



GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
 MINISTRY OF FINANCE :: DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE
 OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL COMMISSIONER OF CUSTOMS
 CUSTOM HOUSE, PORT AREA, VISAKHAPATNAM – 530 035
 PHONE : +91-891-2564552 :: FAX : +91-891-2562613

File No. S2/06/2016-EDI

Date: 25/07/2016

STANDING ORDER NO. 05/2016

Sub: Project 'e-SAMPARK' – Implementation of standardized official communication through website, e-mail & SMS in the Custom House, Visakhapatnam – reg.

Communication among the departmental officers and between departmental officers and Trade/ Importers/ exporters/ stakeholders is one of the most important facets of tax administration. Fast, reliable and standardized channels for official communication go a long way in enhancing office productivity and also ease citizen's interaction with the department. It is for these reasons that the effective use of electronic means of communication such as 'website', 'e-mail', 'SMS' etc. has assumed tremendous significance in the recent times.

1.1 Keeping the above in mind and for optimal use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) for official communications, this Custom House has conceptualised Project 'e-SAMPARK'. Through this standing order, the same is implemented in all offices coming under this Custom House.

1.2 As part of 'e-SAMPARK', it shall be noted that both the sending office/ officer/ section and receiving office/ officer/ section will take a print of e-mail sent/ received and place the same in file for record or for further processing. The key difference now would be that the *transmission* of message/ text/ documents will be electronic via e-mail and no hard copy follows except in specified exceptional circumstances listed in this order, the most important exception being communication of decisions, orders, summons or notices etc. issued under the provisions of the Customs Act, 1962 which shall be sent by registered post with acknowledgment due / speed post as per section 153 of the Customs Act, 1962.

1.3 In the scheme of e-mail communication, the users are identified by their 'e-mail ID'. In the case of 'designation-based' NIC e-mail ID's taken for all Group - A officers and sections/ offices in the Custom House, at any given time, the account is mapped to a single officer holding that designation. At the time of initial log in, the user is also required to fill up

the detailed profile (name, address, date of birth, date of retirement etc.). The name of the officer currently holding the account, as given in the profile, will also be displayed along with the designation-based mail ID. Further, each e-mail sent is dated and time-stamped. Every page of NIC mail, when printed, bears the date of printing (on top left corner), page number (bottom right corner) and a unique URL (on top and bottom of each page). These security protocols built in official e-mail applications obviate the need for physical signature. Hence, once an e-mail is sent from a particular mail account, it is deemed to have been 'signed' and sent by the officer holding that mail account. The mail & attachments, if any, so received in recipient's inbox and printed true copies of the same (which clearly bear the subject, names and mail ID's of sender and receivers, date and time of sending, date of printing etc.) constitute proper official communication by the sender. These can be put up in file for record or for further processing, just like signed papers received through fax/ speed post.

1.4 Further, all the other official procedures presently to be followed in offices under CBEC, including those prescribed under Office Procedure Manual (OPM), Sevottam etc., shall continue without any change.

1.5 The general information and common procedures applicable to all channels of official e-mail communication are given as **Annexure-A**. All officers are hereby directed to go through this section thoroughly as it explains the fundamentals of official e-mail communication.

1.6 The Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to be followed for each communication scenario/ channel in the Custom House is prescribed as under:

Sl. No.	e-mail Communication Channel	SOP prescribed in
1.	Between Custom House and Chief Commissioner's Office (CCO)	Annexure – B
2.	Between CFS/ Terminals and the Custom House	Annexure – C
3.	Between different sections under the Custom House	Annexure – D
4.	Communications of personal nature from officers /staff with office (Administration/Accounts section etc.)	Annexure – E
5.	Between Custom House and other Government offices (e.g., Central Excise, Income Ta, Navy, Coast Guard, etc.)	Annexure – F
6.	Between the Custom House and Stakeholders, Importers/ Exporters, etc.	Annexure - G

All the officers are hereby directed to follow the above SOP's scrupulously without any deviation.

FREQUENT CHECKING OF MAIL BOX:

2.0 As the official e-mail ID's are published on public domain of this Custom House www.vizagcustoms.gov.in, anyone including Departmental Officers/ Trade/ Citizens may send an e-mail. So, it is very important that every officer checks the official e-mail account

once in few hours - at least 3-4 times a day. To confirm that all officers are using official e-mail regularly, frequency of log-in's for each NIC mail account will be monitored with the help of NIC.

USE OF PRIVATE E-MAIL FOR OFFICIAL PURPOSES PROHIBITED:

3.0 It is hereby directed that any of those officers and sections who are still using private/ third party e-mails informally for official communications shall stop the same forthwith. Any use of private e-mail by officers/ sections for official communications should be totally avoided.

3.1 The details of all the user-friendly features of NIC e-mail applications are given as part of **Annexure-H** to this order.

BULK SMS & BULK E-MAIL TO TRADE/ IMPOETERS/ EXPORTERS:

4.0 SMS is a very useful tool in official communications. NIC is offering free bulk SMS services for all state & central government offices through the portal, www.quicksms.gov.in. The SMS's can be sent in Indian languages also and there is a provision to make SMS groups for easy and repeated messaging.

4.1 Using EDW, the database of all Customs Broker/ Steamer Agents, Top Importers/ Exporters shall be generated in MS-EXCEL. The columns, 'Telephone 1' and 'Telephone 2' can be arranged in descending order and invalid numbers and landline numbers can be deleted. This mobile number list of Customs Broker/ Steamer Agents, Top Importers/ Exporters can be used for sending bulk SMS's from time to time. This list shall be updated on monthly basis by the respective sections/ CFSs.

4.2 Appraisers/ Superintendent in charge of sections shall check the website of CBEC in the first hour every day for any new and important notifications/ circulars etc. and broadcast the gist of such notifications/ circulars through bulk SMS to all the Customs Broker/ Steamer Agents, Top Importers/ Exporters.

4.3 The detailed procedure as to how to take 'Quick SMS' account, the SOP to be followed for bulk messaging and sample message texts are given as part of Annexure-I. The same shall be scrupulously followed without any deviation.

4.4 The text of messages and alerts sent through bulk SMS can also be sent by bulk e-mail (in BCC mode) to all/ relevant the Customs Broker/ Steamer Agents, Importers/ Exporters.

4.5 All the Customs Broker/ Steamer Agents, Importers/ Exporters should be advised to update their email ID and mobile number in ACES. Model text that can be sent as SMS/e-mail is given as part of Annexure-I.

BULK SMS & BULK E-MAIL TO STAFF:

- 5.0 Bulk SMS shall be used for quick and effective communication among staff also.
- 5.1 AC/DC (EDI) shall maintain a list of mobile numbers of all staff in the Custom House, viz., Group 'A' upto Hawaldars. This list shall be updated every two months.
- 5.2 Copies of all general/ important communications meant for all staff must be marked to AC/ DC (EDI), who shall broadcast gist of message to all staff through bulk SMS (e.g., aadhar registration for bio-metric attendance, meeting alerts, IPR filing reminders, issue of establishment orders etc.).
- 5.3 Appraisers/ Superintendents in charge of sections shall check the website of CBEC in the first hour every day for any new and important notifications/ circulars etc. and forward the same to AC/DC (EDI), who will broadcast the gist of such notifications/ circular through bulk SMS to all staff.
- 5.4 The detailed SOP to be followed for bulk messaging to staff are given as part of Annexure-I. The same shall be scrupulously followed without any deviation.
- 5.5 The text of messages sent through bulk SMS can also sent by bulk e-mail (in BCC mode) to all staff through NIC, ICEGATE & personal mail ID's.

'e-SAMPARK' – KEY PRE-REQUISITES:

REGULAR UPDATION OF CONTACT DIRECTORY:

- 6.0 Updation of contact directory of all officials in the Custom House and making it available on website is of prime importance in 'e-SAMPARK'.
- 6.1 It shall be the duty of Establishment section to update the contact details of the Officers/ sections (in the format of 'CONTACT US', as available on website) every two months and mail the same to the EDI Section. The EDI section shall compile and ensure that the Contact details on the website is updated on regular intervals.
- 6.2 In addition to the columns mentioned in the aforesaid format, four more columns, viz., (a) SSOID; (b) ICEGATE e-mail ID; (c) personal mail ID (if available and furnished by officer/staff) and (d) mobile number of each officer shall also be added by the Establishment section. These details will not be published on website but will be used for sending bulk e-mail/ SMS to staff.
- 6.3 In addition to sending details in above format, the Establishment Section shall also send a single set of mobile numbers of all officers from Group 'A' to hawaldars typed as continuous text in MS word in the format of 10 digit mobile numbers separated by semi colon (without any space) e.g., 1234567890;1234567891;1234567892;...Utmost care shall be taken

to avoid typographical mistakes while compiling mobile number list. This is to avoid messages going to unintended recipients and to prevent complaints, if any on privacy grounds.

INFORMATION SECURITY, UTMOST PRIORITY:

7.0 While using e-mail / bulk SMS communication, especially on a continuous basis for official purposes, strict adherence to information security is of supreme importance.

7.1 Under no circumstances, the password of the official e-mail is shared with any unrelated person. The password may be changed as frequently as possible or at least every three months as per NIC policy.

7.2 All officers operating NIC e-mail accounts shall adhere to the 'Responsibilities of Users' as prescribed in para 7 of the e-mail policy of Government of India. Further, all officers are advised to go through Tips for SAFE mail published by NIC at www.mail.gov.in > SAFE Email and the documents, viz., 'e-mail services and usage policy', 'password policy' and 'security policy for user' available at www.mail.gov.in > POLICIES.

7.3 All officers are advised to go through the terms and conditions applicable to NIC mail ID's, as amended from time to time. The current version of T & C are given as Annexure-J to this order, for ready reference.

7.4 The terms and conditions applicable for users of Quick SMS are available at www.quicksms.gov.in > QuickSMS Help. The same shall be followed scrupulously.

SINGLE POINT OF CONTACT:

8.0 Superintendent (EDI) (presently G. Rathinavel, rathinavel.govindarajan@icegate.gov.in, g.rathinavel@nic.in) is hereby designated as Single Point of Contact (SPOC):

- (i) to deal with NIC / SI Help Desk reg. user requests relating to NIC mail;
- (ii) to clarify queries of staff relating to use of official NIC mail ID's and bulk SMS;
- (ii) for ensuring periodic updations on Vizag Customs website.

REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS ORDER:

9.0 For e-SAMPARK project to succeed, it requires ownership of the same especially at higher level. Hence, the JC/ADC and AC/DC's have to personally monitor and ensure that e-mail communication is the norm and paper/ postal communications are a rare exception. The O/C register shall be checked once in a week to ensure that only those exceptional communications are sent by Speed post/ fax and all others are sent by official e-mail.

- 9.1 Within 30 days from the date of issue of this order, all AC/DC's shall send a detailed compliance report along with further suggestions, if any, on the implementation of this order.
- 9.2 Compliance with this standing order and number and nature of official communications sent by speed-post/ fax/ hand delivery will be reviewed during every review meeting by the Principal Commissioner.
- 9.3 During annual inspection of each division/range office, the inspecting officer shall review and include a detailed report whether the SOP prescribed in this standing order is being scrupulously followed in the office or not.
10. References used in the preparation of this standing order is given as 'Annexure-K'.
11. Difficulties and suggestions, if any, in the implementation of this standing order may be brought to the notice of AC (EDI) at the earliest.
12. This standing order comes into effect from **01/08/2016**.

-sd-
(C. RAJENDIRAN)
PRINCIPAL COMMISSIONER

Copy to:

1. The Chief Commissioner of Customs, Central Excise & Service Tax, Visakhapatnam Zone.
2. The Additional Commissioner of Customs, Custom House, Visakhapatnam.
3. All the DC/ ACs, Custom House, Visakhapatnam.
4. All Sections, Custom House, Visakhapatnam.

ANNEXURE-A

BASIC PRINCIPLES & COMMON PROCEDURES APPLICABLE TO ALL OFFICIAL E-MAIL COMMUNICATION SCENARIOS

1. (i) e-mail shall be the default mode of official communication in the Custom House. Once an e-mail is sent from an official e-mail account to another official e-mail account, it shall not be sent again by post or fax.

(ii) However, all decisions, orders, summons or notices etc. issued under the provisions of the Customs Act, 1962 shall be sent by registered post with acknowledgment due / speed post as per section 153 of the Custom Act, 1962. There shall be no change in this statute-mandated procedure.

(iii) Updated contact directory along with official e-mail ID's of all officers/sections is published on our website: www.vizagcustoms.gov.in > *Contact Us*

(iv) In 'e-SAMPARK' scenario, any official communication through other than e-mail, viz., fax/ post/ hand delivery shall be resorted to only in the following cases, with the prior approval of AC/DC of concerned Section/ CFS/ Docks, in each case (except 'A'):

- A. **All decisions, orders, summons or notices etc. issued under the provisions of the Customs Act, 1962 (GENERAL EXCEPTION)**
- B. Where the number of enclosures are large and the size of attachment is too big (more than 25 MB) to be sent by e-mail or multiple mails;
- C. forwarding original signed documents/ orders relating to courts/ tribunals/ Commr. (Appeals) etc.;
- D. Internet is down for more than 5 hours in the office;
- E. Both NIC and ICEGATE mail servers are not working;
- F. Communications relating to RTI Act;
- G. Any other case permitted by AC/DC, for specific reasons to be recorded in file.

2. Even in the e-SAMPARK scenario, it shall be noted that both the sending office /officer/ section and receiving office/ officer/ section will take a print of e-mail sent/ received and place the same in file for record or for further processing. The key difference now would be that the transmission of message/ text/ documents will be electronic via e-mail and no hard copy follows except in specified exceptional circumstances listed in this order, the most important exception being communication of decisions, orders, summons or notices etc. issued under the provisions of the Customs Act, 1962 which shall be sent by registered post with acknowledgment due / speed post as per section 153 of the Customs Act, 1962. Further, all the other official procedures presently followed including those prescribed under Office Procedure Manual (OPM) and Sevottam shall continue without any change.

3. **(i) The text of the message/ letter shall be typed in ‘BODY OF MAIL’ itself, i.e., below the letterhead and above signature/ sender’s details. Sending editable letters in MS word as attachments shall be avoided.**

(ii) Forwarding scanned copy of letter signed by AC/ DC also can be an option. But, this process will consume more time and manpower for proper scanning and uploading of files, more web space in terms of attachment file size and is contingent on compulsory availability of a functional scanner at all times. **Hence, scanning and attaching files shall be resorted only in case of letters/ annexure received in paper and which are not available in soft text form.**

4. In the body of the mail, proper official bilingual letterhead **at the top** and ‘signature’ (*sender's name, designation, full postal address, office Phone No.*) **at the end** shall be inserted.

Such a letterhead and ‘signature’ can be easily **added automatically at the end of each new mail** by following below process:

Open NIC mail > **Options (left bottom on screen) > Identities > Local Account > You can add your letterhead/ sender details; You can also edit the ‘DISPLAY NAME’ that accompanies your designation-based mail ID.**

Print out of such a mail with letterhead and sender’s details will almost look like an official letter, a model of which is given at the end of this annexure.

5. While adding recipients, abundant care should be taken to type mail ID’s accurately to avoid mailer daemons.

6. In urgent cases, receipt of mail by recipient shall be confirmed over phone also.

7. While sending urgent/ important mails, one can receive immediate confirmation alert that the message is successfully delivered/ read. To receive such confirmation, follow below steps:

- a. *When you compose your message, click the **Options** icon in the top toolbar.*
- b. *The expanded message icons are shown.*
- c. *From the **Receipt:** drop-down menu, select the type of return receipt that you want to request.*
- d. *The drop-down menu displays the following options:*
 - ***None:** No receipt is returned.*
 - ***Read:** Receipt is returned when the message is read.*
 - ***Delivery:** Receipt is returned when the message is delivered.*
 - ***Read and Delivery:** Receipt is returned when the message is both read and delivered.*

- e. When your recipients receive your message, they are asked to verify that they have received it.

8. Important or pending mails which needs further follow up can be easily COPIED into a separate folder. This folder (e.g., named as 'FOLLOW UP') can be checked from time to time for following up important/pending mails.

To create a new folder:

1. Click the **Create or Subscribe to a Folder** icon above the folder list on the left-side navigation panel. A drop-down list appears.
2. Click **New Folder** from the menu. The **Create Mail Folder** dialog box appears.
3. Enter a name for the folder in the **New folder name** field and click **Create**. An empty new folder is created below the System Folder.
4. When a mail is open, if you want to send that mail to specified folder (e.g., 'FOLLOW UP'), click 'MOVE' > select 'COPY TO FOLDER' > select the specified folder > click OK

9. Any officer going on leave must ensure the following in sufficient advance:

When going on leave for upto 10 working days: Enable vacation message by selecting OPTIONS > Local Account > Vacation Message > Check 'Enable Auto reply' box > give start and end date of your leave > Add message: "***I'm on leave and returning on..... Please contact my link officer at the mail ID:..... & Phone No.....***"

When going on leave for more than 10 working days: Officer going on leave shall map the mobile number of link officer to the mail account. This mail shall be copied to link officer also for information.

10. (i) The syntax of the 'subject' field should be meaningful and self-explanatory: e.g., in case of mails from Various Sections to HQR's, '***Section Name – Full Subject/ description of the mail / report***', e.g., *Sravan CFS – Report for the month of May, 2016*

(ii) The attachments in the mail also need to be named appropriately as indicated above for easy identification and reference in HQR's.

(iii) Casual and generic naming of files, e.g., 'MPR', 'report' etc. shall be avoided as this will create confusion at the receiver's end and makes future reference difficult.

(iv) The font, 'Times New Roman', size 12 shall be used as standard font in all text sent in MS Word/ Excel files and body of the mail. This uniformity is of great utility while consolidating reports for preparing brochures etc.

11. Since NIC e-mail ID's are designation-based and given only one for each section, the question may arise reg. (i) officers not mapped to NIC mail ID's and (ii) scenarios such as a section having multiple superintendents.

Where there are more than one superintendent in a section (*e.g., RI&I, Bonds, Legal, etc.*), one of the Superintendent will be assigned to handle the e-mail correspondence.

Superintendents/ Appraisers and inspectors who are not given NIC mail ID's shall use their ICEGATE mail ID for official communications within section or between sections.

12. As an Eco-friendly measure to conserve paper, it is advised that 'back-to-back/ print-on-both-sides' mode shall be enabled by default and for all office copies' prints, 'one-side used' pages can be used.

13. Mails received in 'INBOX' and 'SENT' mails shall not be deleted by any officer under any circumstances.

14. To access live mail account, internet connection is a must. However, there is a facility for offline storing of mails also, i.e., automatic saving of outgoing and incoming mails on one's computer. The detailed step by step procedure as to how to configure your NIC mail account with MS Outlook Express etc. on your computer is available at these links: <https://mail.nic.in/docs/POP.pdf>, http://webmail.nicsys.net/email_settings/Outlook-Express-Setup.pdf

15. Superintendent (EDI) of the Custom House is designated as nodal officer and Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for management of NIC & ICEGATE mail ID's.

16. For creation of any new NIC mail ID:

- a. Take approval of AC/ DC.
- b. Send an e-mail to SPOC attaching an excel file with below details:

Sl No	Designation / Official position	Full Name	Department, Ministry, [State Name]	Preferred Email ID (<i>e.g., acgjwdiv.cxkk d-ap@gov.in</i>)	Date of Retirement	Mobil e No.

- c. Superintendent (EDI) will forward the new mail account request to NIC;
- d. NIC creates mail account;
- e. The concerned officer will be informed through SMS about the creation of mail ID and initial password;
- f. With user name and initial password, log in at www.mail.gov.in
- g. On first login, fill up the profile and change the password
- h. Start using the mail account.

17. ON JOINING OF NEW OFFICER - MAPPING NEW MOBILE NO. TO NIC MAIL ID:

Each designation-based NIC mail IDs are mapped to mobile no. of respective Section Head. Password can be changed/ re-set using the OTP received on the mobile SMS.

If officer is changed in a particular section:

- a. The new incumbent shall visit www.vizagcustoms.gov.in > Contact Us. Note down the section's mail ID.
- b. The mobile number of the joining officer can be mapped online using the URL <https://quicksms.emailgov.in/mobile/>
- c. The outgoing officers need to login with the username and password of the NIC e-mail in the above mentioned link
- d. Then click the Link “update your mobile number”. An OTP will be send to the already registered mobile number of the outgoing officer.
- e. Then the new mobile number of the incoming officer can be updated for the NIC e-mail id.

18. Official e-mail ID, fax number and telephone number shall be included prominently in every letterhead.

19. NIC account will be deactivated, if not used for 90 days.

20. NIC Email id will be deleted after a period of 9 months from the date of deactivation if no request for activation is received.

21. Contact NIC 24x7 support if you have any problems in using NIC mail at Phone 1800 111 555 or you can send mail to support@gov.in

ANNEXURE - B

SOP for Communications between the Custom House and the Chief Commissioner Zonal office

All the basic principles & common procedures applicable to all official e-mail communication scenarios, as prescribed in Annexure-A of this order shall be noted and followed scrupulously.

A. Member, CBEC, vide letter dt. 24-12-2014 inter alia, stated as follows (Para 1.3): *It may be reiterated that any communication sent from such designation-based NIC email IDs shall be deemed to be authentic communication from the officer concerned and would **not** require to be followed by any other mode of communication such as post or fax. Therefore, any communication using such designation-based NIC email IDs must be sent by either that officer himself/herself or by a duly authorized officer only. Secondly, since any communication sent to such designation-based NIC e-mail ID would not be followed by any paper or fax communication, all the mails received on such designation-based NIC e-mail IDs must be promptly and regularly monitored to ensure timely compliance.*”

B. CCO, Vizag, vide letter dated 16-3-2016 quoted Board letter dt. 10-10-2014 and emphasized on ‘elimination of paper based reporting’. It further directed each commissioner to intimate a designated NIC mail ID as single point of contact for all correspondences with CCO.

C. In view of above, it is prescribed as follows:

1. The mail ID of joint/additional commissioner, viz., adc.cusvzg@gov.in is nominated as the designation-based NIC e-mail ID for the purpose of communicating to/ from CCO. All communications from the Custom House to the CCO shall be by above e-mail ID only. Once a reply /letter /report is sent by the said NIC e-mail ID, it need not be followed by hard copy.

2. Presently, all letters received from CCO are being marked/ forwarded to Superintendents/ Appraisers of concerned sections. Similarly, all e-mails received in adc.cusvzg@gov.in will be forwarded to NIC mail ID of concerned section. The mail box of above ID shall be checked every day, as frequently as possible and there shall be no delay in forwarding mails to concerned section. (Any paper letters received in tapal by post/ fax/ hand delivery will be marked to sections as usual but the reply will be by e-mail only.)

3. The section Superintendent/ Appraiser, upon receipt of mail, will take a print of the same and draft reply/ report will be put up in file to JC/ADC/ Principal Commissioner, as the case may be.

4. Once approved by JC/ ADC/ Pr. Commissioner, the report will be sent from the above e-mail ID (adc.cusvzg@gov.in) to CCO, **with a copy in CC to concerned section’s NIC mail ID.**

5. The e-mail reply so sent to CCO and received in section (in CC) will be printed and kept in file by the concerned Supt. which marks the end of the process.

6. In urgent cases, the receipt of e-mail by CCO shall be confirmed over phone.

ANNEXURE – C

SOP for communication between Customs offices at CFS/ Port/ Terminal and the Custom House

A. All the basic principles & common procedures applicable to all official e-mail communication scenarios, as prescribed in Annexure-A shall be noted and followed scrupulously.

B. In CFS/ Terminals/ Ports, while sending letters/ reports etc. to Custom House, the present practice is that the draft report/ enclosures along with covering letter will be put up to AC/ DC for note approval at LHS and signature on letter at RHS. After signature of AC/ DC, the letter is forwarded to the Custom House.

C. In the NEW 'e-SAMPARK' scenario, the following steps are prescribed:

1. NIC mail ID's given to sections of each Custom Offices at CFS/ Port/ Terminal are hereby designated as the e-mail ID's to forward any reports and other communications to Custom House. If there are more than one superintendent in CFS/ Port/ Terminal dealing with different subjects/ jurisdictions, one will be designated as Nodal officer for NIC e-mail ID allotted to that CFS/ Port and only he/ she will forward all the correspondence to the Custom House.
2. In every file, concerned Supt./AO will put up to AC/ DC, ONLY draft report (data in tabular form etc.) or draft text of communication at RHS (Correspondence side), with following remark at the end of noting: ***"If approved, the communication/report will be sent to HQR's by official e-mail"***.
3. AC/DC, after perusal of the same, puts his signature at the end of draft report/text at RHS and on LHS (Note sheet), in token of approving the draft.
4. If AC/DC feels that the draft has to be modified, he/she sends back the file with corrections in the draft text (at RHS) and signs at note side (at LHS) with a remark to put up revised/corrected draft.
5. (i) Once final approval is given thus by AC/DC, the concerned supt./AO will forward the communication text/ report/ enclosures by NIC e-mail to official e-mail ID of concerned section in the Custom House with a mention at the end: ***"This issues with due approval of AC/DC in file no..."***
 (ii) While sending every mail to Custom House, a copy of the same shall be marked to AC/ DC in 'CC' mode. This is for his information and also to confirm the time of sending and to cross-verify that only the approved text was sent.
 (iii) The syntax of the 'subject' field should be ***'CFS/ Port/ Terminal Name – Full Subject/ description of the mail/ report'***, e.g., *Gangavaram Port – Report for the month of May, 2016*
 (v) The attachments in the mail also need to be named appropriately as indicated above for easy identification and reference in the Custom House. Casual naming of files, e.g., 'MTR', 'report' etc. shall be avoided as this will create confusion at the receiver's end.
 (vi) The font, 'Times New Roman', size 12 shall be used as standard font in all text sent in MS Word/Excel files and body of the mail.

- (vii) At the end of mail, full name, designation and contact number of the sending officer shall be indicated. This can be easily auto-inserted every time using 'SIGNATURE' option in the mail. For details, see Mail FAQ's appended.
6. In responding to important communications or DO letters issued from the Custom House, directly under the signature of the Principal Commissioner, the e-mail shall be sent by the AC/ DC directly from his official mail ID to Pr. Commissioner and JC/ ADC, duly marking a copy to relevant section supt. in HQR's. In all other cases, e-mail shall be sent directly by concerned Supt./ AO as prescribed above with due approval of AC/ DC in every case.
 7. Only those e-mails which are sent from CFS/ Port/ Terminal's designation-based NIC mail ID's will be treated as sent from them.
 8. In urgent cases, receipt of mail in the Custom House shall be confirmed over phone also.
 9. The 'sent' mail will then be printed by the concerned Suptd./ AO using PRINT option available in the mail and the copy will be placed in file for record. This serves as office copy. There shall be no parallel communication of letter by speedpost or fax.
 10. On receipt of the mail, concerned section Supdt. in the Custom House will take a print out of the same and puts up in relevant file. The same will be used for compiling Custom House level report or put upto AC/ ADC/ Pr.Commr., as the case may be.
 11. **Forwarding scanned copy of covering letter signed by AC/ DC also can be an option. But, this process will consume more time and manpower for proper scanning and uploading of files, more web space in terms of attachment file size and is contingent on compulsory availability of a functional scanner at all times. Hence, scanning and attaching files shall be resorted only in case of letters/annexures/enclosures received in paper and which are not available in soft text form.**

D. All communications with relevant trail mail or scanned letters received from CCO that need to be sent to Customs officers at CFS/ Port/ Terminals shall be forwarded by Supt./ Appraisers of concerned section in Custom House to the official NIC mail ID of AC/ DC of concerned CFS/ Port/ Terminals **with a copy in CC mode to be compulsorily marked to concerned section Supt./AO in the CFS/ Port/ Terminals.**

ANNEXURE – D

**SOP for communication between different sections offices
under the Custom House**

1. All the basic principles & common procedures applicable to all official e-mail communication scenarios, as prescribed in **Annexure-A** of this order shall be noted and followed scrupulously.
2. All communications between sections/ customs offices at Port/ CFSs shall be by official e-mail only. Fax and speedpost shall be resorted to only in the exceptional scenarios mentioned in this order.
3. Both the sending office/officer and receiving office/officer will take print of the mail using 'PRINT' option. The same will be put up in the file for record and for further processing.

ANNEXURE - E**SOP for Communications of personal nature from officers/staff with office (Administration/Accounts etc.)**

All the basic principles & common procedures applicable to all e-mail communication scenarios, as prescribed in **Annexure-A** of this order shall be noted and followed scrupulously.

As per Office Procedure Manual prescribed for offices under CBEC (Section II, Para 43), ***“Communications from government officers regarding their leave, pay, transfer, leave salary, income tax, Fund subscriptions, and analogous matters are private and not official.”***

Within 3 days from the date of issue of this standing order, all administrative officers shall circulate a form in below format and obtain officers’ personal mail ID's (where available). The same shall be recorded in a separate file.

Sl. No.	Name of the officer	Designation	ICEGATE e-mail ID* (if entitled)	Personal e-mail ID (if available)	<i>‘I would like to send communications of personal nature to office from this mail ID’</i> Signature

1. All communications of personal nature **which don’t require original/ signed enclosures** can be sent by the officer by e-mail to the concerned section head. The communication can be from the name-based ICEGATE mail ID or personal mail ID that is duly registered with the administration section.

2. An indicative list of such personal communications which can be sent by e-mail is given below. The list is illustrative and not exhaustive.

- A. Application for Casual leave*
- B. Application for Restricted Holiday*
- C. Application for Earned leave*
- D. Application for holiday / station leaving permission*
- E. Application for booking guest house*
- F. Application for allocation of quarters*
- G. Applications for advances like GPF, TA for Transfer/Tour/Training, LTC, Festival advance*
- H Requests for issue of family certificate etc.*
- I. Joining and relieving reports*
- J. Intimation of willingness for training*
- K. Any other personal communication, which don’t require original/signed enclosures***

3. Designation based NIC mail ID's shall not be used for sending any communications of personal nature to office.

4. Requests received through mails other than ICEGATE mail ID's and the personal mail ID's not registered with admin. section shall not be accepted under any circumstances.
5. The receiving officer shall take print of the e-mail and process the request in file, as usual.
6. Any deficiencies to be pointed out or clarifications need to be sought reg. communications of personal nature received by e-mail, such correspondence with officer shall be by e-mail only.

ANNEXURE - F**SOP for Communications between Custom House and (i) other Commissionerates of the department or (ii) other Central & State Government offices (e.g., Income Tax, Navy, Coast Guard, Port etc.)**

All the basic principles & common procedures applicable to all official e-mail communication scenarios, as prescribed in **Annexure-A** of this order shall be noted and followed scrupulously.

Now-a-days, most Commissionerates in the department and many other offices in central and state governments are using and NIC e-mail.

Hence, whenever a communication has to be sent to any other Commissionerate or other Central/ State government office, it has to be checked by the Superintendent/ Appraiser of concerned section whether the recipient office is having an NIC e-mail ID or departmental official mail ID. This can be checked from the website of the recipient office or by enquiring over telephone.

1. Presently, all letters received by post/ fax/ hand delivery etc. are being marked/ forwarded to Superintendents/ Appraisers of concerned sections. Similarly, all e-mails received in the mail boxes of JC/Pr. Commissioner (adc.cusvzg@gov.in / prcommr1.cusvzg@gov.in) will be forwarded to NIC mail ID of concerned section.
2. The section Superintendent will take a print of the same and draft reply/ report will be put up in file to JC/ ADC/ Pr. Commissioner, as the case may be.
3. If the recipient office is having an NIC e-mail ID or their own departmental/ official/ government e-mail ID, the same shall be mentioned by the supt. in the note while putting up the draft letter to JC/ADC/Pr. Commissioner, as the case may be.
4. Once the draft letter/text is approved, the same shall be mailed from (adc.cusvzg@gov.in / prcommr1.cusvzg@gov.in) as directed/ approved by JC/Pr. Commissioner, **with a copy in 'CC' to concerned section's NIC mail ID.**
5. Copy of the e-mail so received in section (in CC) shall be printed and kept in file by the section supt.
6. In urgent cases, the receipt of e-mail by the other office shall be confirmed over phone.
7. Only in cases where the recipient office doesn't have an official e-mail ID or though having e-mail ID, insists on a paper letter, hard copy of the letter be sent by regd./ speed post/ fax.
8. At the end of every letter to other offices, at the end, the below line may be included: *"Reply may preferably be sent via e-mail to the above mentioned ID".*

ANNEXURE - G**SOP for Communications between the Custom House and the Trade/ Importers/ Exporters/ Stakeholders**

A. All decisions, orders, summons or notices etc. issued under the provisions of the Customs Act, 1962 shall be sent by registered post with acknowledgment due / speed post as per section 153 of the Customs Act, 1962. There shall be no change in this statute-mandated procedure.

B. All Trade/ Importers/ Exporters/ Stakeholders have given their e-mail ID and mobile number in ICES at the time of registration. Option is available for them to update those details from time to time.

C. e-mail may be used in following scenarios of communication with Trade/ Importers/ Exporters/ Stakeholders:

1. Intimations reg. date and time of personal hearing or postponement shall be by e-mail and followed by telephonic confirmation reg. receipt of e-mail by Trade/ Importers/ Exporters/ Stakeholders, which shall be recorded in file. Print out shall be taken and kept in file for record.

2. Reminders for submission of documents e.g., in case of refund etc. should be by e-mail followed by telephonic confirmation reg. receipt of e-mail by Trade/ Importers/ Exporters/ Stakeholders, which shall be recorded in file. Print out shall be taken and kept in file for record.

3. In its third report, TARC noted thus: *“In an effort to better communicate with taxpayers, tax administrations send customized e-mails to taxpayers on a variety of topics depending upon the type of taxpayer segment they fall within, for example, self-employed, small, medium, large taxpayers, etc. Through HMRC’s email system, taxpayers can choose which subjects they are interested in. HMRC then sends taxpayers a series of emails with a structured set of advice about the chosen topic. The US IRS offers its taxpayers an opportunity to join the small business/self-employed (SB/SE) mailing list that is a nationwide list server. The Australian Tax Office (ATO) occasionally uses emails for promotional and information purposes. **The ATO also uses short message service (SMS) for informational purposes from time to time. SMS messages from the ATO include reminders, confirmation of appointment and receipt, and notifications of delay to electronically lodged tax returns.**”*

Communications alerting/ reminding Trade/ Importers/ Exporters/ Stakeholders about the fact of queries in the BE etc, can be sent by SMS/e-mail. Bulk e-mail and bulk SMS can be used for this purpose. (For detailed procedure, refer **Annexure-I**) But, care shall be taken to include all e-mail ID's in bcc mode so that each recipient won't know others' e-mail ID's. Print out of mail shall be taken and kept in file for record. *(This is applicable to general*

reminders and alerts only and not to the specific show cause notices issued formally under the Act)

4. Any greetings or invitations on the occasion of International Customs day etc. shall be by e-mail followed by telephonic confirmation. The receipt of e-mail by Trade/ Importers/ Exporters/ Stakeholders, which shall be recorded in file. Print out shall be taken and kept in relevant file for record.

5. General intimations to Trade/ Importers/ Exporters/ Stakeholders to update their mobile numbers and e-mail ID on ICES can be by e-mail and SMS.

6. Sevottam Acknowledgements to all e-mails received by the office shall be sent by e-mail only.

7. Any other routine official communications with Trade/ Importers/ Exporters/ Stakeholders which have no legal or financial angle can be sent by e-mail.

D. In every case, print out of the e-mail shall be taken and placed in file for record. The confirmation over phone regarding receipt of mail and the name and contact number of the person who confirmed receipt also shall be recorded in note side.

E. All Trade/ Stakeholders should be advised to update their email ID and mobile number in ACES.

F. As the official e-mail ID's are published on public domain, anyone viz. Trade/ Importers/ Exporters/ Stakeholders /ordinary citizens may send an e-mail. So, it is very important that every officer checks his /her official e-mail account once in few hours - at least 3-4 times a day. All e-mails received from Trade/ Importers/ Exporters/ Stakeholders /ordinary citizens should be acknowledged and responded through e-mail only and without any delay. Even in cases where the subject/ issue in the mail received is not relevant to the recipient office/ officer, the same shall be promptly replied to the sender. If the recipient officer knows who is the authority to be approached by the sender, he may indicate the same in his reply. In every case, print out of the e-mail received and reply sent shall be taken and placed in relevant file for record.

G. To confirm that all officers are using official e-mail regularly, frequency of log-in's for each NIC mail account will be monitored with the help of NIC. If any officer is found not accessing or using his/ her official mail account on a regular basis or not following the SOP laid down in this order, the same will be viewed seriously.

H. The exact location of each CFS / Port/ Terminal must be updated on Google map. The Holiday List, office timings, telephone no. etc, may be uploaded in the Custom House website.

Adding/Updating information on Google map is as follows:

1. Sign with Google ID
2. Open Google Maps www.maps.google.com

3. Click the Menu  > **Add a missing business**
4. Place the red marker on the exact building in which office is located
5. Enter details such as name of office, address, phone number, website name, working hours etc.
6. Click 'Submit'

I. In below mentioned cases, AC/ DC, in charge of ICES/Website in the Custom House shall send bulk e-mail and bulk SMS to all Trade/ Stakeholders. The message text shall be put up to JC/ ADC for prior approval.

1. Whenever any new information/ presentation is added to the website, especially Tax Payers' Education section;

2. Intimation regarding any new and important notifications/circulars etc. issued by Board;

3. Greetings on the occasion of International Customs Day, Republic Day etc.

J. In many cases, it is observed that the e-mail and mobile number given in ICES are not of the Importers/ Exporters but of their consultant or any other similar agency. In all these cases, both the consultant and Importers/ Exporters need to be suitably advised to immediately update the e-mail/mobile number with that of them.

ANNEXURE - H**OFFICIAL E-MAIL FAQ's****Q. What are the different types of official e-mail accounts I can use?**

Ans.: 1. ICEGATE e-mail ID provided by our department (given along with SSOID)
2. NIC mail ID provided by Government of India (which can be applied by any central/ state government department for their officers)

ICEGATE e-mail ID**Q. How to create/activate ICEGATE e-mail ID?**

Ans: Those who don't know their ICEGATE e-mail ID or lost password are advised to go through the detailed guidance note published on our website at www.cbec.gov.in > Departmental Officers > [How to obtain SSOID & ICEGATE e-mail ID](#)

NIC Mail ID**Q. Which is the website/URL to access NIC mail account?**

Go to www.mail.gov.in

If you encounter any security alert regarding the URL, please ignore the same.

In case www.mail.gov.in is not working, you can try logging in at <https://mail.eis.ernet.in>

One can access the mail from mobile and tablet also.

Q. When ICEGATE mail ID's are given by department, why NIC mail ID's were taken?

Ans: ICEGATE email IDs are name-based (e.g., h.raju@icegate.gov.in) whereas NIC mail ID's can be taken either based on NAME or DESIGNATION.

To ensure continuity and to avoid change of mail ID every time an officer changes, DESIGNATION-based NIC mail ID's (e.g., edi.cusvzg@gov.in) are taken for each section.

Q. Our office needs few more NIC ID's apart from those presently provided by the Custom House. What to do?

Ans: Follow below steps:

- Take approval of AC/DC
- Send an e-mail to SPOC attaching an excel file with below details:

Sl No	Designation / Official position	Full Name	Department, Ministry, [State Name]	Preferred Email ID (e.g., <i>acgjwdiv.cxkk</i>)	Date of Retirement	Mobil e No.
-------	---------------------------------	-----------	------------------------------------	---	--------------------	-------------

				<i>d-ap@gov.in)</i>		
--	--	--	--	---------------------	--	--

- c. Superintendent (EDI) will forward the new mail account request to NIC;
- d. NIC creates mail account;
- e. The concerned officer will be informed through SMS about the creation of mail ID and initial password;
- f. With user name and initial password, log in at www.mail.gov.in
- g. On first login, fill up the profile and change the password
- h. Start using the mail account.

Q4. In our section, only one officer is given NIC mail ID. How I can communicate by official mail?

Ans: As per the standing order issued by the Pr. Commissioner, all officers already provided with SSOID, all newly joined inspectors and all newly promoted superintendents shall create/activate their ICEGATE mail ID's. Even those officers operating designation based NIC mail ID's also need to ensure that their ICEGATE mail ID's are active.

The detailed step-by-step procedure as to how to create/activate ICEGATE mail ID is given on the website at www.cbec.gov.in > Departmental Officers > [How to obtain SSOID & ICEGATE e-mail ID](#)

Q5. I joined newly in the section. How to know the designation-based NIC mail ID of my section? How to activate the account?

Ans: All the official NIC mail ID's given to sections are published on our website. Please check out www.vizagcustoms.gov.in > Contact Us

NIC mail accounts are linked to the MOBILE NUMBER of the officer using it at a given time. Password reset information will be sent to that registered mobile number only.

If you have joined newly, follow the below steps:

- a. The new incumbent shall visit www.vizagcustoms.gov.in > Contact Us. Note down the section's mail ID.
- b. The mobile number of the joining officer can be mapped online using the URL <https://quicksms.emailgov.in/mobile/>
- c. The outgoing officers need to login with the username and password of the NIC e-mail in the above mentioned link
- d. Then click the Link “update your mobile number”. An OTP will be send to the already registered mobile number of the outgoing officer.
- e. Then the new mobile number of the incoming officer can be updated for the NIC e-mail id.

Q6. I'm using NIC mail but forgot password, what to do?

Log on to <https://passapp.emailgov.in/> and follow the steps.

Q7. How to address recipients in e-mail communication?

Ans: It is important to know e-mail addressing basics.

If you want to address 'A', type his/ her mail ID in 'TO' field.

If you want to inform 'B' & 'C' that you have sent the mail to 'A', type the mail ID of 'B' & 'C' in 'CC' (**carbon copy**) field.

If you want to address mail to A, B, C at once but don't want each of them to know the mail ID of other two (e.g., while sending bulk mails to Trade/ stakeholders etc.), type all mail ID's in 'BCC' (**blind carbon copy**) field. This way, a single mail can be sent to multiple people at once but each feels that it is addressed only to him.

Please note that unlike in other mails where BCC option is given along with TO and CC, BCC option in NIC mails has to be selected from top panel.

Q. What are the features available in NIC mail?

NIC mail has all usual features like a private mail account.

All received mails are shown in 'INBOX'.

All sent mails are shown in 'SENT'

The draft mails are stored in 'DRAFTS'

To write a new mail, click, 'WRITE'

To attach any file, click 'ATTACH'

To send the drafted mail, click 'SEND'

To search in the mail, use 'SEARCH'

For further options, see below question.

Q8. Any tips to make best use of NIC mail account?

Ans:

A. You can easily create a standard template with your office letterhead, File No., Date, name and contact details of sender). This will open up every time you WRITE a new mail. This makes your mail print look like a proper official letter and also saves lot of typing each time. You can import a picture from computer or an URL (e.g., CBEC logo) also in the signature.

B. You can edit your DISPLAY name (which accompanies your mail ID and seen by recipients)

C. In signature field, you can add the whole of your letterhead.

Open NIC mail > **Options (left bottom on screen) > Identities > Local Account > You can add your letterhead/sender details; You can also edit the ‘DISPLAY NAME’ that accompanies your designation-based mail ID.**

Q. www.mail.gov.in website not working. How should I send official mails?

Ans: Try logging at <https://mail.eis.ernet.in>

If this website is also not working, use your ICEGATE mail to send official mails.

Q. I want to know more about NIC mail. Where can I get information?

Ans: Please refer **Annexure-J** to this order.

Annexure-I

SOP for communication through bulk SMS

1. NIC is offering **free** bulk SMS services for all state & central government offices through the portal, www.quickSMS.gov.in. The SMS's can be sent in Indian languages also and there is a provision to make SMS groups for easy and repeated messaging.
2. 'Quick SMS' facility is presently available for all NIC mail accounts.
3. In each section, the Concerned AC/ DC and the section Head shall operate the bulk SMS account. Utmost care shall be taken while communicating through bulk SMS. The terms and conditions applicable for users of Quick SMS are available at www.quickSMS.gov.in > *QuickSMS Help* The same shall be followed scrupulously.

BULK SMS TO TRADE/ IMPORTERS ETC:

4. Using EDW, database of Customs Brokers/ Steamer Agents shall be generated in EXCEL. The columns, 'Telephone 1' and 'Telephone 2' can be arranged in descending order and invalid numbers and landline numbers can be deleted. This mobile number list of Stakeholders/ importers etc, can be used for sending bulk SMS's from time to time.

BULK SMS TO OFFICERS AND STAFF:

5. Copies of all general/ important communications meant for all staff must be marked to AC/DC (EDI), who shall broadcast gist of message to all staff through bulk SMS. All these general/important communications shall also be sent by bulk e-mail to all officers in the Custom House through NIC/ICEGATE/personal mail ID's.
6. It shall be the duty of Establishment section to send the updated list of mobile numbers of all staff (Group 'A' to hawaldars) to Superintendent (EDI), every two months. The same should be typed as a group in MS word in the format of *10 digit mobile numbers separated by semi colon (without any space)* e.g., 1234567890;1234567891;1234567892;... Utmost care shall be taken to avoid typographical mistakes while compiling mobile number list. This is to avoid messages going to unintended recipients and complaints, if any on privacy grounds.

Annexure-J

NIC E-MAIL - TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR USERS

1. Users are requested to keep the given userid and password a secret.
2. Please change your password at least once in every three months.
3. By not doing so (point no. 1 & 2 above) the account may be compromised by hackers and the hacker can use the same account for sending spurious mails on the accounts behalf. NIC is neither responsible nor accountable for this type of misuse of the compromised mail accounts. Gross misuse might be detected by automated monitoring tools, which in turn will automatically deactivate the account.
4. Do not open any attachments unless, it has come from a known source. In fact delete those mails which are not relevant to you and still you received it. They might contain a virus that will corrupt your computer.
5. Users are requested, if possible, to install the personal firewall software to secure their machine and email traffic.
6. Users are requested to install the Antivirus software with latest pattern update periodically and OS patches in their system.
7. If using Outlook, Outlook Express, Mozilla Firefox on Microsoft WINDOWS 9X/ ME/ NT/ 2000 Prof./ XP, please apply the appropriate patches announced by the Microsoft/ Mozilla from time to time.
8. NIC is not responsible for the contents that are being sent as part of the mail. The views expressed are solely that of the originator.
9. NIC e-Mail Service is provided over secure channels only. That is WEBmail is over HTTPS (tcp port 443), POP service is over POP3S (tcp port 995), and SMTP service is over SMTPS (tcp port 465). Users are required to suitably modify the client software settings to use the service.
10. Accounts will be given access over WEB only (<https://mail.gov.in>). If user wants access over POP/IMAP, he/she has to send the request for the same to support@gov.in
11. NIC will take all possible measures to prevent data loss, however, due to unforeseen technical issues, if the same happens, NIC cannot be held responsible.
12. User is responsible for his/her data. In case he/she accidentally deletes data, he/she will not ask NIC to restore it.
13. Individuals are responsible for saving email messages as they deem appropriate. Messages will be automatically purged from folders as follows: Inbox – 1 year Sent - 120 days Trash -10 days Probably Spam – 15 days
14. NIC account will be deactivated, if not used for 90 days.

15. Email id will be deleted after a period of 9 months from the date of deactivation if no request for activation is received.
16. Contact our 24x7 support if you have any problems. Phone 1800 111 555 or you can send mail to support@gov.in
17. Please note that advance payment is a must for paid users of Internet/ISDN/E mail

Annexure-K

References

1. E-mail policy of Government of India (*as notified by Ministry of Communication and Information Technology (Department of Electronics and Information Technology) vide Notification dt. 18th February, 2015*)
2. Central Secretariat - Manual of Office Procedure (*13th Edition, published in September, 2010*)
3. 1st and 3rd reports of Tax Administration Reforms Commission (TARC)
4. Letters dt. 24-12-2014 & 10-10-2014 from Board to zonal offices, CBEC
5. www.mail.gov.in
6. www.quickSMS.gov.in
