



BSI Standards Publication

Postal services — Harmonized track and trace events

Part 1: Forward flow

National foreword

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The UK participation in its preparation was entrusted to Technical Committee SVS/4, Postal services.

A list of organizations represented on this committee can be obtained on request to its committee manager.

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European foreword

This document (CEN/TS 18055-1:2024) has been prepared by Technical Committee CEN/TC 331 “Postal services”, the secretariat of which is held by AFNOR.

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Introduction

International track and trace capabilities are a crucial element of Cross border E-Commerce. Predicting the delivery moment of an E-Commerce item can be difficult because the item may be long distances, undergoing complex customs and security processes. Therefore, recipients are keen on following their order via track and trace services.

These services, the provided events, their descriptions and the quality of these events differ per logistical service provider (LSP).

This leads to an opaque supply chain with limited or no visibility on the progress of the E-Commerce item on its way to its destination, causing uncertainty for the recipients, increasing call centre calls and costs whilst reducing the trust in cross border E-Commerce services.

In some cases, over 20 events with unclear descriptions, or even repetitive descriptions that make no sense to the intended recipient of the E-Commerce item are shared.

An increase of the quality of track and trace services with a focus on the recipient, will lead to an increase of consumer trust and supply chain cost reductions. In turn, this will lead to growth of cross border E-Commerce both internationally and domestically.

This document (being the result of a CEN project) will focus on events related to cross border E-Commerce to and from Europe to and from non-European countries as well as cross border E-Commerce within Europe. A generic increase of trust in cross border E-Commerce will be beneficial for the flows within Europe, potentially leading to an increase in cross border trade within the European Union.

The main purpose of this document is to provide a minimum set of progress updates (Events) that are well-defined and easy to understand for the recipient of the E-Commerce items.

The starting point for this is the Consumer buying the goods from the E-Commerce seller. Therefore, in this document, when describing the individual events related to the progress of the execution of the delivery of an E-Commerce item, the language we will use is the language of the Consumer. This in contrast to most other technical specifications for events that take the perspective of the Logistic Service Providers (LSP) and therefore assume a level of knowledge about transport and logistics operations that is simply not there with Consumers. Furthermore, this document aims to describe only the events that deliver the most useful information to the recipient.

This document contains a list of nine (9) track and trace events for LSP's to share with the recipients of E-Commerce items to update them regarding the progress of delivery execution. Chapter 5 describes these events in detail.

The document also includes a description of the basic data set for these events. Chapter 6 provides more detail on that.

This short list of events (defined from the recipient perspective) can be a starting point for LSP's currently not providing any tracking events as well as a reference for LSP's improving the transparency of their track and trace solution.

Although this document has been developed with E-Commerce and cross border shipments in mind, harmonization of track and trace events can benefit other logistic flows, such as domestic shipments and direct (offline) shop orders.

Therefore, this document may be applicable for goods flows and parcel flows outside the scope of cross-border E-Commerce that this document covers. E.g. a number of the events mentioned may be applied also in domestic contexts and/or for transportation of goods that have been traded without using the Internet.

In general, an LSP will have identified and defined events for itself. Therefore, we fully expect that LSPs will need to translate or map their own events to the 9 events defined in this document.

In the addendum you will find a mapping of these nine events to a number of track and trace event lists currently in wide use. The addendum is in no way intended to be comprehensive; many LSPs will need to make the mapping from their own event set to the set in this document for themselves.