IP ENFORCEMENT portal

eAFA user guide for rights holders
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Introduction

The IP Enforcement Portal (IPEP) was developed by the EUIPO in order to help right-holders protect their intellectual property rights (IPR), by supporting the Member State enforcement authorities within the EU in the fight against counterfeiting.

IPEP is an interactive online platform that can function as a relevant and practical tool for customs and police officers. Using IPEP will enable them to recognise counterfeited goods on the basis of information uploaded to the system by right-holders, as well as give them access to contact information of the right-holders. The tool can be used by right holders and enforcement authorities to exchange information in a secure way.

As from 13 December 2021, IPEP is also the single e-filing and management point for customs Applications for Action (AFAs) for 24 Member States and alternative system for the other 3 (the German ‘ZGR’, the Spanish ‘Sede Electónica-Agencia Tributaria’ and Italian ‘FALSTAFF’)

Purpose

The purpose of this manual is to provide a user guide for the right-holders/ economic operators (and their legal representatives) for filing and managing AFAs and AFA requests through IPEP.

1 Introduction to the Application for Action (AFA)

As a rights holder you should protect and defend your rights. One way of doing this is by asking customs to detain goods suspected of infringing your intellectual property rights (IPR). To do this you need to file an Application for Action (AFA) requesting customs to act. You can find more information on the Defend your rights page of the European Commission – DG Taxud under the following link: https://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/defend-your-rights_en

The Customs Regulation (EU) No 608/2013 establishes the procedural rules for customs authorities to enforce IPR regarding goods liable to customs supervision or customs control, including the procedures regarding AFA. All AFAs submitted to the customs authorities of the Member States are centrally stored in the COPIS system of the European Commission – DG Taxud, that is used by EU customs authorities to administer applications for customs action and upload the detention data of IPR infringing goods.

According to the Customs Regulation an AFA must be submitted to a competent customs department designated by the Member State. The Commission has published a list on its web page: (https://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/system/files/2021-01/defend-your-rights_en.pdf). If it is a Union AFA, the AFA is filed to a submission country, and if the AFA is granted it is automatically applicable in the other designated Member States (translations may be requested).

The Commission has also established standard forms under Implementing Regulation (EU) No 1352/2013. The AFA form specifies the information that must be provided by the right-holder and IPEP has been designed that this information can be presented in a structured manner so it can be properly processed by customs for the risk profiling needs. The AFAs in IPEP are generated in all the official languages of the Member States where the AFA will be applicable in.
With the release of the eAFA version of IPEP on 13 December 2021, AFAs must be filed and managed electronically, either through IPEP or one of the existing national portals (German ZGR, Spanish Sede Electronica – Agencia Tributaria, Italian FALSTAFF).

All right-holders (and their legal representatives) who want to submit a new application for action and all holders of decisions and their representatives who want to amend or extend their existing applications for action must have an EORI number (Economic Operators Registration and Identification number).

It is through the EORI number, that all the related AFA information stored in COPIS will be automatically uploaded in IPEP.

2 How to access IPEP

The landing page of IPEP is to be found under www.ipenforcementportal.eu

There are two options of accessing IPEP, either using IPEP credentials (requesting an account in IPEP) or using the UMM/DS credentials of the Traders Portal of the European Commission – DG Taxud

To request an account in IPEP, follow the instructions under the below link:


For information on the UMM/DS Traders Portal credentials, click on the following link:
3 Before you start

Once you have access to IPEP, you need to enter company details (EORI number), contact, IPR and product information that you want to include in the AFA. For more information on how this is done, please check the “Step-by-step user guide” and the how-to videos that you can find in the eAFA toolkit and resources section and under the Documentation Area at the bottom of the IPEP landing page (For right-holders).

Before you launch the AFA process in the IPEP, please make sure that you have entered all the mandatory information. Please remember that pursuant to Regulation (EU) No 608/2013 and Implementing Regulation (EU) No 1352/2013 for the AFA it is mandatory to have:

- Legal and technical contact points that cover all the Member States where the AFA will be applicable. It can be one single contact point that covers all Member States and both technical and legal questions.
- In the product information, at least
  - place of production
  - involved company
  - trader
- In the product information, remember to link the IPRs that protect the product
- Don’t forget to SHARE to product information with the customs authorities of the Member States where the AFA will be applicable.
- The EORI number is mandatory for the AFA, both for the right-holder and the legal representative
- If you are a legal representative, remember to upload your power of attorney in the Document Portfolio in the Company Information.
- To be able to file an AFA on behalf of their clients, the legal representatives have to be based in a EU Member State.

To facilitate the key-in of information, we invite you to use the Setup Assistant that you can find in the Dashboard.
4 Setup Assistant

The Setup Assistant was created in particular for users accessing IPEP only to file a customs Application for Action (AFA). It is an interface that takes you through all the fields in IPEP needed to complete the AFA form.

Users entering form the DG Taxud Traders portal (UUM/DS) (Where are you from? page) for the first time are automatically guided to the Setup Assistant to enter the information in IPEP and start the AFA filing procedure once the mandatory information has been completed.

![Setup Assistant Interface]

The first time UUM/DS users access, they also need to accept the Terms and Conditions of IPEP, that users accessing with IPEP credentials already accept when signing up.

![Terms and Conditions Acceptance]

The Setup Assistant can be accessed in the Dashboard. As the mandatory information is completed, the different chapters of the INFORMATION ENTERED is ticked to guide users.

![Setup Assistant Progress]

The Setup Assistant can be closed at any time, the user able to retake the completion at a different time:

![Close Setup Assistant]

When clicking on Close Setup Assistant, the following warning message will appear:
All information not saved will be lost. Information of each Step of the Setup Assistant is saved when clicking on Next>. So before closing, click on Next> and then, in the new window/Step close the Setup Assistant.

If you have finalised this process, you are ready to start the AFA request.

If you wish to file or manage an AFA click on Application for Action (AFA) tab in the headline menu.

5 Request and management of AFAs in IPEP

5.1 AFA information downloaded form COPIS

When accessing the Application for Action (AFA) section in IPEP all the AFA information of the right-holder in COPIS is displayed, independently of where and how the AFA was filed and provided that the right-holder (economic operator, holder of the decision) has previously filed an AFA.

The AFAs are retrieved form COPIS through the EORI number of the right-holder. Therefore, the pre-condition is that the right-holder has previously entered the EORI number under the Company Details in Company Information (see Section 2.2.2. of the Step-by-step Use Guide)

5.1.1 The preAFA/AFA table

This table displays all the preAFA drafts and the AFA information retrieved from COPIS, including the status history, status information and deadlines. The information is organised under the following columns that can all be filtered:
**PreAFA ID**
An internal ID generated to identify any draft preAFAs that you may have started in IPEP.

**AFA ID**
The ID of the AFA received from COPIS when the AFA is created.

**Submission country**
Member State where the preAFA application will be submitted and whose customs officials will receive, examine and grant the AFA in the customs system (COPIS or one of the national systems that are all connected to COPIS).

**Type**
National or Union AFA. It only appears after the AFA is granted.

**Requested countries**
Applicable countries, that is to say, the other Member States in which customs action is requested.

**PreAFA sent**
Date of submission of the preAFA.

**IPRs**
Intellectual property rights included in the AFA.

**Products**
Products included in the AFA.

**Decision**
Decision of the customs authority of the submission country regarding any AFA request: *Grant, Reject, Extend, Revoke, Refuse ext, Revoke ext, Suspend, Expired.*

**Ongoing Request**
Reflects the status of an ongoing request:

- **Internal draft**: the preAFA has been saved as a draft and has not been sent to customs yet.
- **Submitted**: the customs system COPIS has deemed the preAFA or AFA request and the attachments to have been submitted.
- **Created**: the AFA has been created in COPIS.
- **Granted**: the AFA has been granted. The AFA ID is available.
- **AFA extended**: The AFA has been extended.
- **Expired**: the AFA has expired.
- **Draft Extension**: the AFA extension request has been saved as a draft.
- **Revolved**: the AFA has been revoked by customs.
- **Extension refused**: the extension was refused.
- **Processing**: the preAFA or AFA request has been sent to COPIS.
- **Received**: the preAFA or AFA request has been received by COPIS.
- **Validated**: the preAFA or AFA request has been validated by COPIS. The format is correct.
- **Rejected**: the preAFA or AFA request has not been validated by COPIS.
- **Attachment unavailable**: there is a problem in COPIS when retrieving the attachments.
- **Processing Extension**: the AFA extension request has been sent to COPIS.
Extension Rejected: the AFA extension request has not been validated by COPIS.
Extension Request Received: the AFA extension request has been received by COPIS.
Suspended: the AFA has been suspended
Extension Revoked: the AFA extension has been revoked

Ongoing request date
Date of the AFA request status update.

Expiration date
Date on which the AFA expires.

5.1.2 Action buttons – to manage preAFAs and AFA requests

In the AFA table the action buttons allow you to manage existing AFAs creating the
different AFA request or replying to notifications sent by the customs authorities regarding
an AFA request. How to manage these different requests is explained in more detail
under Section 2.4.10. of the Step-by-step Use Guide

For the preAFAs in draft status, the action buttons available are Edit and Delete.
For any submitted AFA requests, the action buttons available are the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Button</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>AFA History</strong></td>
<td>By clicking on this action button, a new window opens displaying the preAFA/AFA status history and the language versions of the preAFA filed through IPEP.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PDF</strong></td>
<td>By clicking on this action button, the PDF of the preAFA or the latest AFA request is displayed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AFA</strong></td>
<td>By clicking on this action button, the AFA is generated with the last information retrieved from COPIS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Withdrawal</strong></td>
<td>By clicking on this action button, you can withdraw an ongoing AFA request.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information</strong></td>
<td>By hovering over on this action button, a deficiency related to an AFA request is highlighted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>View/Respond additional information</strong></td>
<td>By clicking on this action button, you can view/respond to an additional information request made by customs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Amendment</strong></td>
<td>By clicking on this action button, you can start the AFA amendment procedure, introducing changes to an existing AFA.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Request AFA extension</strong></td>
<td>By clicking on this action button, you can request the extension of an AFA.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>View request</strong></td>
<td>By clicking on this action button, you can view the AFA request you sent to customs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Suspension</strong></td>
<td>This action button appears if the AFA has been suspended either in full or for one or some of the applicable countries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Validate</strong></td>
<td>This action button appears for the user to validate a matching on an IPR retrieved from COPIS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Copy</strong></td>
<td>This action button allows the user to create a new AFA on the information of an old AFA retrieved from COPIS.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 5.2 File a new Application for Action (AFA)

The IP Enforcement Portal has been developed to align the information entered by the right-holders with the information needed in the AFAs. The information is first entered in IPEP, into the different fields of the Company and Product information and for the AFA creation, this information
is then retrieved and fed in a structured manner electronically to COPIS once the AFA has been submitted.

### 5.2.1 Before you start your AFA — missing information

Before starting an AFA, the mandatory fields within the *Exchange Information* module must have been completed. If any mandatory information is missing at *Company information* level, the tool will warn you before you can start to generate the AFA.

The following message will be displayed, highlighting the missing information:

5.2.1.1 Company Details

The first time a right-holder logs into the IP Enforcement Portal, they will see that, under *Company Details*, a number of the fields have already been filled out with information about their company. This information was transferred automatically from TMview or DesignView when the right-holder’s account was created.

The right-holder can change some of the information about their company in IPEP. When clicking on *Update*, the following fields will be available to update in a new window. See Section Error! Reference source not found. Error! Reference source not found. above.
Remember that the EORI number is mandatory for AFA purposes.

5.2.1.2 Contact Points

This is very important information for the enforcement authorities. This is where the right-holder informs customs about who to contact if they find suspicious goods relating to the right-holder’s IPR.

To identify a right-holder and obtain their correct contact information continues to be a serious challenge for the enforcement authorities.

According to the Customs Regulation (Error! Bookmark not defined.), the AFA needs to include a contact for both Technical and Legal matters in all the Member States where the AFA is applicable.

Contact point for legal matters

When suspect goods are detained, customs authorities contact the contact point for legal matters concerning the legal obligations and rights of the holder of the decision granting the application and, in particular, concerning the legal aspects of the administrative procedures for the detention of suspected goods. The contact point for legal matters is considered by the customs authorities to be entitled to act on behalf of the decision holder. In this case, the option Legal should be selected.
Contact point for technical matters

When goods are subjected to customs control for the purpose of IPR enforcement, the customs authorities may contact the contact point for technical questions regarding the authentic goods, such as information on specific and technical data, information needed to enable them to identify infringing goods and information relevant to their analysis and assessment of the risk of infringement of the IPR concerned.

In particular, the customs authorities may contact the contact point about technical questions before detaining goods when more information is needed from the decision holder to assess a potential infringement of their IPR. The contact point for technical matters is considered by the customs authorities to be entitled to act on behalf of the decision holder.

The contact point for legal and technical matters may be the same person. In such a case, the option Technical/Legal should be selected.

One contact person may cover all the Member States where the AFA is applicable or there may be different contacts for different Member States.

You should make sure that the Contact Point information is always updated and the information aligned with your AFA information.

With regard to Product information, if any data required for generating the AFA is missing, the tool will generate an error message listing the missing data, together with a link to the corresponding section where the data must be completed in order to generate the AFA. See Section 5.2.4.2 of the Step-by-step Use Guide Missing information messages

Select the products you want to include in the new AFA. At this stage, you can still modify the product information of the products you want to include by clicking on the Edit button in the product table.

If all the mandatory data is complete, you will be able to access the Application for Action management section and view all the AFAs generated by your company.
5.2.2 Start new AFA — Step 1: Select countries and languages

As a right-holder you can start a new AFA by clicking on Start Application for Action. In this first step you can include the following information:

**Submission country**
Member State where the preAFA application will be submitted and whose customs officials will validate the preAFA in the customs system.

**Language**
Language used for generating the preAFA. You can choose from the languages available for the issuing country selected.

**Applicant Status**
Identify the entitlement to initiate proceedings.

**Member States in which customs action is requested**
In a Union AFA, you need to select the other Member States in which you request customs actions.

When you click on Select Countries, a box will open with all the EU Member States except the submission country which is already included in the AFA.
If the AFA you are creating only includes Geographical Indications, you can include Northern Ireland

![Include Northern Ireland]

Please note that if this box is selected, only the IPR types allowed for Northern Ireland will be displayed in the next step (Step 2):
- Geographical indication for aromatised drinks based on wine products (CGIA)
- Geographical indication for agricultural products and foodstuff (CGIP)
- Geographical indication for spirit drinks (CGIS)
- Geographical indication for wine (CGW)

**Generate an AFA ex officio**

This is only for national AFAs. If a customs authority in one Member States detains suspected goods that are not covered by a valid AFA, the right-holder, once identified, is entitled to submit an ex officio AFA within 4 working days after notification. The ex officio AFA is a shorter version of the AFA. If all information is available in IPEP you can also make a complete AFA. The ex-officio AFA will only be valid for the single detention and has a limited validity.

If the ex-officio AFA is made in the shorter version (meaning no information has been provided on product, involved companies, traders) then there is always the possibility to submit this missing information within the validity period of the ex-officio AFA and ask for an extension.

**5.2.2.1 Representatives submitting the application in the name of the applicant**

When legal representatives submit the application in the name of the applicant, it is mandatory to enter the representative’s information: name, email, EORI number and address. When selecting *Representative submitting the application in the name of the applicant*, a table will display the list of the legal representatives included in *Company Details*. Select the legal representative you want to include in the AFA.
If any of the mandatory information about the legal representative is missing, a ‘Legal representative information is incomplete’ message will appear with a link to the Company Details page where you can add the required information.

When you navigate to Company Details, a floating window will allow you to return easily to the AFA process.

The application must include evidence of the representative’s powers to act as required by the legislation of the Member State in which the application is submitted. The powers of attorney, stored in Document Portfolio in the Company Information section, can be linked at this point. Remember that, if the user selects this option, it is mandatory to include at least one file.

### 5.2.2.2 Licence agreements

By choosing this option, the applicant can select the documents already uploaded in the Company Information section in the License Agreement category under Document Portfolio. The applicant can download and view the files by clicking on them. Several files can be selected and uploaded in this section.
Remember that if the user selects this option it is mandatory to include at least one file.

Once all the files have been uploaded, click on Next >.

5.2.3 New AFA — Step 2: Select your IP Rights

In the second step you can select the IPRs to include in the Application for Action. The list of IPRs that the rights holder can select will only include those IPRs that are related to the products in their Product Portfolio.

If several Member States have been selected (Union AFA) under Step 1, only IPRs based on Union law applicable throughout the EU are displayed:

- European Union trade mark
- international registered trade mark (applicable in the EU)
- registered Community design
- unregistered Community design
- international registered design
- geographical indication for agricultural products and foodstuffs
- geographical indication for spirit drinks
- geographical indication for wines
- geographical indication for aromatised drinks based on wine products
- geographical indication as listed in Agreements between the Union and third countries
- Community plant variety right.

- National IPRs, including copyrights and other IPR’s such as
  - Trade Name (NTN)
  - Topography of semiconductor product (NTSP)
  - Utility model (NUM)
  - Supplementary protection certificate for medicinal products (SPCM)
  - Supplementary protection certificate for plant protection products (SPCP)

are only displayed if the right-holder applies for a national AFA, that is, when only the submission country is selected. The AFA will only be applicable in that specific Member State. Only the trade marks and designs that are valid at the time of application (i.e. in 'registered' status) will be displayed in the table.

If you click on Select all my IPR portfolio, all the IPRs included in the table will be selected.

When you have selected your IPRs, click on Next >. You can return to Step 1 by clicking on < Back.

### 5.2.4 New AFA — Step 3: Select your product

In the third step you can select the product(s) to be included in the preAFA. It is only possible to select those products associated to the IPRs selected in Step 2. The IPRs that are associated to each product are listed in the IPRs Included column.

From the table you can only select those products that include all the information required for inclusion in a preAFA and those that are shared with the customs authorities of all the countries selected in Step 1.
5.2.4.1 Restricted handling

By selecting *Apply restricted handling to all the products included in this preAFA*, you are selecting the ‘restricted handling’ of the AFA information. This means that it will only be visible in COPIS (1) to the customs authorities of the Member States where action is requested (applicable countries).

5.2.4.2 Missing information messages

Select the products you want to include in the new AFA. At this stage, you can still modify the product information of the products you want to include by clicking on the Edit button in the product table.

If the product information is not complete, or if the product is not shared with all the countries, an icon will be displayed in the first column with an information message (tool tip), indicating the fields that must be completed in order to include this product in the AFA. In addition, links to the missing information fields will be displayed in the last column of the product row. By clicking on these links, you can access the corresponding product section and complete the information.

The following messages may be displayed with links to the missing information sections:

- Production place
- Involved company
- Involved company with type trader
- Product is not shared with all the customs selected.

(1) COPIS is the central repository for AFAs of the EU Commission (DG Taxud)
In this section the rights holder will be able to fill in the missing information by clicking on Add Production Place. The rights holder must enter at least one place of production.

Companies Involved
This section is where rights holders enter the information (names, addresses, tax numbers) of any importers, suppliers, manufacturers, carriers, consignees or exporters. At least one company must be involved.

Traders
The rights holder must also include at least one trader, that is a person or entity authorised to trade in products involving the use of the IPRs for which enforcement is sought. For easy understanding, it is the part of the business that has contact with the end consumer.

Product is not shared with all the customs selected
If, for the submission country or for one of the applicable countries for the AFA, the product information in the IP Enforcement Portal has not been shared with the national
customs authority, the AFA cannot be generated and the corresponding error message will be displayed.

The data sharing criteria allow rights holders to decide which enforcement authorities can access the uploaded information about their products. This means that rights holders can decide which information is accessible to customs or police only and which information is accessible to all enforcement authorities.

The user can select all the enforcement authorities at once by clicking Select all. This feature is also available after the user has used the search function and narrowed down its list of authorities. After defining the sharing criteria, the user must click on Save.

After that, the system will take you directly back to Step 3 of your preAFA.

**Return to AFA**
After the missing information is completed, the link in the box at the top right of the screen will take you back to Step 3 of the preAFA

5.2.4.3 Infringing companies
Here you can include the companies involved in infringement that, due to data protection requirements, will not be stored in the IP Enforcement Portal but will be sent to customs with the preAFA and will also appear in the PDF file of the preAFA.

The fields are the same as for Companies Involved and the tool also allows a bulk upload.
5.2.4.4 Small consignments

By ticking the *Small consignment procedure* checkbox, the applicant requests the use of the procedure for the destruction of goods in small consignments. This selection will be reflected in the preAFA generated when the corresponding field is ticked.

It is possible to select this procedure per Member State in case you want to apply it in some countries but not in all.

By clicking on *Select Countries*, you can select the Member States in which you agree to the small consignment procedure.

When you have selected all the options and entered the information you wished to include, click on *Next >*. You can return to Step 2 by clicking on *< Back*.

5.2.5 New AFA — Step 4: Review and send preAFA to customs

In Step 4 you can review the preAFA and the annexes that will be sent to customs and generated in the PDF document. This includes the company’s information and the options selected in the previous steps.

It is possible to download and print the draft preAFA at this stage.

Once you have reviewed the preAFA and before you send it to customs, you must acknowledge that the signed paper version of the AFA needs to be submitted to the competent customs department of the submission country.

When you click on *Send to customs*, the processing of the preAFA will start.

The user who files the AFA will receive a notification email when the preAFA is sent electronically to customs. Depending on the volume of information it contains, this may take one day. If there is any
error in sending the preAFA to customs, a message will be displayed detailing the error and the preAFA will be saved as a draft so that it is possible to continue working on it.

5.2.6 Submitted preAFA or any AFA requests — email notification to rights holder(s)

The user who submitted an preAFA or any other type of AFA request, will receive an email notification when the preAFA status has changed to Submitted. Below is an example of the email notification that is sent to the email address of the user and the user’s company.

Dear user,

The preAFA with ID ESYYYYYMDDD0445546000013 has been sent electronically to customs.

Please do not forget to send a signed printed version of the preAFA by post to the customs authority of the submission country (EU customs contact details).

If you are a representative submitting this preAFA in the name of the applicant, please remember to include evidence of your powers to act as a representative in accordance with the legislation of the Member State in which the application is submitted.

Do not hesitate to contact us if you need further assistance.

Your IPEP Team

By clicking on the link of the preAFA ID, the AFA table will be displayed with this specific AFA highlighted.

Click on the PDF icon to open the preAFA for printing, signing and sending to the Member States. According to the Customs Regulation (Error! Bookmark not defined.), the customs authority of the issuing country has 30 working days from receipt of the application to notify the rights holder of its decision.

All of the contact details for EU customs are in the second link in the abovementioned email:
The signed paper version only needs to be sent to the submission country.

If the AFA is submitted by a legal representative in the name of the applicant it is important to include, together with the printed signed version of the preAFA, evidence of the powers to act as a representative in accordance with the legislation of the Member State in which the application is submitted.

5.2.7 Digital Signature of preAFAs and AFA requests

You can sign a preAFA or any AFA request digitally by selecting the option *Sign digitally* and follow the steps indicated.

![Digital Signature Process]

a) Before you start: valid signing certificates

To electronically sign an AFA in IPEP you will need a *Qualified Digital Signature* (QES), meaning that it is compliant with EU standard *eIDAS*.

To be able to sign digitally with a QES, you need a *Digital ID* that contains a *Signing Certificate*, that is issued by a *Certificate Authority (CA)*. The Member States of the European Union and European Economic Area publish trusted lists of qualified trust service providers in accordance with the eIDAS Regulation, that can be found under the following link: [https://eidas.ec.europa.eu/efda/tl-browser/#/screen/home](https://eidas.ec.europa.eu/efda/tl-browser/#/screen/home)
b) Upload a certificate in UUM&DS

This process only needs to be done the first time. Once the certificate has been uploaded, it can be reused for all future signatures.

You can upload the certificate either before starting the AFA procedure, in the Application for Action tab

or in Step 4, when selecting the Sign digitally option, in point 1. By clicking on here

When clicking on either of the links, the eIDAS page opens for you to select a certificate
Select the one you want to use and click on Submit for the certificate to be uploaded into the UUM&DS system of the European Commission.

The UUM&DS page of the will open and you will be able to see the certificate in status Active.

c) Download your AFA request in pdf for signature

Each time you want to sign an AFA request you can just click on the Download button in point 2. Please, download your request for signing it in your computer

You will get a system message confirming that the download process has started
And you will be able to save the pdf on your PC

Open the pdf and add the signature in page 4 of the AFA form for a new request or amendment or page 1 for an AFA extension

When clicking in to the signature filed, automatically your available certificates will appear, and you can select the one that you want to use
The AFA form will appear signed digitally:

We recommend saving the signed AFA request in your PC.

d) Upload the digitally signed AFA request

Upload the digitally signed document into IPEP by clicking on the blue Upload button in point 3.

A message will appear confirming if the upload was successful.
And the signed pdf will appear in the Sign digitally section for you to view. If you want to delete the pdf and upload a different signature you can do so by clicking on the trash bin and start the process again.

5.3 Manage Applications for Action - AFA requests

As explained above in Section 2.4.1, once the EORI number of the rights holder has been entered in IPEP under the Company Details in the Company Information, all the related AFA information is downloaded from COPIS into IPEP and can be managed from there.

AFAs can be extended, amended or withdrawn. These actions are the so called AFA requests. In IPEP rights holders can receive notifications from customs regarding these requests, requesting additional information or pointing out deficiencies. These notifications will be received both by e-mail and in the AFA Notifications area (see Section 2.4.4 of the Step-by-step Use Guide).

5.3.1 View AFAs retrieved from COPIS

By clicking on the magnifying glass in the AFA table, the AFA form is generated by the system with the AFA information ‘as is’ in COPIS. You can also download the related annexes to the AFA stored in COPIS.
Once you have clicked on the magnifying glass icon, a message will pop up at the top right of your screen, informing you that the AFA generation process has started and that it will take some time.

Once the AFA is ready, it will appear in your Downloads as a pdf with the related AFA number.

Any annex to the AFA will be shown in the PDF and can be also downloaded by clicking on the download icon of the respective document.

### 5.3.2 AFA Extensions

Customs Applications for Action have a life span of one year. After a year the AFA needs to be renewed (extended). This is to ensure that the intelligence included by the rights holders in their AFA is updated at least once a year. If the information contained in the AFA needs to be updated, you need to file an amend AFA request (See Section 2.4.3.3)

To extend an AFA in IPEP, go to your AFA list and click on the black arrow (Request AFA Extension button) to the right of your granted AFA.
The AFA information will be completed automatically by the system; the only new information you will need to provide is the requester of the AFA extension.

Clicking on Next > will generate a PDF document with your AFA extension. This document must be printed, signed and sent by post to customs in the submission country. If needed, you can also download a draft version of this document before sending it to customs.

The address of customs in the submission country can be found by following the link in the confirmation email sent to you after you have submitted an AFA extension or under https://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/system/files/2021-01/defend-your-rights_en.pdf

5.3.3 AFA Amendment – for AFAs created in IPEP

Rights holders can update the information of their existing AFAs through IPEP. By clicking on the Amend AFA action button (wrench icon), the amend process is launched.
A new window opens with the 4 AFA steps.

Warning: Any new information you would like include, needs to be previously key-in in the corresponding fields in IPEP.

5.3.3.1 Amend AFA Step 1

The AFA information corresponding to Step 1 is displayed. For Union AFAs you can modify the list of Member States where the AFA should be applicable.

With regards to the rest of the information under this step:

Legal Representatives
The legal representative(s) listed in your IPEP account are displayed. The legal representative included in the AFA is selected (marked also in darker grey). You can select or another legal representative and add a new power of attorney that you will have previously uploaded in the Document Portfolio of the Company Information (see Section 2.2.8 of the Step-by-step Use Guide)
Licence agreements
Under this section licence agreements or any other document that justifies the right to use the IPR rights included in the AFA and that have been uploaded into the Document Portfolio of the Company Information (see Section 2.2.8 of the Step-by-step Use Guide), can be added or removed (select-deselect) to the Amend AFA request:

Contact Points
The Step 1 has been slightly adapted to also include the Contact Points information that can be also amended:

Like for the Legal Representatives above, the Contact Points from IPEP are shown. The Contact Points included in the AFA are marked as selected. You can add or remove enforcement contacts by selecting or deselecting the contacts in the table.
Once you have made all the modifications you want to do under Step 1 (if any), you can either proceed to Step 2, clicking on Next > or Cancel.

5.3.3.2 Amend AFA Step 2 – IPR portfolio

Under this step 2, the IPRs uploaded in IPEP and linked to a product are displayed. The IPRs included in the AFA are selected. You can add or remove IPRs (selecting or deselecting).

For IPRs other than trade marks, designs and GI’s that are automatically updated by the system, you can update the information at this stage by clicking on the Edit button.

Once you have made all the modifications you want to do under Step 2 (if any), you can either proceed to Step 3, clicking on Next >, return to Step 1 clicking on < Back or Cancel.

5.3.3.3 Amend AFA Step 3 – Product Information, Companies involved in infringements and Small Consignment Procedure

The way the information under Step 3 is processed is the same as in the new AFA procedure outlined in Section 2.4.2.4. of the Step-by-step Use Guide

Restricted handling

You can select or deselect the restricted handling (see Section 2.4.2.4.1 of the Step-by-step Use Guide).

Product information
Please note that only products that are related to the IPRs selected under Step 2 will be shown. To view more products, they will have to be linked to the selected IPRs in the Product Portfolio product information View IPR related to this product as explained in Section 2.3.3.1.4. of the Step-by-step Use Guide.

The product information can be edited at this point by clicking on the Edit action button. A new window will open with the product information for you to make the changes.

Once the product information has been updated, a breadcrumb on the top right side of the screen takes you back to Step 3 of the Amend AFA request process.

Like for the new AFA procedure, if mandatory information is missing in the product information of a certain product, this product cannot be selected. A hyperlink will take you to the field that needs to be completed.
A breadcrumb will take you back to the Step 3 of the Amend AFA request process.

**Companies involved in infringements**

You can include more information either entering the information directly under Add Company Involved Infringements or by downloading the provided excel template and uploading it once it is completed (see Section 2.4.2.3 of the Step-by-step Use Guide).

**Small consignment procedure**

You can change the small consignment information selecting or deselecting the procedure and the countries (see Section 2.4.2.4 of the Step-by-step Use Guide).

5.3.3.4 Amend AFA Step 4 – Amend AFA request preview

Under Step 4 the request to amend AFA form that is generated in its final version. It shows the information the AFA will contain after the changes introduced with the Amend AFA request.

The preview can be downloaded and printed.

Like the new AFA, until the Digital Signature is in place, a paper copy needs to be printed and signed and then send to the customs authority of the Submission country (see Section 2.4.2.6 and Section 2.4.2.7 of the Step-by-step Use Guide).

5.3.4 AFA Amendment –for AFAs created from paper – Step 0

The amendment of AFA that were originally filed in paper, is basically the same as described above, but adding one additional step at the beginning – for easy understanding in the IPEP team we refer to it as ‘Step 0’. Here the user can add mandatory information missing in COPIS and to match the IPR information that is downloaded from COPIS with
the IPR information of the trade marks and design registers of the that are recorded in TMview and Designview.

5.3.4.1 Error report:

When launching the amendment of an AFA originally filed in paper, the system retrieves the information that was manually keyed-in by customs in COPIS. IPEP does a check on the mandatory information, and if there is incomplete information this is pointed out to the user in the error report that the system generates.

First, we invite you to click on View error report and to see the issues and complete the missing information.

A warning message will appear indicating that if you have already started the matching exercise of IPRs imported from COPIS that will be explained next, you will lose this information unless you have saved the changes.

Therefore, we recommend to first check the error report on missing information and only then start with the IPR matching exercise (See Section 2.4.3.4.2 of the Step-by-step Use Guide).

Once you have clicked on OK, the error report will open:
Each error has an *Edit* button that will take you to the field of the missing information, for you to complete the fields.

There may be also format issues that will also be indicated:

Once you have finished the work on the *Error Report* page, you can click on *Back* to return to the ‘Step 0’ view.

### 5.3.4.2 Match IPRs

When retrieving the AFA information from COPIS to IPEP, one of the main challenges is to match the IPRs that have been manually keyed in, with the trade marks and design references of the registers of the different EU IP offices that are recorded in TMview and Designview. Any slight variation is spaces or digits will hamper a matching. Therefore manual intervention is needed in the cases where the automatic matching did not work.
As can be viewed in the image above, the system proposes a matching, and the user can validate the proposed matching

or correct it by clicking on the Edit button.

When clicking on the Edit button, a new window opens, for the user to search for the correct trade mark or design from the registers TMview or Designview.

Please note that there, for the time being, there is no automatic matching for Geographical Indications (GI).

At any time, the updated information in this interface (Step0) can be discarded or saved.

If you click on Discard, the amendment request is cancelled and needs to be launched again, starting from the beginning. Also, you can leave this interface by just clicking on Close. Any unsaved data will be lost.
5.3.5 Create from existing – reusing AFA information

For AFAs originally filed in one of the national Portals, the information can be viewed in IPEP, but any AFA request needs to be handled in the Portal in which the AFA was originally filed.

However, it is possible to start a new AFA in IPEP with the information in those AFAs retrieved from COPIS. It is what the IPEP team calls ‘create from existing’.

For AFAs created in one of the national Portals, the only action buttons available are View AFA and Copy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DE121215641</th>
<th>DE</th>
<th>ES</th>
<th>NO-ID</th>
<th>Grant</th>
<th>22/12/2023</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4127</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When clicking on the Copy button,

the following window opens:

![Copy window]

Once you confirm, the process is launched. You will receive an email with a link to the new draft, that will appear in your AFA table. You can also go to the AFA Notification Area and click on the Copy button.

![AFA Notification Area]
The new AFA will open in the same Step 0 interface as for AFAs created from paper (See *Section 2.4.3.4*).

### 5.3.6 Withdrawal request

Though this action, you can withdraw an ongoing AFA request.

When clicking on the withdraw action button (play button with a cross), a new window opens for you to complete and send the withdrawal request:

```
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Submitted</th>
<th>14/10/2021</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Submitted</td>
<td>01/10/2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sent</td>
<td>12/10/2021</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
```

It is recommended to add a justification of the withdrawal request. The request can be cancelled or send. If you click on *Send* > a new window opens with a preview of the withdrawal. It can be downloaded in PDF form for revision before being sent to customs.

If you agree to the content of the preview, you can click on *Sent to customs* > to submit the withdrawal request.

Please note that the withdrawal request does not need to be signed at this instance, as it is automatically validated by COPIS. Once the Digital Signature is available in IPEP, it will be added to the withdrawal requests.
5.4 AFA Notifications area

In the AFA Notifications Area the user can view any notification related to an AFA request sent by customs and that require the attention of the rights holder. To be able to access this area, you need first to enter the second factor of authentication (pin safe) – you can do so by clicking in any of the unlock the operation links that you can find in some of the widgets in the Dashboard (see Section 2.1.5 of the Step-by-step Use Guide).

This area can be accessed either through the AFA Notifications widget in the Dashboard or by clicking on the bell icon, that is next to the account name in the top menu of the screen.

The counter in the bell icon indicates the number of notifications marked as 'unread'.

Notifications Details

A notification can be viewed by clicking on the magnifier glass.

The Notification Details are displayed in a new window that can be closed.
Additional Information Request

A notification can include a request for additional information from customs. This request can be accessed by clicking on the View Additional Information Request action button.

The Additional Information Request is shown in a new window for you to add the requested information and send it to customs.

Withdrawal requested

For a notification that is related to a requested withdrawal, the related action button appears
Bu clicking on the action button, you can view the AFA withdrawal request.

**Withdrawal Request**

- PreAFA ID: MT202110061423
- AFA ID: MT202110061423
- Withdrawal Request: Amendment
- Withdrawal Request Justification: [Text]
- Applicable Countries: [Optional]

Please enter information of the requester of the withdrawal

- Capacity In which the withdrawal is sent: [Holder of the decision]

**Link to the related AFA in the AFA table**

By clicking on the action button with the three lines, the tool takes you directly to the related AFA information in the AFA table of IPEP.

**Mark as ‘read’**

You can mark a notification as ‘read’ and send a read-receipt notification to customs.

By clicking on the *Mark as read* action button, a new window opens for you to accept the
read-receipt that will be send to customs (COPIS).

When you mark a notification as read, it will no longer be shown in bold characters and the *Mark as read* action button will no longer be shown.

‘Read’ notifications will automatically disappear from the list after a certain time or once a certain number of notifications is reached.

6 Help

For questions and technical issues you can always contact the IPEP team at: ipenforcementportal@euipo.europa.eu
## Glossary - terms, acronyms and abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AFA</td>
<td>Application for Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EORI</td>
<td>Economic Operator Registration and Identification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CESTO</td>
<td>Common Examiners Support Tool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CG</td>
<td>Common Gateway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COPIS</td>
<td>The Anti-Counterfeit and Anti-Piracy System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSN</td>
<td>Customs Secure Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DG TAXUD</td>
<td>Directorate-General for Taxation and Customs Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPEP</td>
<td>IP Enforcement Portal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPE</td>
<td>Europol Platform of Experts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>InfoSec</td>
<td>Information Security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPM</td>
<td>Interface Public Members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPR</td>
<td>Intellectual Property Right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRS</td>
<td>Software Requirements Specification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WCO</td>
<td>World Customs Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHO</td>
<td>World Health Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TMview</td>
<td>Trade Mark View: An online consultation tool allowing any internet user to search, free of charge, the trade marks of all participating official trade mark offices in a single place. The information is provided by the trade mark offices that own the content and are responsible for its daily update.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DesignView</td>
<td>Centralised access point to view the registered design information held by any of the participating national offices. The design tool will be based on the data registers for the participating offices, WIPO and the EUIPO.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>