Directorate of Defense Trade Controls
DTAS-Online

ELECTRONIC FORMS SUBMISSION (EFS): Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Technical

What are the minimum requirements for using the EFS system?

The minimum requirements to use EFS are:
- Screen resolution of 1024x768 pixels
- Internet Explorer 6.0 Service Pack 2 (Mac OS 9/Safari, Firefox and Google Chrome browsers are not supported).
- JavaScript and ActiveX controls enabled

The minimum requirement to use PDF forms is:
- **Adobe Acrobat Reader 8.0 and above**

Why can I not use Chrome browser to use the EFS system?

The system was developed for use with an Internet Explorer 6.0 browser. Using Chrome or Firefox may result in errors during the submission, and certain features may not properly work. As a result, you may not be able to submit a form and/or supporting information. In addition, newer versions of Internet Explorer may not be fully supported by EFS either.

Adobe Acrobat

What is the compatible version of Adobe Acrobat or Adobe Reader?
The recommended versions of Adobe Acrobat (Standard or Professional) software and Adobe Reader software are (i.e. Adobe Reader 8.1.1/8.1.2/8.1.3/9.0, parallels Acrobat Standard or Professional 8.1.1/8.1.2/8.1.3/9.0, viewing function). They perform the same tasks and have matching version numbers.

How do I know which version I am using?
To check which version of Acrobat you are using go to the Help menu in Acrobat then select About Acrobat (version #), a text box will appear containing an Adobe logo with a number, under that information you will see another number, this is the version number of your software (i.e. 8.1.2).

I already have an earlier version of Adobe Acrobat software on my computer, what can I do?
If you are using an earlier version of Adobe Acrobat you can download the compatible version of Adobe Reader software from the www.adobe.com for free.

How do I compress an Adobe Acrobat PDF file?
1. Open PDF document.
2. Select File > Reduce File Size.
3. Select Save Document As…
4. Click OK.

How do I check my Adobe Acrobat file's font size?
1. Select Tools > Advanced Editing > Touch-Up Text Tool.
2. Right-click on text with mouse.
3. Once box appears around the text, right click mouse and select "Properties".

Privacy Policy

What do you do with the personal information I enter into EFS?
DDTC uses that information to track and process your submission. We only share the information you give us with another government agency if your inquiry relates to that agency, or as otherwise required by law. Moreover, we do not create individual profiles with the information you provide or give it to any private organizations. We do not collect information for commercial marketing.

Additionally, we will never ask you for personal information, such as a social security number, banking or credit card information.

PDF Form

How do fill-out the application form?
To start, click on the electronic form of choice, download and save to your computer. The form must be saved to your local computer in order to save inputted information and upload it for submission. After the form has been completed, including the relevant attachments, return to the EFS Information Center webpage and follow the form submission instructions.

Why did I receive an error when I opened the application I downloaded OR received from another user, telling me I have an incompatible version of Adobe Acrobat or Adobe Reader?
The compatible version of Adobe Reader is not required for viewing, editing and submitting a complete our Adobe PDF forms; however it is recommended that the application be completed using the compatible version of Adobe Reader.

What kind of information can be entered into form fields within my application?
Forms offer fields to enter a set amount of data. When the limit is reached for a certain field, you will no longer be able to enter data into that field.

Can I copy and paste information into my application from a MS Word document?
Copying and pasting data into a form from MSWord may lead to errors in Adobe Reader itself, unless the information is copied and pasted from a text editor such as "Notepad" which does not have proprietary fonts and/or special characters.

I have form validation errors, how should I fix them?
It depends on the reasons for the failure. The validation failure could be error related to ill formatted data or mandatory fields not completed. In both cases submission is not possible until the errors have been corrected.

Submitting the Application Package

Do I need to register to use the EFS system?
No. EFS is open to all of Industry and does not require user registration or a certificate.

I have validation errors, how should I fix them?
It depends on the reasons for the failure. The validation check could have warnings (e.g. mandatory fields left blank) or errors (e.g. ill formatted data, mandatory documents not uploaded). In both cases submission is not possible until the errors have been corrected.

Must I fill out all the mandatory fields within the Application form?
Yes. In order to submit your application, you are required to fill-out the mandatory fields (each symbolized by an asterisk), as well as any other applicable fields.

I am trying to fill the online form and the hints obscure the field that I need to write in. What can I do?
You have probably moved from one field to another using the Tab key and not the mouse. The hints appear/disappear based on the mouse movement.

How do I know you received my Form Package?
Upon the successful transmission of your form package, you will receive an on-screen completion confirmation and a receipt with the Transaction Number and details of the contents of your application. You can save this on-screen receipt as a PDF file for your records. In addition, the status for DS-4076, Commodity Jurisdiction (CJ) Determination Requests submitted through EFS can be obtained via MARY, DDTC's web based status retrieval system. However, it may take up to 24 hours for the status of a CJ request to be shown in MARY.

What if I do not receive a receipt confirmation?
If you do not receive a receipt confirmation following your submission, please contact us. The Help Desk can be reached by email at DtradeHelpDesk@state.gov, or by telephone at 202-663-2838.

Uploading Files

Is there any limitation on the size of the uploaded files?
In order to have a fast upload process and avoid possible timeout errors, it is recommended not to upload very large files. To keep sizes down, make sure that your file is in PDF (portable document format, compatible with Adobe Acrobat Reader version 5 or higher, with embedded fonts) avoid color and unnecessary high resolution pictures and graphs. You should aim to restrict your proposal to under 8MB, and under no circumstances try to upload a file larger than 35 MB.

How long should it take to upload my form package for submission?
The time it will take to upload your application for submission varies based on the size of the file. The time and speed will also vary based on whether you are running various internet applications, your ISP's connection, and if you have dedicated all your bandwidth (internet connection speed) to uploading the file.

Is the size and number of attachment files limited?
Yes. We suggest limiting the size of the each file to 2 MB (The max upload File size currently is 35 MB) and/or entire form package including all attachments to 100MB. The upload of additional documents is limited to 25 individual documents excluding the PDF application form.

What type of attachments may be added to a form package?
Allowable file types are Document files (PDF, TXT, RTF, XML, and CSV) Image files (TIF, JPG, PNG, GIF and BMP).

Why do I get an error when I try to upload the PDF version of the DS-4076 form?
Please ensure that when scanning Block 19 of the PDF form for upload into Step 3, you do not inadvertently save over the file you created for the DS-4076 form itself. This will corrupt the form file and it will not upload into EFS.

Why can't I upload a MS Word or Excel document?
EFS restricts the upload of files having the native MS Word (DOC and DOCX) and MS Excel (XLS and XLSX) file extensions for security reasons. Word documents should be saved as a PDF, TXT, RTF or XML file type, while Excel documents should be saved as PDF, TXT, XML or CSV file types.

How do I save a Word document as a PDF, TXT, RTF or XML file type?
1. Open Word document.
2. Select File > Save Document As.
3. Select Other Formats.
4. Next to the Save As Type dropdown, select PDF, TXT, RTF or XML,
5. Click Save.

How do I save an Excel document as a PDF, TXT, XML or CSV file type?
1. Open Excel document.
2. Select File > Save Document As.
3. Select Other Formats.
4. Next to the Save As Type dropdown, select PDF, TXT, XML or CSV.
5. Click Save.

Are there any restrictions on file names for attachments I include with my form package?
No, however, we do advise submitters to adhere to the following suggestions:
1. Limit file names to 50 characters
2. Do not use most special characters (example: &, –, *, %, /, #, ', blank spaces and accent marks) with the exception of underscores ("_").
3. Do not attach multiple documents with the same name.

I uploaded a wrong file, is it possible to delete it?
Yes, it is possible to delete files. Click on the red "X" icon adjacent to the file you wish to delete.

Why am I asked to verify and confirm the form data and uploaded documents?
When the submitter completes a form package, the submitter needs to make sure that the form and associated documents are indeed correct to his/her intention. For that purpose EFS will show the details of that data, so that the submitter can verify the submission and decide whether they will go ahead and submit it.

Submitting Supplemental Information: I have some additional information that may be helpful as a supplement to a CJ already submitted. The CJ was submitted electronically through EFS on the DDTC web portal. Is there a way to add to the supplements of an electronic CJ without retracting the CJ and starting over? Can I provide it directly to the agency that requested the information?
At this time, supplemental information in support of an electronically submitted CJ cannot be uploaded electronically. If additional information is provided, the information can be delivered to DDTC Policy as a PDF via email or on a CD, properly marked to include CJ case number, CJ Block number to which the information corresponds, and reason/s for supplemental submission such as another USG agency requested the information. Email may be used if the applicant authorized DDTC to email the Commodity Jurisdiction determination as well as any other information associated with this case by checking the related box in Block 19, Applicant/Submitter Certification, of the DS-4076 form. In either case, the information will be downloaded into the official electronic CJ file and distributed to the interagency working groups. Only information formally submitted to DDTC can be considered in the CJ review process.