TSS User Guides

Inventory-Linked Ports

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Trader Support Service

HM Revenue & Customs

Contents

If there are any words or acronyms in this document that are unfamiliar, please visit the Jargon Buster or use the search tool on the [Northern Ireland Customs and Trade Academy](#) ([NICTA](#)) to find a definition.[1]

1   Introduction

Inventory-Linked Ports (ILPs) are those ports and airports that have customs control systems linked to HMRC systems, allowing for quick electronic clearance of goods on arrival to the port.

Goods moved to Northern Ireland (NI) via seaports (either bulk or containerised to Belfast, Londonderry, or Warrenpoint) and airports (Belfast City and Belfast International) are generally managed by port community systems.

These systems are provided by Community System Providers (CSP) to specific port and airport communities and are accessed by HMRC, Border Force and other government departments and agencies. The Trader Support Service (TSS) supports certain inventory-linked locations through CSPs such as Cargo Community Services (CCS-UK), Community Network Services (CNS Compass), and Maritime Cargo Processing (MCP) Destin8.

ILP systems can also be accessed by commercial supply chain businesses such as freight forwarders, carriers, temporary storage facility operators, haulage companies and other intermediaries acting on behalf of you.

When goods arrive at an ILP, the goods are either cleared at port or moved into a temporary storage facility (TSF) such as a warehouse or transit shed. This creates an inventory record either at the port of entry or the shed location. Goods can only be released from port or the TSF once agents or you have provided evidence of customs clearance.

This document details the processes you must follow for ILP journeys and the role TSS plays in helping with this process. TSS is free to use; however, you must have first signed up for the [TSS Portal](#) (see guidance on [GOV.UK](#)).

2   How TSS Supports Inventory-Linked Ports Movements

TSS supports air and maritime ILP movements from GB to NI and the Rest of World excluding the European Union (RoW excluding EU) to NI.

If you want to use TSS to complete the customs declarations for your air ILP movements to Belfast International or Belfast City airports and associated locations from GB and RoW

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[1] Terms used in this guide refer to the terminology used on the TSS Portal. Please note that these may not match the most recent terms used on GOV.UK, in HMRC's Customs Declaration Service or the Northern Ireland Online Tariff on GOV.UK.

excluding EU, your customs agent can ask the shed operator to nominate the inventory record to the TSS badge code '**YOB'.**

If you want to use TSS to complete the customs declarations for your maritime (sea) shipments that are inventory-linked within CNS Compass (Belfast and Warrenpoint) and MCP (Londonderry), you can claim your inventory record for Belfast and Warrenpoint locations using the TSS Portal or request an inventory record nomination through the TSS Contact Centre for assistance with Londonderry ILP arrivals.

ILP customs declarations on TSS are supported on the Full Frontier Declaration route; please refer to the Full Frontier Declaration: Step-by-step guide on NICTA.

In this short guide, we will focus on the three ILP routes that are supported by TSS:

- Goods moved directly from GB to NI by air

- Goods moved directly from RoW excluding EU to NI by air

- Goods moved directly from RoW excluding EU and GB to NI by maritime (sea)

For all goods movements, an Entry Summary Declaration is required before the goods move. The legal requirements for this lie with the carrier, but a third party may lodge the declaration if it is done with the carrier's consent. TSS can support you in generating this declaration for GB to NI air movements. The Entry Summary Declaration for maritime (sea) consignments and RoW excluding EU to NI movements is not supported within TSS. Further details can be found in the ENS Step-by-step guide: Standard Process and Consignment First Process guide on NICTA.

2.1 Air movements from GB to NI and RoW excluding EU to NI

The journey for RoW excluding EU to NI movements follows the same process as GB to NI movements except for the completion of the Entry Summary Declaration, which needs to be completed outside of TSS. You can then complete the arrived Full Frontier Declaration within TSS when the goods have arrived.

In addition to the above, you will also need to release your goods from an airport's temporary storage facilities using the following processes:

1. You should nominate a customs agent, intermediary or airline ('agent') to complete the necessary processes so that the shed operator can move the goods between the airport and the approved TSF, informing you when the goods have arrived

2. For GB to NI movements, you can use the TSS process to submit an Entry Summary Declaration, selecting 'Air' as 'Method of Transport' on the Entry Summary Declaration

   The legal requirements for this lie with the carrier, but a third party may lodge the declaration if it is done with the carrier's consent. Further information on submitting Entry Summary Declarations can be found in the ENS Step-by-step guide: Standard Process and Consignment First Process guide on NICTA.

3. You need to know the Inventory Consignment Reference (ICR) for the goods

    You can ask your agent to provide this or telephone the TSS Contact Centre for assistance. Please ensure you know the **air waybill prefix, airway bill number and house air waybill number (if the house number exists) before contacting the** TSS Contact Centre**. You should also know the number of pieces in the consignment. You can obtain this information from your agent/carrier.**

4. The agent will inform the shed operator to nominate the inventory record to the TSS badge code **'YOB'**

    This enables the record to be cleared against a declaration submitted through TSS. By asking for the goods to be nominated to the TSS badge code, the agent takes on responsibility for any ground/airport charges that may be incurred, and any storage charges incurred will be directed to them.

5. Once the goods have arrived, a Full Frontier Declaration needs to be created to release the inventory from the TSF

    This must account for all the customs data in one declaration (unlike Simplified Frontier Declarations). You must ensure all the relevant data for the customs declaration is declared at this stage. For detailed guidance on completing an arrived Full Frontier Declaration for air ILP movements, please see the Full Frontier Declaration: Step-by-step guide on NICTA.

6. You or your agent can only obtain the goods from the TSF by providing evidence that they have been cleared by customs

    You can get this evidence as a copy of your customs declaration by using the 'Export a Declaration' function on TSS, as explained in the How to use the TSS Portal guide on NICTA. TSS doesn't issue collection notes. Any ground, storage, or airport charges that have been incurred may also need to be paid before the goods are released. Having an account with the ground handler or shed operator is the most efficient way to pay these. If you are using an agent, most agents have this in place. The shed operator can then release the goods to you in accordance with the TSF operator's procedures.

2.2   Maritime (sea) movements to NI

For maritime (sea) movements, you can release your goods from the port or the port's associated temporary storage facility using TSS in the following way:

1. The carrier is responsible for submitting an Entry Summary Declaration. This needs to be completed outside of TSS for all maritime (sea) movements

2. Your clearing agent, who holds the respective CSP badge, should complete the necessary processes for moving goods between the port and the approved TSF, and inform you when the goods have arrived

3. You or your customs agent should create an **Inventory Claim** within TSS to claim the inventory / goods at the port location

   To start an **Inventory Claim** you need to know the container number, final destination location code, the house or master bill of lading number, load type (full or part load) and whether the goods are cargo or consignment. If you are using one an agent, you may need to provide them with this information. Full details on the Inventory Claim process can be found in the section on [Submitting an Inventory Claim in TSS Portal for Maritime ILP movements](#) later in this guide.

   The method used for claiming your inventory depends on the location of customs clearance of the goods:

   - **Method A (Belfast and Warrenpoint ports)**: Create and complete the Inventory Claim form in TSS Portal and click **Submit**. The TSS system will attempt to claim the inventory record using the information you have provided. If, after submitting your Inventory Claim form, the Inventory Claim is unsuccessful, the system will raise a case for a TSS agent to assist you

   - **Method B (Londonderry port)**: When you select 'Londonderry' the system will raise a case for a TSS agent to assist you with claiming the inventory record

4. TSS will notify you if the Inventory Claim is successful, or whether further information is needed

   Please telephone the [TSS Contact Centre](#) on 0800 060 8888 if you need help claiming your inventory record. The party who claims the inventory record takes responsibility for any ground or port charges that may be incurred.

5. Once the inventory record has been successfully claimed, the creation of the Full Frontier Declaration is required to release the inventory from the TSF

   - For detailed guidance on completing a Full Frontier Declaration for maritime (sea) movements please see the [Full Frontier Declaration: Step-by-step guide](#) on NICTA.

   - For details on linking Inventory Claims to Full Frontier Declarations, see the section on [Linking an amalgamation to a Full Frontier Declaration and submitting the Full Frontier Declaration](#) in this guide

6. Once any inventory holds have been resolved and the goods are customs cleared, the port operator, (or the shed operator, if the goods have been moved to a TSF) can release the goods to you

   Any ground, storage, or port charges that have been incurred may also need to be paid before the goods are released, in accordance with the port or shed's operating procedures. Having an account with the ground handler is the most efficient way to pay these. If you are using an agent, most agents have this in place.

7. When the goods have been customs cleared and released by the shed; evidence that the goods have cleared customs and that no inventory holds exist may be required by the port or shed before the goods can be collected

8. You can get a copy of your customs declaration by using the 'Export a Declaration' function on TSS, as explained in How to use the TSS Portal guide on NICTA

2.2.1 Submitting an Inventory Claim in TSS Portal for Maritime ILP movements

You or your agent should complete the **Inventory Claim form** on the TSS Portal using the following process:

1. After logging into the TSS Portal, click the **Declarations** tab to reveal a drop-down. Select **Start a Declaration**
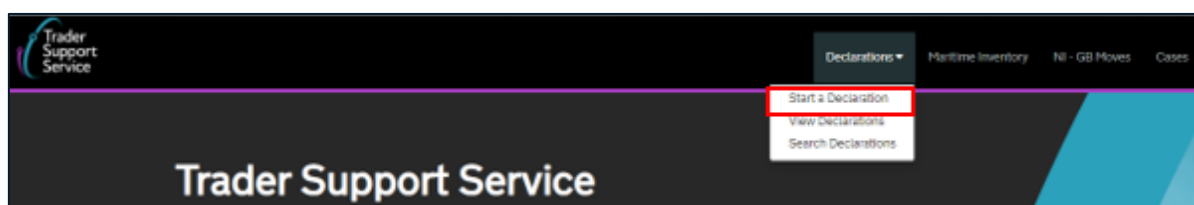
2. Next, on the **Declarations Options** screen, scroll down to select **Start an Inventory Claim**

3. A new page will present an **Inventory Claim – new record** for completion

The form contains the following fields (all asterisked fields are mandatory):

- A unique **Local Reference Number** (LRN) will be generated for your declaration and added to the Inventory Claim form. This is a unique identifying reference for that specific Inventory Claim

- The declaration **Status** field is read-only and will change to reflect the status of your inventory claim

- The **Inventory Type** will be set to 'Maritime'

- **Container Number** – Here you would insert the container number or the trailer number

- **Final Destination Location Code** – select the final location of the goods where customs clearance will take place from the drop-down

4. Input the **House or Master Bill of Lading** number in this field:

5. Add the number of packages to the **Package Count** field. This should match exactly to what has been manifested in the inventory record and the total number of packages on your commercial documents. It should reflect the smallest external packaging

6. The next three fields will appear greyed out and are not editable. These will be automatically populated once the inventory record has been successfully claimed:

   - **UCN** – the Unique Consignment Number

   - **Date of Claim** – the date that the inventory record is successfully claimed

   - The **Linked Frontier Declaration Reference Number (LRN)** field will be populated when you have linked the inventory record to a Full Frontier Declaration (FFD)

7. Choose the **Load Type** from the drop-down menu. The options for load type are as follows:

   - 'FCL – Full Container Load – Cleared on Wheels' – where the cargo fills a whole shipping container

   - 'LCL – Less than Container Load – Offload Cargo' – where the cargo is not large enough to fill a whole shipping container on its own and is combined with other cargo to fill the shipping container (known as groupage)

   - 'Mix' – a combination of cleared on wheels and offload cargo; goods that have been loaded on to a trailer and manifested within the inventory

8. Select whether the goods are **Cargo or Consignment** from the drop-down menu:

   - 'Cargo' – full load shipments

   - 'Consignment' – part load shipments

9. The **Weight** field is not mandatory but will assist in matching your Inventory Claim to the inventory record. The gross weight should be entered in kilograms and must include all packaging (but not the carriers' equipment). The weight must match the weight on the inventory record

10. Once you have completed all the mandatory fields and any optional fields, click **Save**

11. Next, you will have the option to **Submit**, **Cancel Inventory Claim**, **Save** or **Mark for Amalgamation** in your **Inventory Claim** form:

- **Submit** will start the Inventory Claim process using the information you have provided. The method that TSS will use to claim the inventory record on your behalf is determined by the location code you have entered in the **Final Destination Location** field as detailed at the start of this section

- **Cancel Inventory Claim** – possible reasons for cancelling include:

    - Claiming the wrong cargo record

    - Non-arrivals to port

    - The customs declaration will be done outside of TSS

Please call the TSS Contact Centre if you need assistance with re-nominating the inventory record to another agent

- **Save** allows you to save the information to complete at another time

- **Mark for Amalgamation** and **Save**

12. TSS offers you (or your customs agent representing you in TSS) the functionality to amalgamate multiple maritime Inventory Claims (child) into a one (parent) claim, and to subsequently link the latter to one declaration

- The above action will add a tick in the box next to the **Amalgamation Candidate** field

- If, however, the UCN has been claimed already, the **Error Text field** will be updated, and you need to **Cancel Inventory Claim**

13. Once you have submitted your **Inventory Claim** form you will see a confirmation message displayed in green at the top of the screen and if there are no errors, the **Status** will change to 'In Claiming'

- If your Inventory Claim is unsuccessful or if there are any errors, the **Status** of the Inventory Claim form will change to 'Input Required' and you will receive an email notification to advise you of this

  You should check the information for errors, correct them and resubmit your application. If you believe the information you input was correct, you should raise a case on the TSS Portal to resolve this and a TSS agent can help claim the UCN. They will advise you once the inventory record has been claimed.

- TSS will send you an email notification if your Inventory Claim is successful. The **Status** of the **Inventory Claim** will change to 'Claimed' and the **UCN** and **Date of Claim** fields will be updated

14. You can view the **Maritime Inventory** table for a list of your **Inventory Claims**. The following information will be displayed:

15. You then need to amalgamate the inventory and create an amalgamation claim (parent) if there are more than one **Inventory Claims** (child) to the same final destination location. This will generate an amalgamation claim (parent claim), which will be assigned a Master UCN. See the section of this guide on Creating an amalgamation inventory claim for step-by-step guidance

16. Next, create a Full Frontier Declaration and link the amalgamation claim to this in order to clear the goods through customs and release them from the Temporary Storage Facility (TSF) / Shed

    See the section of this guide on Linking an amalgamation to a Full Frontier Declaration and submitting the Full Frontier Declaration for further guidance.

3 Creating an amalgamation inventory claim

1. Once again, scroll down the **Declarations Options** screen to the **Inventory Amalgamation** option (below the **Inventory Linking** option)

2. Click **Start an Inventory Amalgamation** and a new screen will present an **Amalgamation Claim – new record** form

3. Select the **Final Destination Location Code** in the mandatory field using the drop-down. This code must be the same for the **Amalgamation** (**parent**) form and all associated inventory claims (**children**)

4. Then click **Save**

This will update the form with new tabs appearing at the bottom so you can **Associate Inventory Claim** (child) for amalgamation or **Cancel Amalgamation** if required

5. Click **Associate Inventory Claim** to add Inventory Claims, selecting one by one from the drop-down. Inventory Claims will appear in the drop-down if they:

- Are updated with the final destination as per this amalgamation form, and

- Are marked as an Amalgamation Candidate

You can associate as many child inventory claims as required. TSS will create the amalgamation.

The **Inventory Claim(s) to Add** field has a drop-down which lists all the inventory claims that are available for amalgamation at the selected location. The below column headers list the information that appears for each Inventory Claim:

- **UCN** of the individual Inventory Claim

- **House or Master Bill of Lading number**

- **Container Number**

- **Package Count**

- **Weight**

6. Once you have selected the Inventory Claims for amalgamation, the respective UCN numbers will appear in the selection field. Click **Submit** to add them to the amalgamation form. You may also **Add attachments** to the amalgamation

7. The **Associated Inventory Claims** will be listed at the bottom of the amalgamation form. **Note**: If there is a customs hold against a particular Inventory Claim, a **Hold Reason** will appear next to the claim listed

8. At this stage you may:

   • Click **Associate Inventory Claim** for further Inventory Claims, **or**

   • **Submit** to create the amalgamation, **or**

   • **Cancel Amalgamation** if required

   Once you **Submit** the amalgamation request, a confirmation will appear on a green pop-up message, and the **Status** of the amalgamation form will change to 'In Claiming':

Once the amalgamation process is successful, the **Status** will change to 'Claimed' and a Master UCN will appear, and the associated **Inventory Claims** will show at the bottom of the Amalgamation Record.

Local Reference Number ∧	Status	Weight	Package Count	Container Number	House or Master Bill of Lading	Hold Reason
ICR000000000002986	Claimed	20000.00	100	DSAU12345678	HGKBEL12345	
ICR000000000003015	Claimed	20000.00	150	TMEU12345678	HKGBEL987654	

- When viewing an **Amalgamation Record** from the Maritime Inventory Screen the TSS Portal screen header will show the Inventory Claim ICR number

Home > Maritime Inventory > Amalgamation - ICR000000000001591

- When viewing an **Inventory Claim** from within the Amalgamation form the TSS Portal screen header will show the related **Parent ICR** and the **Child ICR** numbers

Home > Maritime Inventory > Amalgamation - ICR000000000001591 > Inventory Claim - ICR000000000001468
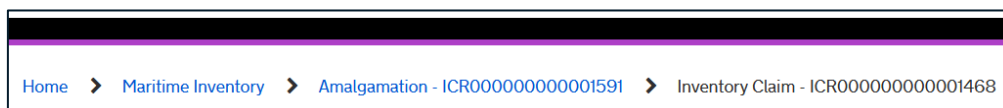
- When viewing an **Inventory Claim** from the Maritime Inventory Screen the TSS Portal screen header will show the Inventory Claim ICR number

Home > Maritime Inventory > Inventory Claim - ICR000000000001438

3.1   Decoupling an Inventory Claim from an amalgamation form

If you make an error or no longer wish to include a particular Inventory Claim in the amalgamation request, you must cancel the whole amalgamation before you can click **Decouple from Amalgamation** to decouple the Inventory Claim (child) from the amalgamation request (parent). A new amalgamation request would be required, and all the correct Inventory Claims (children) associated once again before it is submitted. You need to take great care, therefore, when you are selecting Inventory Claims to associate with the parent to avoid errors in selection

Decouple from Amalgamation   Save (Ctrl + s)
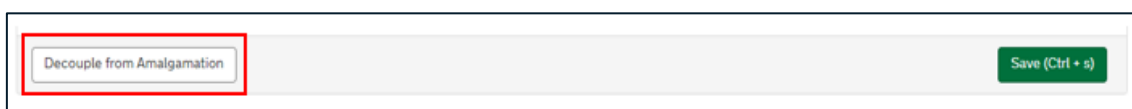
Once decoupled, the **Inventory Claim** will look like this:

3.2   Cancelling an amalgamation Inventory Claim

If you cancel the amalgamation the form initially moves into 'Pending Cancellation' **Status**.

It will then move into a **Status** of 'Cancelled' once fully cancelled:

3.3   Common error when creating an amalgamation Inventory Claim

You must select at least two **Inventory Claim** UCNs and **Submit** an amalgamation request, otherwise an error message will appear.

3.4   Linking an amalgamation to a Full Frontier Declaration and submitting the Full Frontier Declaration

1. Whilst creating a Full Frontier Declaration, in the **Transport Details** section of the declaration if you select **Maritime** from the drop-down in the **Mode of Transport at the Border** field, the **Maritime Inventory** field appears. In this field you need to select the **Master UCN** of the required Amalgamation Claim

2. Select the **Master UCN** in the **Maritime Inventory** field from the drop-down

Note: When selecting the Master UCN, the fields for **Container number** and the **House or Master Bill of Lading** number are not relevant as these are only available at the Inventory Claim (child) level.

3. Once the Full Frontier Declaration has been saved, the **Status** of the Amalgamation Claim and the associated Inventory Claim changes from 'Claimed' to 'Linked'

4. Once the Full Frontier Declaration has been submitted to CDS, the **Status** of the Amalgamation Claim changes from 'Linked' to 'Processing', and the **Linked Full Frontier Declaration (LRN)** field is updated with the Full Frontier Declaration number on the Amalgamation Claim

Note: If you cancel the Full Frontier Declaration, the amalgamation claim's **Status** changes from 'Processing' back to 'Linked'.

5.   The Full Frontier Declaration will then move through the 'Awaiting Arrival' to 'Arrived' **Status** after dwell time of 10–15 minutes, and then onto 'Closed'

6.   When the Full Frontier Declaration is 'Closed', the status of the Master UCN (parent) **Inventory Claim** changes to 'Customs Cleared'

The status of the child **Inventory Claim** also changes to 'Customs Cleared'.

The list of all child claims within an amalgamation will be shown as 'Customs Cleared'.

7. When all the child Inventory Claims are 'Released' (i.e., not on any border force or port health inspectors related holds) then the status of the Master UCN will change to 'Released'

- Example of Child inventory claim as **Released**:

- Example of Master UCN claim as **Released**:

However, if the status of even one child inventory claim remains as 'Customs cleared', then the status of the master UCN will also remain in 'Customs cleared' status.

3.5   Potential Full Frontier Declaration errors

If you enter the incorrect number of packages in the Full Frontier Declaration compared to that in the amalgamated **Inventory Claim**, an error notification would appear in red on the Full Frontier Declaration. The correct number of packages needs to be entered before the Full Frontier Declaration can proceed.

4   I need to know more

There are additional guides available on NICTA to support you with trade into and out of NI:

- Data guide: TSS declaration data requirements

- ENS Step-by-step guide: Standard Process and Consignment First Process

- Full Frontier Declaration: Step-by-step Guide

- How to use the TSS Portal

- Tariffs on goods movements into NI

- Webinar: 'Tariff on goods entering NI'

- Payments: Step-by-step guide using TSS

- Registration: Step-by-step guide using TSS

You can also consult the TSS Contact Centre for support on 0800 060 8888.

5   Changes to guidance and policy

Last updated January 2024.

January 2024: Updated to further detail process of movements to inventory linked ports

October 2022: Removed references to Maritime Automation