



Douane
Belastingdienst

Description technical interface change VENUE

Version 1.0

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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this document

This document describes how HTG is used when this manual submission of documents is replaced by an automated (system-to-system) message exchange.

This document describes the proposed change to the technical interface of VENUE (for companies with a 'Simplified Declaration Permit').

Couriers currently submit declarations in a zip file, which is digitally encrypted and signed and submitted to an external mailbox. Customs will switch to using a mailbox in HTG for these declarations. This document describes the consequences of this intention.

1.2 Available interfaces

HTG, the "Handel en Transport Gateway" (Trade and Transport Gateway) (the successor of Digipoort Trade & Transport) is a generic electronic access service that allows the business community, active in the Trade and Transportation domain, to exchange electronic messages with public authorities. Whether or not HTG will function successfully is depending heavily on a proper description of the interfaces to which the business community and the public authorities must be able to connect. VENUE (see also paragraph **Fout! Verwijzingsbron niet gevonden.**) will also be processed via the HTG shortly.

HTG offers the business community and the private authorities a number of interfaces based on electronic mail messages:

- SMTP-MTA (server-to-server)
- SMTP-MSA and POP3.

A separate description is available for each interface. The following table indicates which interface descriptions will apply to VENUE.

Message flow	Type of interface	Document
VENUE	SMTP-MTA	Description technical interface change VENUE in addition to Interface description HTG SMTP-MTA
	SMTP-MSA/POP3	Description technical interface change VENUE in addition to Interface description HTG SMTP-MSA and POP3

Table 1: Message flows and interface descriptions

The documents "Interface description HTG; Message Exchange - SMTP-MTA (server-to-server)" and "Interface description HTG; Message Exchange - SMTP-MSA and POP3" describe the standards used for exchanging email messages between mail servers (MTAs), respectively exchanging email messages between a mail client and HTG based on SMTP-MSA and POP3 protocols. For VENUE there are a number of additional agreements on these standards. This document describes these additional agreements.

1.3 VENUE

VENUE processes declarations for companies holding a 'Simplified Declaration Permit'. These declarations are currently submitted digitally encrypted and signed via an external mailbox.

As of <effective date>, these messages can no longer be submitted via this external mailbox. As a replacement, Customs is making an HTG mailbox available. This has a number of technical consequences, which are explained in this document.

1.4 Target audience

This document is primarily aimed at implementers of communication facilities and developers of system-to-system connections with customs system VENUE.

1.5 Support

Support during connection setup and use is provided by the National Helpdesk Dutch Customs (NHD). See the publisher's imprint for contact details.

1.6 Outline of the document

The structure of the document is as follows. Chapter 1 contains general information. Chapter 2 describes the changes that the declarant must implement in their software in order to be able to continue submitting VENUE declarations to Customs from the effective date. The document finishes with a list of abbreviations in chapter 3.

1.7 Version history

Version	Date	Changes (draft/definitive)
1.0	24-06-2026	Definitive version.

As soon as the production date of this change has been determined, a version 1.1 will follow.

2 Description of the necessary adjustments

2.1 Current situation

The declarant's software produces a zip file containing declarations. This zip file is digitally encrypted and signed and sent by email to the Douane@douane.lan mailbox.

Response messages from Customs to the declarant follow a similar scenario. Customs produces a zip file, which is encrypted and signed and sent by email to the declarant's mailbox.

To enable encryption and signing, digital certificates (and private keys) are used, whereby the public keys are exchanged via the certificates.

2.2 New situation

Customs will receive and send VENUE messages via HTG. To this end, the mailbox venue@htpoort.nl (pre-production: venue@preprod.htpoort.nl) will be set up.

Because this mailbox is under the control of Customs and no external party is involved between the declarant and Customs, encryption and signing of the zip file are no longer required. HTG uses channel encryption (via VPN or TLS), and therefore encryption of the zip file is no longer necessary.

For declarants, the following changes therefore apply:

- The zip file to be submitted will no longer be encrypted and signed.
- The message will be sent to HTG mailbox venue@htpoort.nl instead of mailbox Douane@douane.lan.
- The response message from Customs will also no longer be encrypted and signed.
- The response message from Customs will be sent from HTG mailbox venue@htpoort.nl.
- The message is placed in a mailbox (MSA) configured for HTG or sent to an MTA configured for HTG.

Content-wise, **nothing** changes regarding the zip file. All agreements regarding naming, content, and formats remain in effect unchanged.

With this change, VENUE message exchange will closely resemble that of DMS(ZIP) and DECO. Declarants who already have an HTG connection can make use of this. One difference, however, is that only one mailbox per declarant will be supported for VENUE (and therefore not multiple mailboxes). This situation corresponds to the current situation, where only one mailbox (XYZ@Douane.lan) is available per declarant.

For HTG, a maximum message size of 20 MB applies. This limit remains valid, also for VENUE messages. When calculating the maximum permitted size of the message containing the documents, the following points should be noted:

- 20 MB applies to the total message. The message consists of SMTP Headers, MIME Headers, the meaningful part (the XML message), and all intermediate and trailing characters.
- The zip file is a binary file, and therefore must be encoded with base64. As a result, a zip file becomes approximately 1.4 times larger.

2.3 Subject of the message (VAKS)

In the current situation, the subject (Subject:) element of the email is not mandatory for VENUE. In HTG, it is customary for Customs message flows to include the so-called VAKS in the subject line.

In the new situation, it is also not mandatory to use the VAKS for VENUE. However, the NHD has a strong preference for the VAKS to be provided. Without a VAKS, it is hardly possible for the NHD to provide adequate support if message processing does not proceed correctly. By including a unique identifier in the reference (K), the NHD can provide support that is also customary for the other HTG message flows. If the declarant chooses to provide VENUE messages with a VAKS, the rules below apply.

2.3.1 Syntax

The subject field contains four so-called keywords. The order of the keywords V, A, K, and S is free.

The syntax of the subject field consists of the four keywords:

[V=PROCESS-ID of the originator][A=PROCESS-ID of the recipient][K=originator's reference][S=0]

The subject field shall be designed as shown below.

Declaration handling:

[V=<EORI-Number>.<sequence number>.05][A=VENUE.NL][K=reference][S=0]

The meaning of the characters V, A, K and S is:

V: Process-ID of the originator

A: Process-ID of the recipient (VENUE.NL)

K: Reference of this communication, entered by the sender

S: Status, always 0 (zero)

The following applies (if the choice is made to use the VAKS):

- The reference (K) must be supplied, because this element is used by Customs as a search criterion to retrieve a message. Without this reference the National Helpdesk is unable to provide proper support for customer queries about submitted messages.
- The Sender Process-ID (V) must always contain a sequence number. This sequence number is usually 00 if a party uses exactly one email address in its communication with Customs. If more than one email address is used, Customs uses the sequence number to select one of these email addresses.
- The status (S) of a message must always be 0 (zero) for VENUE.

Syntax rules:

- The maximum length for the subject field (all VAKS fields together, including square brackets) is 128 characters.
- The '[' and ']' brackets are part of the syntax and serve for recognition purposes.
- Spaces are not allowed between the square brackets ']' and '['.
- The keywords (V, A, K and S) can be written in both upper or lower case; all characters are treated as case-insensitive.
- Only one '=' operator is used between the keywords and value attributes.
- No spaces or other whitespace characters before or after the '=' operator are permitted.
- The order of the keywords is free.
- The values of the keywords V, A and K may only contain characters from the following sequence:
".0123456789ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZabcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz".

2.3.2 Completion instruction

This instruction applies for VENUE messages from a declarant to Customs (if the choice is made to use the VAKS).

Key word	Description	Format	Instruction
V	<p>Process-ID of the originator. "V" stands for "Van" (Dutch for "From").</p> <p>This Process-ID is made up of three parts:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The EORI number 2. The sequence number 3. The activity code of the Customs process. <p>These three parts, together with the separating dots `.` form the Process-ID of the originator.</p>	AN..32	<p>Between the EORI number and the sequence number a dot (`. `) must be placed. A dot (`. `) must also be placed between the sequence number and the activity code. For VENUE the activity code is "05".</p> <p>Example: [V=NL001234567.00.05]</p> <p>If the combination of the three parts is not administered by Customs, the message cannot be processed.</p>
A	<p>Process-ID of the recipient. "A" stands for "Aan" (Dutch for "To"). The address of the Customs application must be used here.</p>	AN..32	[A=VENUE.NL]
K	<p>Reference of the originator. "K" stands for "Kenmerk". A unique reference for each message allows the National Helpdesk Dutch Customs to easily retrieve the message in case of customer questions.</p>	AN..32	<p>Example: [K=550e8400e29b41d4a716446655440000]</p>
S	Status of the message.	AN..5	[S=0] (the digit zero) For a message from a declarant always use S=0.

Example of a subject field for a VENUE message:

[V=NL001234567.00.05][A=VENUE.NL][K=550e8400e29b41d4a716446655440000][S=0]

For the VENUE return messages from Customs to the declarant's system, Customs will not populate the subject field.

2.3.3 Activity code

Table 2 contains the activity code of the Customs processes for VENUE.

Activity code	Process
05	Declaration

Table 2: Customs activity code

3 Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning
DMS	Customs Management System, Declaration system of Customs
HTG	Handel en Transport Gateway (Dutch), Trade and Transport Gateway
MSA	Message Submission Agent, software used when receiving email from client
MTA	Mail Transfer Agent, software that transfers email messages between computers
NHD	National Helpdesk Dutch Customs
POP3	Post Office Protocol - Version 3
SMTP	Simple Mail Transfer Protocol