Australian Customs Notice
No. 2023/34

Home Affairs Gatekeeper Certificate Replacement

The Department of Home Affairs' existing Gatekeeper certificate expires on 24 August 2023. The Department has renewed the certificate until 2025, and the new one will be introduced as follows:

- Test Period – 6:30 pm 2 August to 12:30 am 16 August 2023:
    - ICS Test messages sent from Home Affairs will be signed with the new certificate
    - ICS Production messages sent from Home Affairs will continue to be signed with the current certificate
    - ICS Test and ICS Production messages sent to Homes Affairs may both be encrypted with either the current or new certificate
- Final Cutover – from 12:30 am 16 August 2023 onwards:
    - All messages sent from Home Affairs will be signed with the new certificate
    - All messages sent to Home Affairs must be encrypted with the new certificate

That is, **ICS EDI messaging clients are required to use the new Home Affairs certificate from 16 August 2023 onwards**, but have the option of testing with the new certificate beginning 2 August 2023.

For messages sent from Home Affairs we will be updating our signing algorithm to RHA-SHA256. No change to the encryption algorithm. Clients are not required to update their signing algorithm for messages sent to Home Affairs.

This replacement does not affect any digital certificates you or your organisation may have purchased.

Who does the changeover affect?

If you, your company, or your clients are communicating with Home Affairs using any type of EDI package, it will be necessary to install the new Home Affairs Gatekeeper certificate public key into your EDI Application. Please note that Home Affairs does not provide technical support for 3rd Party Software packages.

The changeover does not affect organisations who only use Cargo Interactive (CI).

What should I do?

A copy of the new Home Affairs certificate's public key can be downloaded from this page: https://www.abf.gov.au/help-and-support/ics/integrated-cargo-system-(ics)/using-the-ics/digital-certificates

ICS Production messaging will be changing over to the new certificate during the 00:00-04:00 outage window on Wednesday **16 August 2023**. We anticipate that the actual outage will be approximately 30 minutes from 00:01 to 00:30.

Clients must continue to use the existing Home Affairs certificate to verify the signature of ICS Production messages sent from Home Affairs up until 23:59 on Tuesday 15 August 2023, and then use the new Home Affairs certificate to verify the signature of ICS Production messages from Wednesday 16 August 2023 onwards.

All messages sent by the Department after the changeover outage will be signed using the new Home Affairs certificate, so at that point if you have not yet changed your systems to use the new certificate, your EDI software will fail to authenticate new messages and will reject them. As mentioned above, please note that we will be updating our signing algorithm to RHA-SHA256. No change to the encryption algorithm.

When encrypting ICS Production messages sent to the Department, clients have the **option** of using the new Home Affairs certificate from ~18:30 02 August 2023 onwards, but **must** use the new Home Affairs certificate from 16 August 2023 onwards.

All EDI messages that you send to the Department after the changeover on 16 August 2023 must be encrypted using the new Home Affairs certificate or they may be rejected by the Department.

We encourage all clients to take advantage of the opportunity to test the new Home Affairs certificate with ICS Test messaging prior to updating your ICS Production messaging configuration. The test period begins 18:30 02 August 2023.

Message for IT support staff and developers.

Developers should be aware that your clients have been advised to contact you for instructions about the changeover if you have implemented your own PKI solution.

Any questions?

Please contact Cargo Support via email at cargosupport@abf.gov.au or phone 1300 558 099.