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POSTAL OPERATIONS COUNCIL

Committee 1 (Supply Chain Integration)

Postal Security Group (PSG)

WCO–ICAO Joint Working Group on Advance Cargo Information (JWGACI/TEGACS)

Document by the International Bureau
(Agenda item 9)

1 Subject	**References/paragraphs**
Outcome of the meetings of the Joint Working Group on Advance Cargo Information and the Technical Experts Group on Air Cargo Security relative to the Joint WCO–ICAO Guiding Principles for Pre-Loading Advance Cargo Information.	§§ 1 to 3
2 Decision expected	
The Postal Security Group is invited to take note of the document on the Joint WCO–ICAO Guiding Principles for Pre-Loading Advance Cargo Information.	Annex 1

I. Overview

1 The sixth and final meeting of the Joint Working Group on Advance Cargo Information (JWGACI) was held on Monday, 29 April 2019, at the World Customs Organization (WCO) in Brussels, Belgium. This was followed by the WCO Technical Experts Group on Air Cargo Security (TEGACS) meeting.

2 The final JWGACI meeting resulted in general agreement among attendees on the Joint WCO–ICAO / Guiding Principles for Pre-Loading Advance Cargo Information (PLACI), attached as Annex 1.

3 The TEGACS endorsed the PLACI guiding principles for submission to the two organizations' relevant decision-making bodies for approval.

Berne, 27 May 2019

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Joint WCO-ICAO Guiding Principles for Pre-Loading Advance Cargo Information (PLACI)

Contents

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to provide general guidance, principles, and a description of the risk assessment process to assist International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Member States and World Customs Organization (WCO) Members that are considering the option to implementing a Pre-Loading Advance Cargo Information (PLACI) programme, as an additional layer, for aviation security purposes. It provides a useful starting point for further discussions between Customs and Aviation Security (AVSEC) authorities and the private sector with the goal of refining PLACI concepts and ensuring the optimum degree of alignment between existing and future PLACI programmes.

2. BACKGROUND

The concept of PLACI was already under consideration by regulators as an aviation security extension to the Advance Cargo Information (ACI) regime. ACI enables Customs to target and risk assess cargo shipments for a range of regulatory issues in advance of the arrival to the country of destination. The development of PLACI was given an added impetus by the terrorist incident in October 2010 when Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) were concealed in computer printer cartridges and placed on an aircraft. This incident led to the establishment of the United States Air Cargo Advance Screening (ACAS) pilot, followed by the European Union's PREloading Consignment Information for Secure Entry (PRECISE) and Canada's Pre-load Air Cargo Targeting (PACT) pilot.

The pilot projects have tested the use of PLACI for assessing if a shipment is being used to conceal an improvised explosive or incendiary device (IED, IID), i.e., a 'bomb in a box', and how to mitigate that risk. It is an additional layer to the current cargo security regimes.

The pilots, which differed in scope and size and some involving live trials and some not, tested different air cargo supply chain business models including those for the express, general cargo and mail segments of the business, and involved the regulated agent and freight forwarder community. More details about the Pilots can be found in the Phase I report of the ICAO and WCO Joint Working Group on Advance Cargo Information (JWGACI).

The results of the pilot projects and the work completed in the JWGACI have demonstrated that a PLACI regime could be practically applied as an additional layer to existing air cargo security measures with minimal disruption to the supply chain.

The JWGACI was established in 2014, to discuss and recommend modalities for sharing and using PLACI in carrying out security risk analysis by Customs and AVSEC Authorities to mutually support each other and strengthen air cargo security. The group comprised of representatives from the WCO ICAO and relevant stakeholders. The JWGACI followed a two-phased approach below:

Phase I - study of ongoing pilots and assessing cost and benefits, challenges and impact on aviation security and its operations, for better understanding of mutual cooperation on PLACI; and,

Phase II - based on the outcomes of Phase I, moving towards a concept of operations determining the processes and methods for collection, sharing and use of pre-loading advance electronic cargo information including the response protocols.

Phase I was completed in 2015, which concluded with the assessment that PLACI can be an additional layer in the management of air cargo security risk and that during Phase II, the JWGACI should develop a model for the use of PLACI, for ICAO Member States and WCO Members which wish to adopt such a system.

In its meeting in 2019, the JWGACI assessed that based on the available operational experiences the originally conceived deliverable of a detailed concept of operations for PLACI was too prescriptive, and that it would suffice to provide a general approach concerning how PLACI should be applied for aviation security purposes, whilst leaving it to ICAO Member States and WCO Members to work out the details in alignment with the recommended approach should they wish to implement PLACI.

These *Joint WCO-ICAO Guiding Principles for PLACI* articulate the general approach the JWGACI has established for ICAO Member States and WCO Members' consideration, should they wish to implement a PLACI system for aviation security purposes through mutual cooperation.

3. CONCEPT OF PRE-LOADING ADVANCE CARGO INFORMATION

PLACI is an additional layer of a multi-layered approach to aviation security. In and for itself, PLACI is not a method of AVSEC screening[1] or air cargo security control[2] and should therefore not be used as standalone security method.

PLACI is the term used to describe a specific 7+1 data set as defined in the WCO SAFE Framework of Standards (SAFE FoS) (see Annex III) that is drawn from consignment data and provided to regulators by freight forwarders, air carriers, postal operators, integrators, regulated agents, or other entities as soon as possible prior to loading of cargo on an aircraft at the last point of departure.

Regulators (analysts and/or targeters) can use PLACI to perform an assessment of the potential aviation security risk represented by the consignment. This may indicate a need for additional information or actions, further explained in Section 5.

4. PRINCIPLES OF PLACI

The following principles are intended to ensure that PLACI programmes are aligned, mutually compatible and meet the needs and capabilities of both regulators and industry.

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[1] Definition of *'screening'* in Annex 17 – *Security* to the Convention on International Civil Aviation Convention – "*The application of technical or other means which are intended to identify and/or detect weapons, explosives or dangerous devices, articles or substances which may be used to commit an act of unlawful interference."*

[2] Definition of *'security control'* in Annex 17 – *Security* to the Convention on International Civil Aviation – "*A means by which the introduction of weapons, explosives or other dangerous devices, articles, or substances which may be used to commit an act of unlawful interference can be prevented."*

4.1. Key principles

a) The purpose of PLACI is solely for the detection of an IED/IID in air cargo. Combined with intelligence and other information, PLACI consignment data enable regulators (e.g., analysts or targeters) to perform an initial risk assessment of the potential risk represented by this consignment which may indicate the need for an additional action.

b) Given the global, interconnected nature of air cargo and the industries it serves, WCO Members and ICAO Member States (hereafter called Members) intending to implement a PLACI regime should follow a globally harmonised approach. Furthermore, given the impact of PLACI implementation on the air cargo industry, and the expertise that industry can provide, PLACI regimes should be developed in consultation between authorities who have a responsibility for aviation and air cargo security and industry stakeholders. The development should also take place through live testing involving all relevant stakeholders.

c) PLACI systems should not unnecessarily impede or delay the flow of cargo movements through the supply chain. Where an appropriate authority has notified the operator that it has significant unresolved concerns arising from its risk assessment process that relate to a possible threat to aviation security, the cargo should not be loaded onto an aircraft destined to a PLACI country until appropriate measures have been taken to mitigate that risk. Except in the case of a Do Not Load message being issued, cargo keeps moving through the supply chain during the PLACI process. Where such concerns are raised about cargo already in transit by air these should be resolved at the earliest available opportunity.

d) While Members may consider adopting a model of PLACI implementation which involves both AVSEC and Customs authorities, they should coordinate to establish a single point for real-time communication with industry regarding the submission of PLACI and communication of response protocols for aviation security purposes (e.g. RFI, RFS and DNL). To further realize efficiencies, AVSEC and Customs authorities should explore best practices to enable information sharing between authorities.

e) Members should abide by the principles of international cooperation in aviation security, as adopted by the ICAO Assembly and included in Annex 17 to the Chicago Convention, and the WCO SAFE Framework of Standards in the use of PLACI for aviation security purposes.

f) Each Member should carefully consider whether there is sufficient justification for the implementation of a PLACI regime, which requires significant investments in financial, information technology and human resources, with full consideration of the aviation security threat to their territory. The use of automated risk assessment systems is vital to avoid impeding the flow of legitimate trade. Members must be in a position to handle vast amounts of information expeditiously so as to achieve timely assessments on PLACI data being submitted.

4.2. Specific principles

4.2.1. Partnership

Addressing vulnerabilities or gaps in the international supply chain, air cargo security threats, strained economic climate, and man-made and natural disasters are a shared responsibility between the public and private sectors. These partnerships were crucial in co-creating the PLACI pilots and they have demonstrated it was possible to facilitate trade while ensuring a high level of air cargo security. It is also important to set up a high level of cooperation between Customs and AVSEC authorities and other stakeholders to regulate, provide guidance, and quickly react when dealing with pre-loading information.

- AVSEC authorities have expertise of aviation security requirements and risk assessment in the civil aviation context, and Customs authorities have expertise with respect to data collection, analysis, and risk assessment.
    - Communication and partnership with relevant trade stakeholders is critical and coordination between the above authorities is essential to develop processes that minimize the burdens to cargo operations and avoid duplications, while enhancing the security of the international supply chain.
    - Transparency between government and industry is a prerequisite to have a productive and meaningful communication; it fosters an understanding of one another's priorities and objectives, as well as each other's capabilities and constraints.
- Consider existing requirements of country of departure vs. PLACI country for mitigation opportunities for a Mutual Recognition approach (i.e., both Customs and AVSEC regimes).
- Harmonization to the greatest extent possible of screening protocols when referrals are issued by PLACI regulator(s).
- Commitment from both sides is required; regular engagements will produce results.
- Significant time and resources for outreach to trade stakeholders are likely to be required (industry associations can be a force multiplier for outreach and education).
- Members considering instituting a PLACI type regime should reach out to other Members that have implemented such a programme.

4.2.2. Automation

- A robust and tested automated targeting system is a basic pre-requisite to instituting an efficient and effective PLACI programme. However, automation is resource-intensive, therefore, Members should carefully consider whether their inbound security threat justifies the establishment and maintenance costs associated with implementing a PLACI messaging system, both for authorities and industry.

4.2.3. Communication protocols

- Communication protocols must be in place to define roles and responsibilities of the different parties and to ensure that communication relating to Request for Information (RFI), Request for Screening (RFS) or Do Not Load (DNL) is sent to all

relevant parties. This also applies to transit/transfer of cargo, co-loading, code-shares, charters and interline transfers, and other forms of involvement of multiple operators (e.g. multiple-filing and multi-modal transports).

- Members should cooperate and coordinate their communication with other Members operating a PLACI programme to achieve consistent and coherent risk mitigation to the extent possible, in particular for cargo transferring/transiting through more than one country operating a PLACI programme.
- Members should establish communication channels with those Members in which only government agencies conduct secondary screening so that "RFS" requests to the private operator can be satisfied.
- In the event of a Do Not Load (DNL) being issued regulators and industry must ensure that they (and relevant staff) are fully aware of and comply with the national security protocols already in place. Where such protocols are not established they should be agreed upon before implementation of PLACI.

4.2.4. Legal

- Consideration should also be given to the practices and procedures detailed in this document to the greatest extent possible. However, any action taken must not conflict with established national and international laws, including bilateral and multilateral agreements and ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices and the SAFE Framework of Standards, nor with existing structures and processes.

4.2.5. Flexibility

- It is important for authorities to work collaboratively together and with industry to develop a workable programme and to resolve issues. One-size does not fit all.
    - Avoid being overly prescriptive or restrictive about the process by which data transmission should occur and encourage data transmission by all parties.
    - As far as possible, provide businesses with enough flexibility to determine in what ways and how their business processes should be modified.

4.2.6. Cost

- Careful consideration should be given to the need for and the impact of the implementation of a PLACI regime, both for authorities and industry. The significant investment in financial, information technology and human resources should not be underestimated.

- To minimize cost and operational disruption in the supply chain, industry must ensure that data can be transmitted as early as possible, and regulators must assess that data and return assessment results to data filers as early as possible.

5. GUIDANCE FOR PLACI RISK ANALYSIS PROCESS

The following paragraphs and flow chart describe and explain the PLACI process (see the flow chart on page 7).

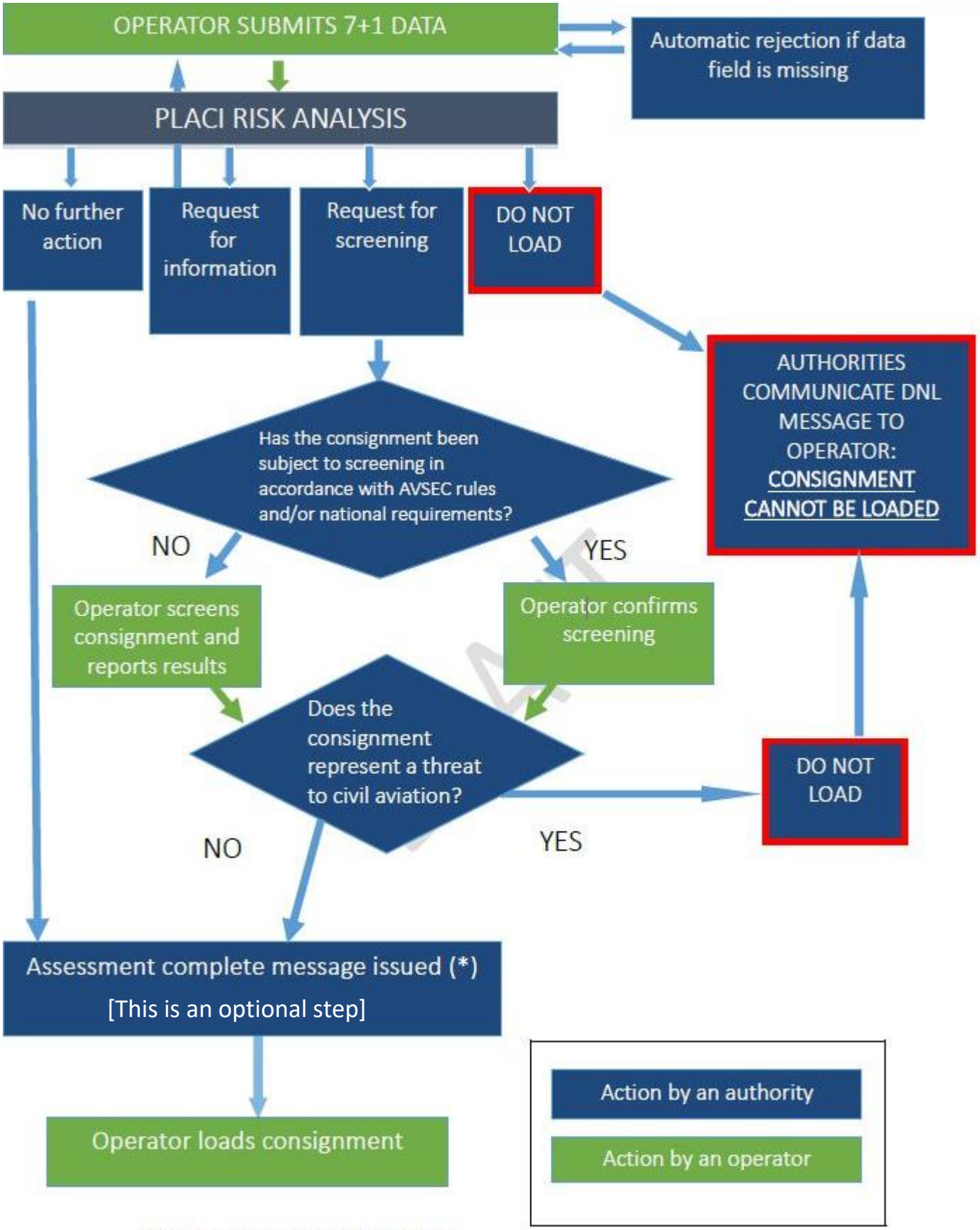
5.1. PLACI risk analysis process

The PLACI "7+1" data elements provide regulators (e.g., analysts or targeters) with data

that is available early in the supply chain, to sufficiently conduct an initial risk assessment for purposes of aviation security threats (i.e. bomb in a box). Entities that submit PLACI data to the relevant regulator(s) include express delivery companies, air carriers or their authorized representatives (e.g., ground handling agents), postal operators, and freight forwarders.

Complete 7+1 submissions should be sent as soon as the information becomes available but no later than prior to loading onto the aircraft at the last point of departure to the PLACI territory. Data submissions should be assessed in a timely manner according to risk rules and indicators, which should be developed according to information on intelligence, threat, and risk by each Member.

In addition to the 7+1 data elements required for PLACI submissions, other consignment data can be helpful in risk assessment and avoid the necessity of further mitigation measures for a shipment. Thus, industry entities can optionally provide, and regulators can accept, additional cargo information about a shipment.



(*) Not a prerequisite for loading cargo, some business models will load independently of this message.

5.2. Possible results of the PLACI risk analysis process

The following reactions may occur as a result of the pre-loading PLACI risk analysis process: Assessment complete, Request for Information, Request for Screening, and Do No Load. Nonetheless, except in the case of a Do Not Load message being issued, cargo keeps moving through the supply chain during the PLACI process.

5.2.1. Assessment Complete

In the case where no air cargo security related risk is identified, or where a perceived risk has been successfully resolved, a regulator may decide to programme IT platforms to deliver a message to the 7+1 data submitter indicating that the risk assessment is complete. If an operator makes a commercial decision to proceed with loading the consignment on board the aircraft without the assessment complete, it is at their own risk.

5.2.2. Request for Information (RFI)

An RFI referral should be sent for shipments when it is not possible to fully assess the risk to aviation security with the information contained in the initial filing. Such requests should be communicated as soon as possible.

The operator should respond with the information requested as soon as possible, to enable the authorities to perform the risk assessment. Some operators may provide access to internal systems to reduce the need for RFI referrals.

Authorities may also suggest the optional inclusion of additional security information or confirmation if any screening (including what kind of screening) has taken place on the shipment in question. This information may also be requested in an RFS, as described below. Provision of this additional information could avoid the necessity of applying additional security measures.

5.2.3. Request for Screening (RFS)

When additional evidence is required to determine if a risk to aviation security exists, or it is not possible to determine risk with the information available (including additional information from a RFI), a request for screening, screening using a secondary appropriate method (high-risk cargo and mail screening), or confirmation of screening can be sent by appropriate authorities. The consignment should not be loaded onto an aircraft until the screening has been conducted, unless the appropriate authorities and the operator have agreed that the shipment must be moved to a location where the appropriate screening equipment is available.

Upon receipt of the RFS, the operator should confirm what screening has already taken place and/or carry out the requested screening, where necessary as per ICAO Annex 17 regulations and/or the Member's applicable national cargo security programme measures. Results of any screening should be confirmed with the authorities. Providing the reason for the referral to the operator may in some circumstances help them to determine which screening method is the most appropriate to address the potential risk, though it may not always be possible to provide these details if the nature of the information is

confidential (e.g. proprietary information, classified intelligence).

5.2.4. Do Not Load (DNL)

When advance cargo information matches to specific intelligence or threat scenarios that indicates an imminent threat to aviation security (i.e. "bomb in a box"), appropriate authorities will issue a Do Not Load order. A DNL order may also be issued if a threat item is identified in the cargo while in the process of resolving an RFS. In accordance with ICAO requirements, Members must have existing protocols in place, to address instances of imminent threat to aircraft presented by an air cargo shipment. These protocols can be leveraged by authorities in the context of PLACI.

Annex 1[3] PRE-LOADING AIR CARGO SECURITY DATA

No	WCO ID	Name	Description
1	R031	Consignor, name	Name [and address] of party who makes – or on whose behalf – the export declaration is made and who is the owner of the goods or who has similar right of disposal over them at the time then the declaration is accepted.
2	R031	Consignor, address	Name [and address] of party who makes – or on whose behalf – the export declaration is made and who is the owner of the goods or who has similar right of disposal over them at the time then the declaration is accepted.
3	R014	Consignee, name	Name [and address] of party to which the goods are consigned.
4	R014	Consignee, address	Name [and address] of party to which the goods are consigned.
5	144	Number of packages	Number of individual items packaged in such a way that they cannot be divided without first undoing the packing.
6	131	Total gross weight (incl. measure unit qualifier)	Weight (mass) of goods including packaging but excluding the carrier's equipment for a declaration.
7	138	Brief cargo description	Plain language description of the cargo of a means of transport, in general terms only

Note 1: The identification of the data filer must be provided together with the HAWB and/or MAWB number according to the cargo business model

[3] A stipulated in Annex III of the WCO SAFE Framework of Standards