



EDI Technical specification

Appendix F1

LORS: Message terms and definitions

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APPENDIX F1

MESSAGE TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

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USE OF THE TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

Update - March 2023: This technical specification was released in March 2023 and replaces the version dated June 2009

1. PURPOSE

The formal definitions relating to the syntax rules are found in the UN/EDIFACT Syntax Rules (ISO 9735). The clarification given here is consistent with the formal definitions and is provided in this form to aid the understanding of the message.

2. MESSAGE

An EDI message is a collection of data, logically grouped into segments, that is exchanged to convey information between partners engaged in EDI. Messages are composed of specific segments that represent a business transaction. Each message starts with a message header segment (UNH) and ends with a message trailer segment (UNT).

The message type identifying the type of business is given in the message header segment (UNH). The maximum number of messages in an inbound interchange is 800.

3. SEGMENT

A data segment is the intermediate unit of information in a message. A segment consists of a pre-defined set of functionally related data elements which are identified by their sequential position within a set. A segment begins with a segment identifier - a unique three alphabetic upper-case code - and it ends with a segment terminator.

4. SEGMENT STATUS (REQUIREMENT DESIGNATOR)

The status of a segment in a specific message may be:

Mandatory	This segment must appear in the message.
Conditional	This segment will occur in the message dependent on certain conditions stated in the message definition. If no conditions are specified, then the occurrence of the segment may be subject to agreement between trading partners, or at the option of the message originator.

5. MAXIMUM USE OF SEGMENTS

Some segments may be repeated a certain number of times at their specific location in the message. A maximum number of repetitions may be indicated in the message structure Branching Diagram and Segment Table which are included in the individual Message Specifications.

The status (requirement designator) and the maximum number of repetitions a segment type can occur, in more than one position in the message, are indicated in the message structure Branching Diagram and Segment Table.

6. GROUPS OF SEGMENTS (LOOPS)

Within a message, specific groups of functionally related segments may be repeated. These groups are referred to as `loops`. The maximum number of repetitions of a particular loop, at a specific location, is included in the message definition and indicated in the message structure Branching Diagram and Segment Table.

A group of repeating segments (a loop) may be nested within other loops, provided that the inner loop terminates before the outer loop.

The status of a loop may be:

Mandatory	This loop must appear in the message.
Conditional	This loop will occur in the message dependant on certain conditions stated in the message definition. If no conditions are specified, then occurrence of the loop may be subject to agreement between trading partners, or at the option of the message originator.

7. DATA ELEMENTS IN A SEGMENT

A data element is the smallest unit of information in a segment. Data element descriptions and usage are defined in the UN Trade Data Elements Directory (UNTDDED).

Two or more data elements may be grouped together to form a composite data element. The data elements forming a composite data element are referred to as component data elements. The use of data elements in a segment are defined in the UN/EDIFACT Data Segment Directory.

The status of a data element, in a segment, may be :

Mandatory	This data element must appear in the segment.
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Conditional

This data element will occur in the segment dependant on certain conditions stated in the message definition. If no conditions are specified, then occurrence of the data element may be subject to agreement between trading partners, or at the option of the message originator.

8. QUALIFIERS

A data element whose function is to give a more precise meaning to another data element is referred to as a qualifier. The data value of a qualifier is taken from an agreed set of codes. The code, when interpreted, represents the meaning added to the content of the data element being qualified. A qualifier may be used in the same way to give a more precise meaning to a whole segment.

The correct codes for qualifiers may be found in the LORS EDI Code Set List (Appendix B).

9. DATA ELEMENT FORMAT NOTATION

The UNTDED notation is used to indicate the format of data elements:

a3	3 alphabetic characters, fixed length
n6	6 numeric characters, fixed length
an5	5 alphanumeric characters, fixed length
a..6	up to 6 alphabetic characters
an..35	up to 35 alphanumeric characters
n..9	up to 9 numeric characters