UN/CEFACT Project Proposal

Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) Notification Exchange

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1. Project Purpose

The project aims to provide a UN/CEFACT business standard that can support information notification for food and feed safety. In particular, the goal is to foster the implementation of an international standard to be useful for a Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) Notification Exchange.

2. Project Scope

This project will develop a specification for

- processes capturing the notification and distribution of information from one member of a notification network towards a cluster and other countries
- specifications for data and information exchange messages

The starting point of the project is the European Union Regulation EC/178/2002, which concerns general principles and requirements for food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety. This involves a network of countries, the European Commission (EC) and the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) working together in order to follow issues and incidents related to food safety within the European Union and European Free Trade Association (EFTA), for food and feed related products coming from any country.

The RASFF network is composed of designated National Contact Points (NCPs) in each participant country as well as EC and EFTA representatives. These contact points can decide if food and feed safety issues discovered in a Member (by inspecting products in the market or at the border) are under the scope of the RASFF system.

As an example, the RASFF notification form is used to communicate details of the findings to the European Commission. The EC in turn performs a number of tasks and checks if it can make the notification available to other members and can as well inform non-Members of RASFF (third countries). Third countries where the product is exported or countries of origin of the product are to be notified so as to be able to take corrective measures when and as needed.

This project involves support for an electronic process for the exchange of RASFF notification information and establishes the specification of what information (in the form of standard messages) is exchanged among and/or within a group of countries. The project builds on the considerable experience with the registration of food safety risks and hazards related information in RASFF. This project will also attempt to establish a taxonomy and practical ways for the classification and usage of this information.

The collaboration between the NCPs and the EC via the RASFF system and the current practices are well established and widely known. The experience with using the current system and communication with third countries indicates that the usage of electronic exchange of the RASFF notification information and connection with existing information systems in RASFF Members can facilitate the exchange in shorter time periods while improving the content quality and decreasing the effort to perform the checks at central levels (Members, EC, or other similar cluster of countries).

The project intends to establish a common specification for the exchange of information between all participants. This exchange will try to leverage practices and experience from the RASFF network (and other similar networks).

3. Project Deliverables

The project deliverables include:

a. A Business Requirements Specification (BRS) document containing Business Process Models covering electronic logbook business processes
b. A guide for users which assist them to select the model appropriate to their needs
c. A Requirements Specification Mapping (RSM) document describing the message structures (as class diagrams) for the business transactions
d. XML Schemas to implement the message structures for the business transactions

4. Exit Criteria

a. A Business Requirements Specification (BRS) document containing Business Process Models covering electronic logbook business processes
  - Completed BRS.
  - Public review and logs showing how comments have been addressed.
b. A guide for users which assist them to select the model appropriate to their needs
  - Completed Guide.
  - Public review and logs showing how comments have been addressed.
c. A Requirements Specification Mapping (RSM) document describing the message structures (as class diagrams) for the business transactions
  - Completed RSM.
  - Public review and logs showing how comments have been addressed.
d. XML Schemas to implement the message structures for the business transactions
  - Completed XML Schemas.
  - Public review and logs showing how comments have been addressed.

5. Project Team Membership and Required Functional Expertise

Membership is open to experts with broad knowledge in the area of food safety. Specific knowledge is welcomed with respect to developments within the European Commission, European Food Safety Authority, European Union (and EFTA) countries, ASEAN RASFF, other alert systems and related UN/CEFACT activities.

Experts are expected to contribute to the project solely on the basis of their competencies and to comply with the UN/CEFACT Code of Conduct and UN/CEFACT Intellectual Property Rights Policy.

The project team is envisaged to initially involve:

- Philippe.Loopuyt@ec.europa.eu,
- Giorgos.Georgiannakis@ec.europa.eu,
- Jan.Baele@ec.europa.eu

6.   UN/CEFACT Head of Delegation support

- France
- Germany
- Italy
- Netherlands
- Spain

7. Geographical Focus

The geographical focus covers the globe, initial contributions are expected to focus on the processes involving European Union Member States, European Free Trade Association countries (namely Liechtenstein, Iceland, Norway, and Switzerland) and Asia via the ARASFF system.

The food and feed products chain and exchange covers the globe, so end products consumed in Europe can be sourced from anywhere in the world. Economic operators and authorities have a high interest for the timely exchange of structured information so as to facilitate trade as well as trace and block all safety threats within reasonable time.

8. Initial Contributions

The following contributions are submitted as part of this proposal. It is understood that these contributions are only for consideration by the project team and that other participants may submit additional contributions in order to ensure that as much information as possible is obtained from those with expertise and a material interest in the project.

- Process Model for notifications
- Data Dictionary and Data Model for exchanged information

9. Resource Requirements

Participants in the project shall provide resources for their own participation. The existence and functioning of the project shall not require any additional resources from the UNECE secretariat.

10.   Project Leadership

Project Leader: Philippe.Loopuyt@ec.europa.eu
Editors: Giorgos.Georgiannakis@ec.europa.eu
Jan.Baele@ec.europa.eu
Others (to be decided)

11.   Milestones

A project plan, documenting the objectives to be achieved, and showing the major products, milestones, activities and resources required on the project will be developed after acceptance of the project.

Project Stages	Expected Completion Dates
Project Inception	2013-05-01
Business Requirements Specification • Requirements gathering • Draft development • Public draft review • Publication • Review for maintenance requirements	2013-06-30 2013-09-30 2013-10-31 2013-12-31 2014-06-30
Guide for users • Requirements gathering • Draft development • Public draft review • Publication • Review for maintenance requirements	2013-06-30 2013-09-30 2013-10-31 2013-12-31 2014-06-30
Requirements Specification Mapping • Draft development • Public draft review • Publication • Review for maintenance requirements	2013-07-30 2013-10-31 2013-12-31 2014-06-30
XML Schemas • Draft development • Public draft review • Publication • Review for maintenance requirements	2013-09-30 2013-10-31 2013-12-31 2014-06-30
Project Exit	2013-12-31