



Customs and Border Protection National Consultative Committee Technology Sub Committee

Meeting Minutes - Monday 11 October 2010

Location: Level 8 Customs House, Sydney International Airport

Meeting Commenced: 10am

Attendees:

Industry

Mr Paul Alexander	Shipping Australia Limited
Mr Peter Blanchard	TradeGate Australia Limited
Mr James Skurray	1 – Stop Connections Pty Ltd
Mr Richard White	Cargo Wise
Mr Paul Zalai	Customs Brokers & Forwarders Council of Australia Inc.

Customs & Border Protection

Ms Megan Kelly	National Manager IT Service Delivery (CHAIR)
Ms Rochelle Moore	National Manager Business Solutions
Mr Steve Moore	Director Industry Engagement
Mr Simon Nix	Director Gateway Services
Mr Paris Lai	IT Strategy, Architecture & Security
Mr Neil Hogan	Client & Program Managed Services (Secretariat)

Apologies

Mr Geoff Clark	Conference of Asia Pacific Express Carriers
Mr Joe Attanasio	CIO, Customs & Border Protection

1 Welcome & Introductions

The chair opened the meeting by welcoming the attendees. The chair noted apologies from Mr Clark and Mr Attanasio. The chair outlined the purpose of the meeting and its role within the Customs and Border Protection National Consultative Committee.

2 Acceptance of minutes from previous meeting

The previous minutes, from the meeting on 25 March 2010, were accepted without change.

3 Review & acceptance of sub-committee terms of reference

The chair asked the attendees for any comments on the developed Terms of Reference (ToR). Mr White enquired, with reference to the scope, if this was the correct forum to discuss future trends and overseas developments in ICT, particularly those of relevance to cargo and trade related transactions? Mr Blanchard added that he believed this forum was the appropriate area to discuss this. The Chair confirmed that this committee was the correct forum to discuss these matters and noted dot point 6 under the Purpose & Scope section of the ToR.¹ The Chair advised that this section of the ToR will be updated, to include reference to best practice.

Mr Blanchard raised a concern with the membership section of the ToR, particularly that 'Industry Bodies' weren't included as a category. The Chair advised we would update the ToR to capture this. Mr Zalai observed that industry groups like the CBFCA, may not need to attend a committee like this and that he saw his role here as an observer. Mr White noted that technical committees should resist the urge to be large, as the larger they got the

¹ Dot point 6 in the Purpose & Scope section states "Develop strategic technology roadmaps to enable improvements to cargo and trade related technological interaction between the government and software development community"

less productive they tend to be. Mr White noted it would be better to invite specific industry bodies to meetings with relevant agenda topics, on a meeting by meeting basis. Mr Zalai asked if there should be a wider representation of Software Developers at the meeting. Mr White stated that this committee wasn't a replacement for the Software Developers meeting; it was pitched at a more strategic level. Mr Zalai enquired if the Software Developers were aware of this meeting. Mr Moore replied that several other Software Developers were invited and that Customs and Border Protection (C & BP) will publish the meeting minutes on the Customs Website² once they are accepted.

Mr Blanchard suggested that as C & BP doesn't have major cargo related IT changes occurring at the moment; perhaps the frequency of the meetings of this sub-committee could be reduced. Mr Moore responded that the frequency was tied to the main CBPNCC meeting, as there was a requirement for this sub-committee to report to the main CBPNCC committee. Mr White requested that instead of alternating meetings between Sydney and Melbourne it would be more practical to have them in Sydney and Canberra, based on the locations of the meeting attendees. It was noted that the other sub-committees generally met on the same or adjacent day in the same location, to assist people who attended more than 1 sub-committee. There are some Melbourne based attendees on the other sub-committees.

The Chair advised that we will update the ToR based on the attendees review comments and distribute it with this meeting's minutes. Sub-committee members to provide additional comments within 2 weeks of distribution otherwise the Terms of Reference will assumed to be endorsed.

Actions

- Update the ToR to include reference to best practice. **Secretariat**
- ToR to be updated to include Industry bodies as a category under the Membership section. **Secretariat**
- Arrange for the publication of the meeting minutes on the Customs & Border Protection Website after minutes have been accepted. **Director Industry Engagement**
- Distribute updated ToR with meeting minutes. **Chair**

4 ICS Change Update

Mr Moore summarised the current situation regarding the EDI Client Create project and the Master Air Waybill (MAWB) re-use project.

4.1 EDI Client Create

Currently, the only way to register a client in ICS is through the Customs Interactive screens or by sending a paper form to Customs & Border Protection. There is no facility to request a new client through EDI messaging. C & BP have developed EDI functionality for the client registration process. The message specifications have been made available to Software Developers. It is currently being tested in the User Acceptance Test (UAT) environment. C & BP are working towards having this in Industry Test by 29/10/2010 and into Production on the 24/11/2010. Mr Moore noted that in the 4 week period of Industry Test, C & BP will be liaising with Software Developers, before advising Industry that the message can be used in Production.

Mr White asked how ICS will deal with an existing client requesting a new Client ID via an EDI message. Mr Moore replied that it would be handled by the same functionality in ICS that deals with this when someone requests a Client ID for an existing client via Customs Interactive. A message would be sent back to the EDI sender advising of the existing client ID. Mr White enquired about how ICS is coping with duplicate clients. Mr Moore advised that in the early stages of ICS there were a number of duplicate clients being created, but that this had been improved by a better utilization of matching software.

4.2 Master Air Waybill Re-use Project

ICS was designed for MAWB numbers to be a unique identifier for consolidated and straight line air consignments. MAWB's issued according to the International Air Transport Association (IATA) standard, comprise a 3 character code to represent the issuing organisation³, 7 characters to identify the AWB and a check character. Due to the volume of trade, this has meant that MAWBs with the same identifier are being re reported. ICS thinks that the re reported MAWB is referring to the previous consignment with the same identifier. Customs & Border Protection have developed a model, that will allow the re reporting of the same MAWB identifier for different consignments, after a year has passed. This will align ICS with Industry practice and the current IATA guideline. C & BP have worked with the Air Cargo Industry to develop rules for a unique MAWB within a period. Mr White questioned if C

² <http://www.cargosupport.gov.au/>

³ e.g. 081 indicates QANTAS have issued the MAWB

& BP could work with Industry to ensure that MAWB identifiers aren't re reported. Mr Moore remarked that as most MAWBs reported in ICS are issued overseas, that this wouldn't be practical. Mr White asked what would happen if a duplicate MAWB/House Air Waybill (HAWB) combination was reported to Customs. Mr Moore advised that it would be rejected, with an error message sent to the sender and it would need to be resolved manually.

Implementation of the changes into the ICS Production system will not occur until mid 2011. Mr Blanchard asked why there was such a long lead time for this change. Mr Moore explained that as the MAWB was a key identifier of air cargo, it was used as reference information and as a linking field in a number of messages and that this change would touch a significant amount of code. Meeting attendees agreed it was better to take our time and get it right, rather than hurry the change and have to deal with problems afterwards. Mr Moore advised that in early February, Customs & Border Protection would be talking to Software Developers and Industry about the best way to take this forward. Mr Moore asked if 4 months would be sufficient time for Software Developers to make any necessary changes to their software. It was agreed this was sufficient with Mr White mentioning that existing Industry systems allowed for duplicate reporting, usually with an associated warning/information message, so the changes need to Industry software should be minimal.

Mr Zalai asked if this change is implemented incorrectly can we roll back. Mr Moore noted that for all ICS releases we have the ability to roll back the software. Ms Moore added that due to the data migration required, that a roll back would be difficult, a roll back of the code is manageable but a roll back of the database is more problematic. Ms Moore stated that this will be tested extensively by Customs internally and also in Industry Test. Mr White commented that a problem with Industry Test environments around the world is the lack of current data, especially reference data.⁴ Automating the population of production data into Industry Test environments would make testing in Industry Test more meaningful.

Mr White asked if the CAPEC shipment flag change would be delayed due to the MAWB project. Mr Moore confirmed that it would be. It is on C & BP's work program but it has not been rated as a high priority by Industry. Mr Moore & Mr White agreed to discuss this further out of session.

5 Overview of Gateway Services program of work

Mr Nix delivered a presentation⁵ on the Gateway Services program of work. The two major components of this program are the Customs Connect Facility (CCF) Remediation project and the Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) 2011 project. Mr Nix noted that his team are nearly finished the analysis stage of this work. The current timelines are working towards a production release towards the middle of 2011. Mr Nix mentioned that C & BP will be seeking assistance for organisations with a pilot of the new functionality using the Industry Test environment.

The CCF remediation and PKI work will be conducted across development, test and production environments and will facilitate the future support of a wider range of client platforms and services. This could potentially allow for the use of web services in the future, although this isn't factored into C & BP's current work program.

One of the concerns with the current PKI regime is the dependency on the Australian Tax Office's Common-use Signing Interface (CSI). CSI is no longer supported software and may not work with some future platforms. Mr White enquired what the Tax Office proposes as an alternative to CSI for their clients. Mr Lai noted that ATO recommend AUSKey as an alternative for their clients⁶. For C & BP a CSI alternative will be provided as part of the PKI project that will make the use of certificates simpler for clients (similar to accessing online banking services). Mr Nix presented matrices to demonstrate which platforms clients were using and which platforms were currently supported and to when. Mr White asked would these future services be available for clients using Apple computers. Mr Nix noted that some of the current inhibitors to using a wider range of technologies will be removed once the PKI/CCF remediation work has been completed.

Mr Nix discussed the Identify Manager component of the PKI project, noting that it would assist organisations manage user access; through functionality such as disabling a user and reactivating a user. Mr Zalai stated that a common request among his members was the ability to provide different access roles to users in organisations, e.g. read, submit etc. Mr Nix noted that this was a step towards this functionality, but that the exact level of internal organisational control that would be delivered as part of this initial change was still to be determined.

⁴ e.g. Vessel IDs, Voyage Numbers, Flight Numbers, Tariff Duty Rates, Client IDs etc

⁵ Presentation entitled "Gateway Service Program of Work 2010-11" included with the meeting minutes email.

⁶ More information regarding AUSKey is available at:
<http://help.abr.gov.au/content.asp?doc=/Content/00237155.htm&usertype=BC>

EDI messaging was discussed with Mr Nix saying that Customs & Border Protection was eager for Industry to move away from the use of the Secure EDI (SEDI) software prior to September 2012, when the current T3 certificate expires. A proposal will be developed by C & BP, in consultation with Industry, on how best to achieve this. Mr Skurray mentioned that a number of companies tried a variety of EDI messaging tools but could only get SEDI to work. Mr Skurray asked if Customs would make the relevant Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) available. Mr Lai noted that while the SEDI APIs were made available to Software Developers with the Software Developer's Guide⁷ CD during the initial ICS development, it was only provided to assist developers as an entry point for either development of their own in-house, or integration of a commercial encryption solution.

Mr White noted that it will be difficult to get some small operators off SEDI, unless SEDI alternatives were identified. Mr Skurray said that the proposal should include examples of code to assist Industry and Software Developers. Mr White suggested that modern software products/environments now include inbuilt functions equivalent to those previously provided by SEDI. Mr White also added that the use of properly developed software instead of SEDI, would alleviate a lot of the problems caused by the use of SEDI and that he would be happy to provide some sample code. Mr Nix indicated that all of these options will need to be considered as part of developing the SEDI retirement proposal.

Mr Nix mentioned that C & BP would be seeking assistance with Industry pilots in May and June 2011. Mr Skurray advised that 1-Stop could potentially provide assistance with this. Mr Skurray indicated that C & BP should look at requesting some Industry partners to use 'forking code' during the Industry Test period, so that Industry Test is populated with duplicate production messages. Mr Zalai asked if this upgrade would address the issue of old and different versions of Java for different applications. Mr Nix answered that it would. Mr Zalai enquired if this upgrade will require additional user input. Mr Nix responded no, it would be a simpler system for users, similar to other online user experiences with prompts for User Id & passwords etc. Mr Nix requested that if any of the Industry representatives were aware of their members/clients upgrading their software platforms that they let C & BP know.

Actions

- Liaise regarding possible inclusion of 1-Stop as a pilot partner. **1-Stop & Director Gateway Services.**
- Provide code examples. **TradeGate** (to 1-Stop and Director Gateway Services).

6 Authentication Directions

Mr Lai delivered a presentation on Authentication directions⁸. Mr Lai advised that VeriSign⁹ have re-signed with C & BP for 3 years, to deliver digital certificate related services. Mr Lai outlined the factors influencing the need for secure authentication services. The 2009 Authentication review found; that C & BP can be generally confident that Industry clients sending messages to C & BP, are using a valid identity and that the identity is being used by an authorised person. Mr White remarked that use of certificates within an organisation isn't always governed by authorised persons using their own certificates.

The PKI project will prepare C & BP for the use of Gatekeeper II, as well as delivering other benefits. Mr White asked if there was a list of effects for end users if C & BP moved to Gatekeeper II. Mr Blanchard noted that the costs for VeriSign to obtain Gatekeeper II certification could be high, and that there is a risk that VeriSign would pass on these costs to clients through increased prices for certificates. Mr Zalai asked if there were any controls over potential VeriSign cost increases. Mr Lai responded that no there wasn't. Mr Blanchard questioned at what point in time AGIMO will mandate the use of Gatekeeper II certificates. Mr Lai replied that AGIMO's policy on certificates recommends the use of Gatekeeper but this isn't mandated.

Mr Lai outlined the other upcoming changes in certification noting the changes to the signature algorithm and the key bit length. Mr White said he would be happy to test these changes and asked Mr Lai who he had been dealing with in VeriSign. Mr Lai provided the contact's name to Mr. White. Mr Zalai asked if users will need to change to Gatekeeper II certificates immediately when C & BP does. Mr Lai answered that C & BP will allow both the use of Gatekeeper I & II certificates.

⁷ The current version of the Software Developer's Guide is available at: <http://www.cargosupport.gov.au/webdata/miniSites/sdg/index.htm>

⁸ Presentation entitled "CBPNCC Tech Subcommittee, Authentication Directions" included with the meeting minutes email.

⁹ More information regarding VeriSign is available at <http://www.verisign.com.au/>

Mr Zalai noted that when ICS was implemented, Industry was informed that Gatekeeper certificates would be required across the whole of government; however this hasn't eventuated. If there are cost or implementation issues with Gatekeeper II Industry may raise concerns. Mr White mentioned that some large clients have direct MQ¹⁰ access to C & BP for messaging and asked if these were encrypted. Mr Nix said he would take that question on notice and provide an answer at the next meeting.

Actions

- Provide an update at the next meeting on whether encryption is applied to MQ messaging from clients. Director Gateway Services.

POSTSCRIPT: For MQ message the transport layer security must use a mutually authenticated SSL/TLS transport layer. This approach provides encryption at the transport layer. To ensure that the data is being received from an established trusted partner however all messages must be signed by the send/receiver pair by a certificate that is registered with the gateway. As confidentiality is being provided by the transport layer, encryption of the messages themselves is not required.

7 Other Business

Mr Moore advised that there will likely be an increase in the number of Sunday outages in the next 6 months. As per standard practice, Cargo Advices will be distributed 10-12 days before these outages. The current change schedule requires more outage time.

Mr Skurray indicated that the use of Web Services to send messages to Customs & Border Protection would be beneficial to Industry, noting the widespread use of Web Services with the expectation that this will increase. Mr Skurray asked if the use of Web Services for messaging was on Customs agenda. Mr Nix replied that it wasn't something that was currently in our program of work but that the CCF Remediation project would facilitate the future use of Web Services. Mr Skurray asked besides MQ and EDI SMTP¹¹ emails what other messaging technologies Customs are looking at. Mr Nix answered that at this stage C & BP isn't actively looking at anything else. Mr White added that during the development of ICS, Industry and Software Developers voted for the use of SMTP but now this is something that he regrets. SMTP emails are vulnerable to a lot of security issues, such as viruses and there is no guaranteed delivery of the message. This leads to situations like clients turning up at the wharf unaware that C&BP has not received their cargo message. Other issues with SMTP emails include that they are not necessarily delivered in the order they were sent, sometimes leading to confusion regarding cargo statuses. Mr White, Mr Skurray & Mr Blanchard commented that the introduction of Web Services would decrease the number of messaging related problems we currently encounter. This wouldn't change the payload¹² information, which would remain as it currently is in EDIFACT format. It would present the addressing/identifying information of the message in a way that is compatible with Web Services. Mr White proposed a working group to look at this issue and develop a template, including Mr White, Mr Skurray, Mr Blanchard & Mr Nix. Mr White and Mr Skurray volunteered to develop a high level proposal to be presented at the next meeting.

Mr White mentioned that with EFT payments it is difficult for clients to determine which payments have been accepted by C & BP on a given day.

Mr White said that Drawback functionally should have an EDI capability. Currently users requesting Drawbacks need to do this through the Customs Interactive or by lodging a paper form. Mr Zalai observed that Brokers tend to do it electronically in their own systems, and then fax the Drawback to Customs with a covering letter. Mr Moore acknowledged this was an issue, but advised that it hadn't been listed as a priority issue by Industry and therefore wouldn't be actioned in the short term. Mr Zalai added that it would be helpful if Industry was aware how much effort was involved in potential changes, so they could raise the priority of potential 'quick wins'. The Chair questioned whether it would be worthwhile to provide the meeting attendees with this priority list. Mr Moore noted that C & BP was still in the process of discussing this list with different Industry groups. Once it has been finalised and presented at the CBPNCC Service Delivery Sub-Committee, it could be distributed to members of the Technical Sub-Committee.

¹⁰ IBM messaging software

¹¹ SMTP = Simple Mail Transfer Protocol is the electronic mail messaging standard C & BP uses for the sending of EDIFACT messages to and from ICS/CCF.

¹² Payload of a message is the business information, such as the information on an import declaration or a cargo report.

Actions

- Present a high level proposal, regarding the use of Web Services for messaging to ICS/CCF at the next meeting. **TradeGate, 1-Stop & Director Gateway Services**
- Distribute Industry priority list to CBPNCC Technical Sub-Committee members after it has been presented at the Service Delivery Sub-Committee. **Director Industry Engagement**

8 Close

The meeting was closed at approximately 12:15pm.

9 Summary of Action Items

ID	Date	Description	Owner
1	11/10/2010	Update the ToR to include reference to best practice.	N. Hogan
2	11/10/2010	ToR to be updated to include Industry bodies as a category under the Membership section.	N.Hogan
3	11/10/2010	Arrange for the publication of the meeting minutes on the Customs & Border Protection Website after minutes has been accepted.	S. Moore
4	11/10/2010	Distribute updated ToR with meeting minutes.	M. Kelly
5	11/10/2010	Liaise regarding possible inclusion of 1-Stop as a pilot partner.	J.Skurray & S.Nix
6	11/10/2010	Provide code for use as an example in the proposal paper to be developed by C & BP	R.White
7	11/10/2010	Provide an update at the next meeting on whether encryption is applied to MQ messaging from clients.	S. Nix
8	11/10/2010	Present a high level proposal, regarding the use of Web Services for messaging to ICS/CCF at the next meeting.	R. White, J.Scurray S.Nix
9	11/10/2010	Distribute Industry priority list to CBPNCC Technical Sub-Committee members after it has been presented at the Service Delivery Sub-Committee.	S. Moore