



NOTE BY THE TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT

ELECTRONIC SUBMISSIONS OF ANNUAL DECLARATIONS ON PAST ACTIVITIES AS AT 31 MAY 2015

Introduction and overview

1. The Declarations Handbook governs the submission of declarations by States Parties to the Technical Secretariat (hereinafter “the Secretariat”), including the submission of electronic declarations.¹ This helps to improve both the quality of the declaration data and the efficiency of importation and processing of such data in the Verification Information System (VIS) of the Secretariat.
2. The electronic declarations tool for National Authorities (EDNA) was developed by the Secretariat and initially released in 2008 for use by States Parties for the preparation of Article VI declarations. The most current version (3.1) has been available since January 2015.
3. This Note presents an update on the overview of the status of submission of annual declarations on past activities (ADPA) in electronic format, information that was first provided in a Note by the Secretariat in 2009 (S/773/2009, dated 18 June 2009).

Declarations received in electronic format

4. As at 31 May 2015, an ADPA for 2014 had been submitted by 98 States Parties, including 10 nil declarations. Of the 88 declarations that therefore are required to be processed, 52 declarations, or 59%, were submitted, fully or partially, in electronic format.² Of these 52 declarations, one was made in common transmission file structure (CTFS) format. The remaining 51 declarations were submitted in Extensible Mark-up Language (XML) format; 47 of these 51 were prepared using the EDNA. In total, 93% of plant sites and facilities were declared in electronic format.
5. As at 31 May 2015, 26 declarable Schedule 1 facilities had been declared in ADPA for 2014, by 22 States Parties, out of which 11 declarations, or 50%, were submitted in electronic format, 10 of which were prepared using EDNA. Of the total number of 26 declared Schedule 1 facilities, 12 facilities, or 46%, were declared in electronic format.

¹ The Declarations Handbook 2013, Section A, paragraph 3.3.

² Only declarations which include CTFS or XML files are counted as electronic declarations.



Processing of electronic declarations

6. The Secretariat has worked with the States Parties concerned to resolve any technical problems they have encountered when submitting electronic declarations. While some technical problems can be resolved by the Secretariat, continued successful implementation of electronic declarations also depends on States Parties closely following the relevant protocols and guidelines that have been issued by the Secretariat.³
7. Some States Parties that submit an electronic declaration also submit a hard copy declaration as the “authoritative” version. This requires the Secretariat to validate the consistency between both versions. As developments with electronic declarations continue, it is recommended that, whenever possible, States Parties consider making their formal submissions in electronic format, thus removing the need for a hard copy.⁴

Summary and perspective

8. The introduction and continual improvement of EDNA has led to a steady rise in the number of States Parties submitting declarations in electronic format and the overall share of data declared electronically. Looking at the ADPA for 2014, this trend has continued and can be summarised as follows:
 - (a) The number of States Parties submitting ADPA for 2014 in electronic format increased by four to 52, compared to 48 electronic submissions of ADPA 2013.⁵
 - (b) Seven States Parties submitted their declarations in electronic format for the first time using EDNA.
 - (c) Of 26 declarable Schedule 1 facilities, 12 facilities, or 46%, were declared in electronic format, in comparison to nine facilities, or 35%, in ADPA for 2013. In terms of the number of States Parties declaring Schedule 1 facilities electronically, there was an increase to 11 out of 22, or 50%, in comparison to nine out of 22, or 41%, in ADPA for 2013.
9. The Secretariat welcomes the rising trend of submission of declarations in electronic format as well as the interest of States Parties in declaring Schedule 1 facilities and transfers using the new module for Schedule 1. For any questions regarding EDNA and electronic declarations, States Parties are advised to contact the Declarations Branch’s Data Analytics, Reporting and Quality Control Section using the dedicated e-mail address vis@opcw.org.

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³ Available on the OPCW external server (<https://external.opcw.org/>) under EDNA documents.

⁴ The Secretariat is aware that this might not be possible for all States Parties, given that some have legislation that always requires a hard copy to be submitted; this hard copy takes precedence.

⁵ As at 31 May 2013, as reported in S/1107/2013, dated 14 June 2013.