



HM Revenue  
& Customs

## NCTS5 – Frequently Asked Questions following Webinar 1 (05/03/24)

### Audience

This document has been produced to support Traders, Agents, Express Operators, Fast Parcel Operators, Hauliers, Software Developers, and any other entities that play a role in the movement of goods, under Common Transit Convention procedures.

### Timing

NCTS5 will go live in the UK under Transitional Rules on 01 July 2024 and under Final State Rules on 22 January 2025. This introduces different functionality on the two different dates.

The answers within this document addresses questions around the new functionality introduced by NCTS5, as well as other frequently asked questions relating to NCTS.

## NCTS5 - Frequently Asked Questions

### Multiple House Consignments

**Question 1: for NCTS we have approximately 600-1000 shipments per outbound truck and upload up to 999 shipments/consignments. However, with NCTS5 you state that there are up to 99 consignments at house level with 999 item lines. Today with NCTS4 we upload up to 999. Why the change/restriction?**

**Response:** *since we went live with the webinar, we have received confirmation that there will be up to 1999 consignments at house level, each with 999-line items (therefore up to 1999 consignors or consignees). This is more than originally reported.*

However, please note the maximum overall number of line items you can have in a declaration is 1999.

## Functionality

### Question 2: What functionality and processes will change with NCTS5 and when will these happen?

**Response:** please refer to the table below:

01 July 2024 (Transition)	What this means?
<p><b>Amendments</b> –NCTS5 will provide the ability to amend pre-lodged and/or rejected declarations. Current Phase 4 capabilities mean the declaration must be cancelled and re-submitted if an amendment is required</p>	<p>NCTS5 will allow declarants to amend pre-lodged and/or rejected declarations after they've been submitted. This means if you need to make an amendment, you can go back into the declaration and make changes without starting a new declaration. This cuts down on the administrative burden for traders and allows a declaration to be amended.</p>
<p><b>Commodity codes</b> - you will be able to enter a commodity code of up to 6 digits into NCTS5 on a voluntary basis.</p>	<p><b>This feature is available from 01 July 2024;</b> however, it will not be mandatory to use until 00:00:01 on 22 January 2025. Even though this is not mandatory, we encourage you to get used to the new requirement and enter commodity codes from 01 July 2024</p>

From 00:00:01 on 22 January 2025 (Final State Rules)	What do I do during the transitional period?
<p><b>Electronic presentation of Movement Reference Number (MRN)</b> –Transit Accompanying Documents (TADs), the MRN can be presented via a phone, tablet, or other electronic means (managed by each National Administration). However, there may still be a requirement to carry a paper TAD as</p>	<p>No changes to the current position are required. Some locations already allow for electronic presentation which is compliant with Phase5 (such as electronic presentation and processing at Goods Vehicle Movement Service ports).</p>

not all locations across member states will have the infrastructure to facilitate electronic transmission.

When we move to final state, from transitional state (00:00:01 on 22 January 2025) there will be a different TAD layout. This is to accommodate some of the new functionality being implemented with NCTS5. Third-party software developers have been provided with this information and are building their software to the required specification

**Office of Incident** – the ability to report incidents (enroute) to a customs office, for real-time reporting directly into NCTS5. There will be a new customs ‘Office of Incident’ role which means incidents will be recorded as they happen, at the nearest applicable customs office, as opposed to the current process whereby you need to wait until arrival at the Office of Destination which can cause delays. In the UK, all Office of Departure, Destination and Transit locations will carry out these duties. You can find a list of customs offices on the [Europa Website](#)

During Transition hauliers will continue to record the details of any incidents that happen during the journey onto the paper TAD as they do now. Post Transition the new ‘office of incident’ function can be used to record incidents in real time during the journey avoiding delays on arrival at ‘office of destination

**Multiple House Consignments** - will allow the user to send multiple grouped items with more than one consignor and consignee within the same declaration. This will accommodate up to 1999 house consignments, each with 999-line items, within 1 declaration. This will accommodate a maximum of 1999 line items. From 00:00:01 on 22 January 2025 you will no longer be able to provide Consignor or Consignee details at the consignment line-item level. Instead, if there are multiple Consignors or Consignees, these will need to be supplied at the House Consignment level and should apply

From 1 July 2024 you will no longer be able to enter multiple Consignors at Consignment level so you will need to leave the Consignor details empty and continue to enter all your Consignee information at item level, as you do now.

to goods declared in their respective House Consignment. You can declare up to 1999 House Consignments, and so up to 1999 Consignors or Consignees. Each House Consignment can contain up to 999-line items; however, the declaration may not contain more than 1999-line items in total.

### E-MRN's

### **Question 3: So, does a driver no longer need to carry a paper TAD from 22 January 2025?**

*The requirement to carry a paper TAD is planned to be removed from the NCTS 5 final state implementation date (22nd January 2025).*

*However, the requirement to carry the paper TAD is only removed if the MRN can be presented to any involved customs authorities and offices via electronic means.*

*If the customs office of departure, transit, or destination requires the paper TAD because provision of the MRN via electronic means (via a system, or presentation on a digital device) is not yet supported; the TAD or MRN should be manually presented - at least for provision at that office.*

*In the UK, we will be leveraging our GVMS to capture Transit MRNs digitally at customs offices where GVMS is employed.*

*However, there may be a requirement to carry a TAD if electronic presentation of the MRN is not supported at the office of Transit, or the office of Destination. The TAD will still be printed at any UK office of departure to facilitate all border crossings throughout the journey.*

*If moving goods from an authorised consignor location, similarly the TAD will need to be printed if it is to be required at any office of Transit or office of Destination.*

*To perform transit movements without carrying paper TADs, there must be prior knowledge of the route to be taken, and the facilities for electronic presentation of the MRNs at the involved offices of transit and destination.*

*If a paper TAD is produced for a movement, this does not prevent border crossings being processed electronically. It merely provides a hard copy of the barcode and MRN which can be input into electronic systems throughout the journey.*

**Question 4: I don't fully understand how the electronic MRN works. Will the vehicle still have to present to an IBF? If so, what happens? Is the T Form updated electronically? How do drivers know they can continue the journey?**

**Response:** *A paper TAD or record of the MRN may need to be passed to a driver but the MRN can be presented electronically. If you already need to present to an IBF, then you will continue to do so as you do now.*

*For outbound (export) movements it will form part of the Office of Departure processes. As a result of these, the transit movement would be started at the IBF or Customs office at the port (after the declaration submitted) and the TAD would be passed to the driver once the goods are released for Transit. You are advised to check the local procedure for each National Administration to determine what process is in place for presentation of the MRN. For example: for short straits movements the French Authorities use an equivalent to GVMS (SI Brexit) for pre-logged declarations. Currently the paper TAD is scanned.*

*For inbound (import) movements you will need to present a TAD either electronically at the port of exit e.g., entering all MRN's into GVMS or by paper for Office of Transit Movements to be completed in GB or NI at non GVMS locations. Finally, the TAD must be presented at any Office of Destination at the IBF or port to enable the transit movement to be discharged.*

*Note: the processes above could be alternatively carried out at a Border Location or (in the case of departure and destination) the Authorised Consignor's/Consignee's premises.*

**Question 5: who will have access to the electronic MRN? Will we need to send this to our hauliers or will Motis, Sevington, other customs give this to the driver?**

**Response:** *If the Authorised Consignor has the infrastructure to produce the TAD in an electronic format (with the MRN and linear barcode) then they would pass this to the driver as detailed in question 3. Please note a paper copy of the TAD may need to be presented during your journey so you may be presented with a physical TAD too, although you may not always need to present this. Electronic versions may be sufficient for the entire movement.*

**Question 6: If a driver forgets to go to IBF to collect TAD electronically or paper and manages to get overseas can the TAD be released electronically?**

**Response:** *No, a Transit movement cannot be released retrospectively. The requirement to no longer carry a TAD (when there is capacity at all offices involved to submit the declaration electronically) does not remove the requirement to have correctly declared the transit movement and have this released by the office of departure or supervising office (for authorised consignor simplified departures).*

*If the goods are moved without a proper NCTS declaration having been made and released to transit first, the goods will not be travelling under a valid transit procedure and may be stopped for customs intervention.*

**Question 7: how can we ensure that there are no MRNs missed out when submitted via a phone or tablet? Drivers can lose paper documents, so MRNs can also be missed if sent electronically. Would the driver be stopped at the border?**

***Response:** There will be circumstances where it will be possible to present the Transit MRN electronically across National Administrations (such as at a GVMS location). However, there may also be a requirement to carry a paper Transit Accompanying Document or manual record of the MRN/ barcode, as not all border locations will have the infrastructure to deal with customs procedures electronically. If there is a preference to carry a paper copy, then this can be done but note that electronic presentation can speed up the transit process at some locations.*

*To ensure appropriate checks can be completed by customs authorities, it is the responsibility of the Agents/Traders/3rd parties etc to ensure that declarations are completed correctly. They should also ensure a clear line of sight between themselves and hauliers/drivers. Part of this responsibility is to ensure a TAD (or any other relevant customs paperwork such as licences etc) travels with the goods and is presented as required, whether that is in the electronic or physical format.*

*Businesses are advised to ensure their internal processes uphold these responsibilities, as this will reduce the likelihood of any unnecessary hold ups at the border.*

## Amendments

**Question 8: At what stage can you amend a transit declaration? For example, if the port changes for the delivery. If the declaration is in its completed format, can it be amended afterwards- rather than draft format?**

**Also, with regards to Incorrect Office of transit or Destination offices being declared in error, if the T1 is released, can the "Correct" office of destination accept these T1's? and will the Transit office still be "intended office of transit".**

**Response:** when NCTS5 is implemented you will be able to amend a pre-lodged declaration prior to it being fully submitted (can be pre-lodged up to 30 days before movement). Once the declaration has been fully submitted, accepted and the MRN allocated, it cannot be amended.

If a transit journey is re-routed once underway and a movement goes through a different office of transit or arrives at a different office of destination than planned, NCTS5 will continue to allow the new office to call the declaration data from the office of departure and allow the journey to continue/close.

**Question 9: for goods collecting from the UK, if the vehicle plates change before departure from the UK, would a new TAD be required?**

**Response:** if the declaration is pre-lodged but not submitted, yes. If not, you should declare the incident via the new office of incident function (please see next section for questions relating to office of incident).

**Question 10: is it possible to amend the Consignee, the pieces/packages and or the weight on the TAD once it's been released?**

**Response:** Changes to the TAD enroute do not change the actual declaration in NCTS; and it is the NCTS declaration information which is expected to be correct. An investigation will be made if the actual goods carried differ.

Any amendments in NCTS5 are changes to the IE015 (declaration data) made prior to the IE029 movement release (release of goods for transit). These amendments must be made, and accepted, prior to the IE029 movement release, and then will be reflected on the TAD when (or if) it is printed.

Modification of the consignee, pieces/packages, weight after release is not possible, and if differences are identified between the declared and the actual goods, these must be reported as discrepancies from the declaration during the IE044 unloading remarks process at an authorised consignee destination in the simplified arrival process; or reported to customs at the office of destination in the normal arrival process.

## [Office of Incident](#)

**Question 11: are you able to amend a transit after the goods have been released for transit (i.e., after a vehicle has broken down or otherwise needed to change during the journey).**

**Response:** *from January 2025 you will be able to report the types of incidents you currently report enroute by writing on the TAD (e.g., a change vehicle or trailer or change to a journey) to an Office of Incident, which is a new electronic function reported via the NCTS5 system in real time and can help prevent delays at Office of Destination where incidents are currently resolved. Please refer to the Transit Manual for details of what constitutes an incident [transit\\_manual\\_june\\_2020\\_en.pdf](#) ([europa.eu](#))*

*In the UK all offices of Departure, Transit and Destination will be able to carry out these functions.*

**Question 12: If information is added to the Office of Incident and shipment was delayed, does this allow more time for the transit to be closed?**

**Response:** *the timer for completion of the journey is not changed if an incident is reported enroute.*

*It's worth noting that when an incident is reported; if the movement is allowed to proceed the information of the incident is sent to the offices of departure and destination who would be involved in the enquiry if the movement did arrive after its declared/expected date; making it easier to justify the delay.*

### **Commodity Codes**

**Question 13: You have told us it is mandatory to provide commodity codes for all NCTS5 T1s from 22 January 2025. What would we do if we are creating SDP entries which do not require commodity codes? Also, if we receive another agents EAD and there are multiple tariffs, we only need to state one commodity code. Is this still the procedure or will we need to state all commodity codes?**

**Response:** *The use of a 6-digit commodity code is mandatory in NCTS in all CTC contracting parties from the date of P5 final stage – i.e., 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2025. This requirement has been signposted for some considerable time and there are no permissible exceptions to this. HMRC is though keen to understand in more detail the difficulties that this might cause to Traders especially in relation to the interactions with other customs processes following the end of a transit movement. If you would like to discuss this in more detail, please contact HMRC Transit Policy by email at [transitpolicymailbox@hmrc.gov.uk](mailto:transitpolicymailbox@hmrc.gov.uk)*



## Software and Technical

**Question 14: during the webinar were you only giving advice for companies using NCTS5 through the online web and not the portal?**

**Response:** *when we refer to the portal - this is the online web version via gov.uk. The functionality we have described is available in both 3rd party software, and the online web version.*

**Question: will the Web Portal have the same functionality as you would have when using 3<sup>rd</sup> party software.**

**Response.** *Yes, but there is one exception, which is that you will not be able to enter multiple house consignments via the portal from 22 January 2025. However, HMRC intend to make this functionality available from a later date (to be confirmed).*

**Question 15: what does it mean that end users need to get software by 20 May 2024? What do they need to do exactly? Does that apply to new users not using NCTS or also those who use NCTS 4?**

**Response:** *we are referring to both new users and those who already use NCTS4.*

*Following discussions with the Software Developer industry, it was established that whilst Software Developers need sufficient time to be ready, the end users need to be ready to use the software too. It is recommended you have your new software by the 20th of May (6 weeks before go live) to familiarise yourself with the new features.*

*Some key points to note:*

- *All 3rd party software developers must have approved Production Credentials for Transitional rules before their software can be used from 1 July 2024.*
- *If Production Credentials are not granted by 01 July 2024, 3rd party software will not be able to be used until Final state rules are in force from 00:00:01 on 22 January 2025 (GMT).*
- *It would still be possible to submit CTC movements if this deadline is missed, however these would need to be made via the free Web Portal on Gov.UK. Note: that if you use the online Web Portal then this will be available from 01 July 24.*

*If you are new user of NCTS then now is the time to establish whether the volumes of declarations you may send, would warrant the purchase of commercial software.*

**Question 16: could you please advise whether it will be possible to test different test scenarios (for example, with our own data) for NCTS5 other than what is presented within the Test Pack? I am asking, because my company would like to try with declaring scenarios that we already declare in the NCTS4 system.**

**Response:** *The test environment cannot use actual live data, so we cannot connect to the live service. We can only simulate how it will work, using dummy data to return the expected response from the system.*

*Note: we should have covered all potential scenarios you may encounter within the test environment. If as a Software Developer, you are aware of scenarios that are not sufficiently covered in test, then please contact your readiness liaison in HMRC.*

**Question 17: How do we know if our software is approved will they tell us this and do you have a webpage where all the approved third-party software providers are.**

**Response:** *if you are a user of NCTS and want to know if your Software Developer is approved for NCTS5, then please speak with them.*

*If you are a Software Developer, the Software Developer Support Team in HMRC will contact you to confirm your production credentials are in place. These cannot be used until 01 July 2024*

*A list of Software Developers can be found here [NCTS: software developers - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ncts-software-developers)*

**Question 18: with all CTC countries adopting different deadlines, can a transit be raised in version 4 and discharged in version 5, and vice versa? If so, how does that work?**

**Response:** *during transition, it is possible for a Transit Movement to be raised in NCTS4 and actioned further in NCTS5 vice versa. For example, the Transit may have Office of Departure processes completed in NCTS4 but may go on to have subsequent Office of Transit and Destination Processes completed in differing NCTS versions.*

*For this to happen each National Administration has conversion/adaptation software with appropriate business rules, to ensure that data and messages flow appropriately through different versions of NCTS.*

*That said, there are limits to what the conversion/adaptors can do, which is why all functionalities won't be available or apply until Final State Rules are introduced on 22 January 2025.*

**Question 19: in case of closure of transit in the UK do the traders need to switch to NCTS5 as well to be able to close TADs via 3rd party software?**

**Response:** *whether you are a trader, agent, intermediary or any other entity that uses the UK's version of CTC, you will need to start using NCTS5 from 1 July 2024.*

**Question 20: is there an excel upload option for the web version?**

**Response:** *No, all entries must be manually keyed in when using the Web Portal.*

*If your business needs to enter significant amounts of data, you may wish to consider obtaining commercial/3<sup>rd</sup> party software, which has the functionality to meet your requirements.*

**Question 21: An Agent currently completes our exports and T1s for us. Would we be able to do it ourselves if we obtain customs software and save the Agent cost?**

**Response:** *it is possible for you to obtain commercial software and complete your own declarations. However, HMRC cannot comment on whether purchasing software would prove to be more cost effective for your business. This can only be determined by individual businesses themselves.*

**Question 22: we currently use a broker to complete the customs clearance for all our imports and exports, inside and outside of the EU. I take it these changes will have no impact on us, and that our broker will handle the clearance according to any new requirements.**

**Response:** *assuming you have an up-to-date subscription for NCTS5 and:*

- *Your broker is using NCTS5 via the free to use Web Portal from 01 July 2024 or*
- *Is using commercial software from a Software Developer with approved production credentials, by the 01 July 2024.*

*Then your broker will have the necessary in place to continue to assist with the completion of CTC movements for you. If you have any questions about this and need to confirm their readiness, then please refer to your broker.*

**Question 23: will NCTS5 feed data into EU's ICS2 (Import Customs System)?**

**Response:** *There is currently no link between NCTS5 and ICS2.*

**Question 24: We have authorised consignee status and currently use 3rd party software to complete, however it's not often we complete TADs, so we are thinking about switching to the free web version. Can you use the web version for simplified and normal procedures?**

**Response:** *yes. The Web Portal can be used for simplified procedures if the user has the relevant authorisation.*

### Miscellaneous

**Question 25: all my T1's come from outside the EU, 99% are from China, does the new NCTS apply to myself?**

**Response:** *China is not a member of the Common Transit Convention. However, if the goods you are referring to are moved at any point under the Common Transit Convention procedure from a CTC member state, then NCTS5 will apply from the point each relevant National Administration introduces their version of NCTS5. This will be under transitional rules up until 02 December 2024. For users of the UK service this applies from 01 July 2024. Final state rules will apply to every CTC member state from 22 January 2025.*

**Question 26: do Final State Rules apply from 00:00:01 UK time or CET?**

**Response:** *the time referred to is Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) also known as co-ordinated Universal Time (UTC).*

**Question 27: the UK has left the EU. Does the Common Transit Convention still apply to UK including both GB, NI, and other special territory?**

**Response:** *the UK joined the Common Transit Convention in its own capacity from 01 January 2021. It is subject to the requirements of the Convention for movements coming into or out of the UK under transit. It applies to both GB and NI.*

*Whilst Northern Ireland is part of the UK and member of the CTC too, for Safety and Security purposes NI are part of the EU and Safety and Security zone.*

*The UK are therefore replacing the two back-end core systems that already exist. One will handle GB movements and one NI.*

**Question 28: Why is there a difference between the two dates (02Dec2024 and 22Jan2025) mentioned in the webinar?**

**Response:** *The 02 December 2024 is the deadline for all National Administrations to be using NCTS5 under Transitional Rules. The later date of 22 January 2025 is when Final State Rules apply for NCTS5.*

**Question 29: What are the fallback options if traders try to initiate a new transit movement but, if NCTS is down, an MRN can't be returned?**

**Response:** *we would always advise you to wait (if possible) until NCTS is available. However, if you cannot, you should use the Business Continuity Procedure (BCP) laid out in Transit Manual Supplement, Chapter 6. The Fallback/BCP position is:*

- **NCTS is down in another member state and goods moving to GB or NI,** then please refer to the processes for that administration for starting a transit movement and obtaining either a Single Administrative Document as a replacement for the Transit Accompanying Document (TAD) or an offline version of the TAD. Note: a Goods Movement Reference will be required if you are moving into a port that has adopted GVMS [Create a goods movement reference - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- **NCTS is down in the UK** then you should follow the processes outlined in the Transit Manual Supplement (Chapter 6, "The Business Continuity Procedure"). Again, if you are moving through a GVMS port then a Goods Movement Reference will be required. [Transit Manual Supplement - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

*Note: that from 01 July different National Administrations will be changing their fallback processes leading up to the 22 January 2025. In the first instance always refer to the processes laid out by each administration. In the case of the UK position we will provide you with more information for changes to the fallback/BCP process in advance of 22 January 2025.*

**Question 30: we are an authorized consignor and therefore we can raise simplified T1's at our Basildon site. For normal T1 procedure do we still need to stop at IBF?**

**Response:** *in terms of the Office of Departure (OoDep), Transit (OoT) and Destinations (OoDest) NCTS5 will not introduce significant changes for Authorised Consignors. So, if you aren't already authorised to carry out Office of Departure procedures as a consignor for your Transit movements (assume this is what you mean when you refer to a "normal T1 procedure") then yes, you would still need to report to an IBF or to Border Force at any locations not covered by an IBF to start OoDep processes.*

**Question 31: are there any notable changes to treatment of restricted goods under NCTS5?**

**There are no notable changes because of the implementation of NCTS5. Please continue to follow the step-by-step Gov.UK guidance for the Importing or Exporting goods to and from the UK.**

[Import goods into the UK: step by step - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

[Export goods from the UK: step by step - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

**Question 32: How can we get notifications if the TAD is not closed for some reason?**

**Response:** *The process remains the same in NCTS5. If a TAD is not closed correctly, the relevant Customs Office will open an enquiry and contact the relevant party.*

**Question 32: will anything change for the transhipments requiring a T2?**

**Response:** *please continue to follow the transhipment guidance set out in the Transit Manual Supplement. [Transit Manual Supplement - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)*