



# **Electronic Data Messages**

**The use of electronic messages to ensure good quality reporting.**

**Relationship between the IFTMIN and ERINOT messages**

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## Table of content

<b>1.</b>	<b>Management overview</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Preamble</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Scenario</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Messages used to supply the data</b>	<b>7</b>
4.1	IFTMIN	7
<b>5.</b>	<b>Messages used for reporting to the RIS authorities</b>	<b>9</b>
5.1	The ERINOT message:	9



# 1. Management overview

## Summary,

To ensure that reporting parties are able to provide the required data to the competent fairway authorities, the provision of correct information to reporting parties is a pre-condition. This information is at present generally provided through the use of paper documents although electronic substitutes do exist. To ensure electronic reporting with messages containing all necessary data, the required information should be handled electronically throughout the whole transport chain.

This document provides an overview of the messages used to facilitate correct electronic reporting by the skipper and the means to provide electronic data to the skipper, resulting in good quality electronic reports. The document includes an explanation on the use of the messages and is meant to create awareness and to explain the relationship between the various used messages.

The messages are used and required for a number of reasons:

- for reporting purposes to the respective competent authorities,
- to ensure that the data to be reported is electronically available to the reporting parties,
- to support the tendency to decrease administrative procedures and replace documents by electronic data.

Messages used for electronic reporting in inland waterway transport are divided in messages meant for the competent authorities and messages meant for commercial, logistical purposes such as a transport-order. Moreover the messages are used for the next party in the transport chain such as terminal messages. Obviously privacy and security aspects will need to be respected and have to be in line with the respective European Directives and national guidelines.



## 2. Preamble

It is becoming increasingly clear that to ensure unambiguous use of the reporting facilities as agreed under the Directive on River Information Services (RIS), there is a need to clarify when a certain message should be used and the function and application of the messages used for electronic reporting.

The RIS directive states in this respect that: "Member States shall take the necessary measures to implement RIS and shall enable, as far as ship reporting is required by national or international regulations, the competent authorities to receive electronic ship reports on the voyage and cargo data of ships" and:

"In cross-border transport, this information shall be transmitted to the competent authorities of the neighbouring state before the arrival of the vessels at the border."

For the reporting of vessels the ERINOT 1.2 message will be the standard by which the skipper or the vessel operator on his behalf has to exchange the necessary information with the competent waterway authorities. The ERINOT 1.2 message shall where required by legislation be used for the reporting of voyage related information and of information on dangerous and non dangerous cargo carried on board of all vessels sailing on inland waterways. To ensure a uniform usage of the standard the European Commission will publish the technical specification of this standard, ERINOT 1.2 message as an annex to the RIS directive. Based on the empirical experience during the implementation of the message it became clear that the production of an electronic form (the ERINOT 1.2) does need a considerable effort by the skipper, especially where many different goods respectively containers need to be reported. This manual effort of the skipper will obviously decrease the quality of the data which has to be provided to the authorities. Manual intervention of a skipper is not really necessary, given the fact that most of the information is available in electronic format with the barge operators or the shipper. To ensure the availability of the electronic data on board, the skipper has to obtain the data in a pre-specified electronic format, this has been the reason why a standard IFTMIN-BICS message and its implementation manual have been designed and elaborated .

Although through the use of this message all necessary information should be available electronically and in many cases the electronic forms are part of the software used on board, the awareness around the need to use this possibility is still lacking. To clarify the function and use of the respective messages used to enable electronic reporting of data in inland waterway traffic and transport, this document has been drafted on request of the fairway authorities and (inter)national bodies. The purpose of this document is to provide these authorities with detailed information on the use of the message and to support them in raising awareness towards the involved commercial parties.



### 3. Scenario

To ensure that in the present date and time electronic reporting to the competent waterway authority is done properly, taking into account the often enormous amount of data, it is inevitable that this data is delivered and exchanged electronically with all involved parties but especially with the party (skipper of the vessel) responsible for reporting.

This avoids manual handling of data by the people responsible for electronic reporting.

The availability of electronic data will subsequently result in:

- fewer errors,
- less corrections.
- an increase of data quality and integrity.

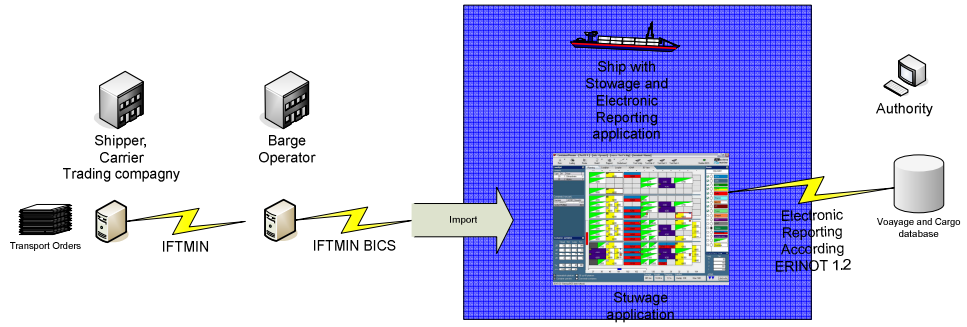
As has been defined in the RIS directive, River Information Services means the harmonised information services to support traffic and transport management in inland navigation, including interfaces to other transport modes. RIS does not deal with internal commercial activities but is open for interfacing with commercial activities.

The present scenario for the used messages is as follows:

1. A transport instruction is sent from the customer (shipper) to for instance a barge operator. The electronic message to accomplish this is the standard IFTMIN message as explained in Chapter 4. This message is used to give all details regarding the cargo to be transported and where applicable refers to the underlying contract.
2. A transport order in the form of an IFTMIN (BICS) special message, in accordance to the implementation guidelines, is then sent by the Barge operator to the skipper of the vessel. This message will contain all particulars regarding the cargo respectively containers to be loaded and any further requirements for the transport.
3. The barge operator will also provide a pre-load list to the terminal for the announcement of the cargo to be expected. Based on the received information the skipper will provide a stowage-plan often using a stowage application. The stowage-plan provides the information regarding the required stowage position on board of the cargo. The final result is used to fill the ERINOT reporting message.
4. Upon starting the voyage the skipper must report all particulars regarding the voyage, ship and (hazardous) cargo to the waterway authorities, using the ERINOT reporting message as described in Chapter 5 of this document. Where required the skipper will receive a confirmation in the form of an ERIRSP (APERAK) message that the reporting message has been received and processed by the waterway authorities.



### Visualisation of the scenario





## 4. Messages used to supply the data

There are several standard (commercial) messages in existence dealing with booking, stowage, transport instructions and container management, such messages do serve as input information for the reporting messages exchanged with the competent authorities. Good examples are the IFTMIN and IFTMIN-BICS which are the user guidelines for the transport instruction.

### 4.1 IFTMIN

The Standard International Forwarding and Transport Instruction (IFTMIN) message may be used for both national and international applications. It is based on universal practice related to administration, commerce and transport.

#### 1 Principles

The instruction results in a transport contract for a consignment and is primarily meant for administrative purposes.

It will be the message from shipper to carrier or forwarder containing the final details of the consignment for which services are provided. The instruction message is the one and only message which results in the actual contract for transport which can either be a document or an electronic contract.

If only one message will suffice in an exchange between a shipper and a carrier/forwarder, the instruction message should be the one as this message is the only message that results in the contract between the shipper and the barge operator.

#### 2 Usage of the IFTMIN (BICS) message implementation guide for Inland shipping

The IFTMIN standard UN message has been used as fundament for the definition of a subset and its implementation guide explaining the use of this subset. This subset has been called the IFTMIN (BICS) message. Such a specific subset of the IFTMIN was required to ensure that the correct information necessary for the transport over inland waterways is available in the correct format to the skippers. The guide is geared towards the special use of the IFTMIN message to provide the data to competent authorities and partners.

In the inland shipping industry the IFTMIN-(BICS) message implementation guide is the key for the electronic data interchange (EDI) between barge operators, and skippers (partners) in inland shipping. The IFTMIN-(BICS) message and guide provides all the necessary data to enable electronic data interchange between inland shipping with their partners and does provide all data necessary for reporting to the respective competent authorities. In other words, the message serves as the fundament for the provision of data to the parties connected to the domain of inland shipping.

The message implementation guide is used by inland waterway operators and the guide is completely in line with the applicable UN-standards for instructions for the transport of goods and equipment.



Summary of the reasons why the IFTMIN (BICS) message and guide are to be used as the standard for information provision in inland waterway transport:

- The inland shipping industry has a vital interest in seamless transfer of information related to the entire transport chain. This contributes highly to the quality and reliability of the inland waterborne transport as an individual part in the transport chain and for that matter in the total logistics chain.
- The IFTMIN-(BICS) message is the basis for electronic reports to fairway- and other authorities and the key to several electronic transport documents like E-manifest, electronic Bill of Lading, load and discharge instructions.
- With the use of the IFTMIN-(BICS) message all necessary information is supplied from the customer (agent, barge operator initiating the transport) to the vessel. This information is needed for a safe and secure transport of the cargo. After receiving and processing this information the skipper cannot only take care of safe and secure transport but also all necessary data is available to make a report to the competent authorities.
- In this way it is possible to deliver all desired information in a uniform structure to commercial partners (consignees, shippers, terminals and barge operators) as well as to authorities (fairway authorities, police, customs, port authorities).
- With respect to the application of security measures (ISPS) the actual information obtained through the use of the IFTMIN-(BICS) message, will be indispensable for all those who need to provide information. To meet the information requirements of other involved parties, the message gives skippers the only manageable way of providing reliable and good quality data.
- By using international standards or implementation guides based on international standards, fewer changes in in-house software of participating actors are necessary. This will stimulate the acceptance and the use of Electronic Data Interchange in the inland waterway transport environment.





## 5. Messages used for reporting to the RIS authorities

### 5.1 The ERINOT message:

The use of the ERINOT message which is the mandatory message for where required the electronic reporting of voyage and cargo details (dangerous as well as non-dangerous goods) by a ship sailing on inland waterways to the competent waterway authority and where applicable also the port authority. The message has been elaborated in the ERI guide and will be published by the European commission and is published by the CCNR.

The message is also used for the exchange of information between the competent waterway authorities mutually and between port and inland waterway authorities.

The notification message is used for the following purposes:

- transport notification from vessel to authority from ship to shore;
- transport notification on behalf of the skipper to authority from shore to shore;
- passage notification from authority to authority between authorities;

This message together with its standard implementation guide is within the environment of River Information Services in accordance with the RIS directive and is part of the technical annex of the directive.