BIC
EDI Implementation Guidelines
for Book Trade Returns

Issue 1, Version 1.4

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Issue 1 of the *BIC EDI Implementation Guidelines for Book Trade Returns* covers the use of EDI messaging to handle requests for returns authorisation sent by booksellers to publishers or wholesalers, and responses to such requests. The contents are as follows:

R.1	**Overview**
R.2	**Structure of an EDIFACT transmission**
R.3	**Using the RETANN message for returns requests**
R.4	**Using the RETINS message for returns authorisation**
R.5	**Using the RETINS message for returns adjustments**
R.6	**Code lists**

BIC and EDItEUR acknowledge the assistance of EAN International. "EANCOM" is a trademark of EAN International.

ISSUE AND VERSION NUMBERING

Each time Issue 1 of the *BIC EDI Implementation Guidelines for Book Trade Returns* is updated, it is given a new version number, eg 1. 1, 1. 2 etc. Each new version carries in this section a summary of the changes from the previous version. A new Issue will occur only when there is a major general revision. Section R.6, however, is outside of the Issue and version numbering scheme, to allow changes in code lists to be made without issuing a new version of the other documentation.

CHANGES FROM VERSION 1.3

Section R.1, Overview: changes to text in the second and fourth paragraphs to take account of agreed extensions to returns processes.

Section R.2, Structure of an EDIFACT Transmission: no change.

Section R.3, RETANN: changes to enable the RETANN message to handle the reporting of price and discount discrepancies.

Section R.4, RETINS for returns authorisation: changes to the introductory text to take account of agreed changes in returns processes, but no changes to structure or content.

Section R.5, RETINS for returns adjustment or confirmation: minor changes to the introductory text, but no changes to structure or content.

Details of the pages affected by these changes are given on the first page of each section.

COMMENTS, QUERIES AND CHANGE REQUESTS

Comments, queries or requests for changes or additions to these *Guidelines* will be welcomed. They may be sent to the BIC Secretariat: brian@bic.org.uk

R.1 OVERVIEW

For booksellers, wholesalers and publishers' distribution centres which are EDI-enabled, the returns procedures developed as part of the PA/BA Book Trade Supply Chain Project can be automated by using two newly-defined EDIFACT messages, RETANN and RETINS.

The RETANN ("Announcement for Returns") message (Section R.3) is used to send details of items which a customer wishes to return for credit *for any reason*, regardless of whether authorisation is needed from the supplier. The scope of the message extends to include items which the supplier has recalled or for which authorisation has already been given outside of EDI, since part of the purpose is to enable the supplier to check off a return consignment against an expected list of contents which has already been notified electronically. The message can also be used to report delivery shortages and invoice discrepancies ("incorrect" prices and discounts), though these do not of course involve a return.

The RETINS ("Instructions for Returns") message (Section R.4) is used to respond to a RETANN message. One of the aims of the new returns procedures is to reduce handling costs for all parties, and one of the ways in which this is achieved is by separating at the earliest possible stage those items which are to be returned for stock (or, where applicable, to be returned as "title-page only") and those which are to be returned or sent to a third party for destruction. These have been widely referred to as, respectively, "green box" and "red box" items, and this terminology is adopted in the *Guidelines*.

Accordingly, if any of the items listed in a RETANN message is to be destroyed (upon return to the supplier, or by the customer, or by a trusted third party), there may be two or more RETINS messages sent in response, one for "green box" items (also including any lines which the supplier does not accept for return), and one for "red box". Where different publishers handled by the same distributor require different procedures for "red box" items, the distributor may send more than one "red box" message in response to a single RETANN request.

It follows that, if none of the items listed in a RETANN message is to be sent for destruction, there will be only one, "green box", RETINS message sent in response.

Each RETINS message carries a unique reference which must be quoted on any consignment which is returned to the supplier or sent for destruction.

Finally, the RETINS message is also used (Section R.5) to communicate adjustments to a returns consignment if in the event the customer returns a different (ie lesser) quantity than was authorised by the supplier, or to confirm that the return is being made exactly in accordance with the supplier's authorisation. Each RETINS message from a supplier that authorises a returns shipment MUST be matched by a RETINS message from the customer to confirm the shipment.

The versions of the RETANN and RETINS messages used by BIC are taken from EDIFACT D.99A. Note that this is a departure from normal BIC and EDItEUR practice, which is to use EANCOM messages based on EDIFACT D.96A. The reason is that RETANN and RETINS had not been released as full EDIFACT messages in D.96A, so that some developers who use third-party EDI software might have difficulty in obtaining translation tables.