

ELECTRONIC DATA COLLECTION SYSTEM (EDCS)

A general overview of the Panama Canal Authority Electronic Data Collection System (EDCS) was provided in Advisories to Shipping Nos. A-07-2004 and A-15-2004. The following offers further detail:

EDCS registration process for Agents:

In order to access EDCS, the following is required:

1. Procedure for Agents (Web Access):
 - a. To access EDCS, a user ID and password are required. All Panama Canal registered agents (agent code holder) are issued an administrator user account and password.
 - b. The person assigned for the agent administrator account is responsible for the administration of all agent accounts, view all audits logs and reports, and requests for additional user accounts for this agent code, in this regard the agent administrator will only be able to de-activate an account, i.e., personnel taking vacation or personnel no longer working with the agency, and re-activate, i.e., personnel returning from vacation or re-hiring.
 - c. The administrator account will have the same capability as any other account regarding the submission of forms; however, only the ACP can create additional user accounts requested by the agent administrator.
 - d. All agencies are compelled to, at least, retrieve as soon as possible their administrator user account and one digital certificate (token) in order to access the EDCS and submit all funding related forms (booking, same day transit, etc.). Only the administrator can request additional users and digital certificates.
 - e. The administrator user account requires the use of a digital certificate. All requests for additional users and digital certificates will have to be digitally signed by the administrator prior to submitting.
 - f. Agencies who do not retrieve their administrator user ID and digital certificate will be unable to use EDCS. In order to submit an administrator account request, the following is required:
 - (1) A completed “EDCS Administrator Account Request” form (MRT-337), containing agent administrator user information, must be signed and submitted by each agent representative to the ACP via electronic mail to EDCS_registration@pancanal.com or fax to (507) 272-1592. In turn, agents will receive their administrator user ID and digital certificate. A sample form is enclosed.

- (2) If an agency has more than one person in charge of submitting information through EDCS, other than the administrator account, two options are available:

(a) Sharing the same user ID and password.

This is not advisable if the users are able to submit information within the same time period. EDCS provides an electronic trail for all transactions that are tied to a logged-in user; therefore, if two or more persons are sharing the same user ID at the same time, it would be difficult to perform a trace, and the accountability of the transaction would be lost.

(b) Requesting Additional Users and passwords.

This is the preferred option since it will afford better accountability and control.

- (3) Requests for additional user accounts may be submitted after the administrator has retrieved its user ID and digital certificate by using “EDCS Additional User Request” (MRT-339) form. This form shall be completed and digitally signed by the administrator prior to forwarding. It shall be sent via electronic mail to EDCS_registration@pancanal.com. A sample form is enclosed.
- (4) The administrator shall define on form MRT-339 which additional user accounts will be assigned with digital certificates. The persons in charge of submitting forms related to transit bookings, i.e., Booking Request, Booking Cancellation, Request for Daylight Booked Transit, Request for Same Day Booked Transit, etc., are required to have a digital certificate in order to sign and submit their request through EDCS.

Note: Requests for additional user accounts: Each shipping agent with an ACP Agent Code can request up to ten (10) user accounts at no cost. Thereafter, each additional user account will have a nominal annual charge.

Related Charges:

Creation of account – User ID and password (valid for agents and customers)

- 1. Basic user (Account administrator)No Charge
- 2. Additional users (First 10)No Charge
- 3. Additional users (11 and up).....USD \$ 50.00

Digital certificate (including token) for agents:

- 1. Basic user (Account administrator)No Charge
- 2. Additional user (2 and up)USD \$ 90.00
- 3. Renewal (does not include token).....USD \$ 25.00
- 4. New digital certificate (loss of token).....USD \$ 90.00

Digital certificate for servers (CIG access module):

- 1. Basic userNo Charge
- 2. Additional user (2 and up)USD \$ 1,000.00

Accreditation process (CIG access module).....No Charge

Notes:

- The above-listed charges were established as a means to immediately start the EDCS registration process and are not meant to recover the system’s development, implementation and maintenance costs at this time.
- Tokens will be used to store digital certificates. However, if tokens are lost, a new digital certificate will have to be requested.

Payment:

The above-listed charges will be made at CITIBANK Panama with cash or certified check using the “Speed Collect” slip available at the bank. The reference number required by the bank in order to complete the “Speed Collect” slip is EDCS-290101-400203.

Training

Since March 22, 2004, the ACP has been holding regular training sessions especially designed for all registered agents. Additionally, an E-learning tool will be available to agents as a training aid on the use of EDCS. Access to this application will be available to all registered agents with an assigned EDCS user ID and password.

Beginning May 1, 2004, the EDCS Training Module will be available online or for downloading, at <http://www.pancanal.com>.

Implementation Schedule:

March 22 to April 15, 2004: Hands-on Training

April 12, 2004: EDCS user accounts registration opens.

May 17, 2004: EDCS goes live.
From this day forward, all forms, including revised SHIP DUE, can be submitted only through EDCS.

The following exceptions apply:

- 1. **Containerized Cargo:** All containerized vessels shall submit, upon arrival, all cargo declaration information using Form 4363 (current form).

Note: Vessels carrying any other type of cargo, besides containers, shall submit all non-containerized cargo details 96 hours in advance through EDCS.

2. **Cruise Ships:** Passenger List and Crew List will not be required in advance. They should be ready upon arrival to be submitted to the ACP boarding officer. All other vessel types are required to submit the required forms 96 hours in advance through EDCS.
3. On a case-by-case basis, based on the reported problem, the Manager of the Traffic Operations Division may authorize receipt of the following forms through fax or in person.

Note: The request for exception shall be received in writing through fax, letter or e-mail at facsimile (507) 272-3630 or e-mail at mrtv@pancanal.com.

 - a. Ship Due or ETA at facsimile: (507) 272-3976
 - b. Transit Booking Request at facsimile: (507) 272-5137
 - c. Transit Booking Cancellation at facsimile: (507) 272-5137
4. Small craft are not required to submit information through EDCS. However, a special “Ship Due for Small Craft” form was designed for small craft, and can be accessed at <http://www.pancanal.com> located in the Maritime Operations link at homepage of EDCS application, which must be forwarded to the ETA clerk through e-mail at eta@pancanal.com.

Note: Small craft will be required to comply with the 96-hour rule. If a small craft enters Canal waters without complying with this rule, Canal Protection personnel will be obligated to issue a citation or remove the small craft from Canal waters.

July 1, 2004: All forms are required to be forwarded using EDCS (Web Access and CIG Access modules).
Exceptions for Containerized Cargo, Passenger and Crew List no longer exist.

General Inquiries:

The ACP will publish regularly information, as well as frequently asked questions, regarding EDCS.

Additional concerns or questions may be addressed to Mr. José Carrasco – ADCS Project Manager at jgcarrasco@pancanal.com.