEMS IN OPTIMISING TRADE FACILITATION"**)



Photo credit: Port Technology International

For more comprehensive coverage, including in-depth articles on key topics discussed, readers can refer to the PTI journal at:

<https://www.porttechnology.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/PTI144-DIGITAL-v1-pages-1-1.pdf>

12.5. Maritime Single Window Seminar in Curaçao, September 2024 : Insights from IPCSA's Secretary-General



Nico De Cauwer, Secretary-General of IPCSA, was honored to be the keynote speaker at the Maritime Single Window Seminar, an event organized by the esteemed Curaçao Ports Authority, a valued member of IPCSA. The seminar focused on providing keynotes and insights into establishing a Maritime Single Window and its potential evolution into a comprehensive Port Community System.

Nico De Cauwer expressed his gratitude for the warm hospitality and appreciation he received from the people of Curaçao. Despite the literal warmth due to a current heatwave, the experience was made enjoyable by the welcoming atmosphere.

He also acknowledged the professional organization of the seminar by the Curaçao Ports Authority, commending their remarkable achievement in gathering all relevant stakeholders from the community—a task that is not easily accomplished.

As a proud member of the IPCSA family, IPCSA remains committed to offering unwavering support. The mutual exchange of experiences and knowledge among its members is central to the association's mission.

“An inspiring testimonial from Mr. Nico De Cauwer, our keynote speaker and Secretary-General of IPCSA, at the recent Maritime Single Window Seminar in Curaçao.

His insights are a must-watch for anyone interested in the future of maritime innovation.”

Available at:

https://www.linkedin.com/posts/curaçao-ports-authority_maritimeseminar-keynotespeaker-nicodecauwer-activity-7242970304174510080-XFw2/?utm_medium=ios_app&rcm=ACoAAABokasBsaigu3cK3gUw2qb2TgKylKyeVLs&utm_source=social_share_video_v2&utm_campaign=whatsapp

12.6. IPCSA at IAPH 2024: Key Discussions on Supply Chain Resilience in Ports



From October 8 to 10, 2024, Hamburg, Germany, hosted the IAPH 2024 World Ports Conference, where significant conversations took place. Javier Gallardo, CEO of Portic and Chairman of IPCSA, contributed his insights during the Supply Chain Resilience in Ports Working Group session. Alongside him were esteemed speakers: Dr. Phanthian Zuesongdam, Head of Division Port Process Solution at Hamburg Port Authority and IPCSA Regional Representative for Europe; Paul Walter, Corporate Strategy Director at Digital Port of Rotterdam; and Ingrid Boqué, Global Strategic Networks Officer at Hamburg Port Authority.

12.7. IPCSA at VANTAGE POINT



Kale Logistics Solutions recently launched VANTAGE POINT, marking the first edition of its premier Thought Leadership Summit for the maritime sector. This exclusive event, by invitation only, gathered influential figures from prestigious organizations like the International Association of Ports and Harbors (IAPH), the International Port Community Systems Association (IPCSEA), international regulatory authorities, and significant ports globally. Attendees shared insights, explored groundbreaking innovations, and collaborated to shape the future trajectory of maritime logistics.

Speaking at the event, Vineet Malhotra, Co-founder and Director, Kale Logistics Solutions, said, “This summit served as a fog light for the industry, illuminating pathways for innovation and collaboration. The actionable insights shared here will shape the future of maritime logistics.”

Nico De Cauwer, Secretary General of IPCSEA, said, “It was remarkable to see each and every one in the room. Of course, the general takeaway and challenge is digital transformation, but it’s filled in by the different people here who gather today in a different way. They’re using different technologies for the one, it’s digital twin, which is a priority for the others, it’s AI. Therefore, it’s remarkable to see that for everyone, digital transformation is at the head of the agenda.”

“The different angles and perspectives which the various people have when it comes to the main challenges of the digital transformation for their environment are very insightful in the discussions to shape the maritime digital future. Also, we have port authorities and PCS operators gathered here, so it is beneficial for both parties to exchange these ideas when discussing mutual challenges”, he added further.

The summit delved into the transformative effects of digitisation, emphasizing technologies like PCS (Port Community Systems), blockchain, and the Internet of Things (IoT) on boosting efficiency and promoting sustainability. A central theme that emerged was the importance of collaboration, with Malaysia’s national single window initiative being highlighted as a successful model for standardisation and trade facilitation.

For more insights on VANTAGE Point, you can check out Kale Logistics Solutions' YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gRkaULXSXHY>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KYx7Xo1uYA>

12.8. IPCSEA at Nexus International Conference - DGTMP 2024

IPCSEA participated actively in the Nexus International Conference on DGTMP 2024, hosted by the University of Évora and Ports of Sines and the Algarve Authority in Portugal. This event focused on sustainability in port operations, reflecting IPCSEA’s commitment to advancing sustainable practices. IPCSEA engaged with global experts and stakeholders to explore innovative solutions that support environmental stewardship in the maritime sector.

The participation highlighted IPCSA's dedication to fostering a sustainable future for ports worldwide. IPCSA emphasized the pivotal role of port community systems in promoting sustainability within the logistics chain through innovative solutions and collaborative approaches. These systems have enhanced efficiency, reduced environmental impact, and promoted sustainable practices across the industry, aiming to create a resilient and eco-friendly logistics infrastructure.

IPCSA at the NEXUS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE - DGTMP 2024



Hans Rook, IPCSA Ambassador, delivered a keynote speech on the impact of community systems, such as Port Community Systems (PCS) and Single Windows, on the logistics digital ecosystem. He highlighted how these systems have expedited digitalization within ports, revolutionizing trade facilitation and transforming interactions within the global supply chain. As a neutral organization, IPCSA has played a crucial role in shaping operational conditions for these systems, enhancing efficiency, transparency, and sustainability.

Rook urged global collaboration and called on ports worldwide to embrace these systems to tackle challenges, contributing to a more connected and sustainable global economy. Stephanie van den Berg, Portfolio Manager for Strategy & Innovation at Portbase, also delivered a keynote speech on sustainability in ports. She discussed the development of IPCSA sustainability guidelines for PCS and emphasized the need for innovative solutions to address current challenges and support future generations.

On the third day, Secretary General Nico De Cauwer participated in a panel session on "Digital and Green Transition In The Port And Logistic Sector," highlighting the synergy between digital and green initiatives. By improving efficiency through Port Community Systems (PCSs), stakeholders can engage more effectively in the digital

ecosystem of global trade. The integration of technologies like artificial intelligence has transformed PCSs into powerful tools for prediction and forecasting, optimizing cargo movement.

By optimizing business processes through digitalisation, PCSs enhance cargo operations and contribute to a greener, more sustainable port logistics environment. They minimize the environmental impact of port activities by streamlining operations, reducing paperwork, and improving communication among stakeholders. The Nexus conference addressed the critical issues of sustainability, cybersecurity, and cyber resilience, providing a platform for experts, industry leaders, and stakeholders to share insights and strategies for sustainable transformation in the ports and logistics sector.





To stay updated, join the IPCSA Community - our internal social platform. Remember, up to 10 people from a member organization can join the Community. You also have the option to create your own posts, form working groups, and publish updates.

Explore the main functionalities of the community at:

<https://www.ipcsa.community/thoughts/82>

Widgetguide:

<https://www.ipcsa.community/groups/5-widgetguide/welcome>

More insights: <https://www.ipcsa.community/e-learning/en/basic/index.html#/>

For more information and registration, please contact: inga.morton@ipcsa.international

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 - Filter information by context and meta-data
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