

On-Road Certification / Audit E-Cert FAQs

TIMING

1. When must I use E-Cert and submit an XML file to the E-Cert system in order to receive an Executive Order?

It is planned that all 2010 model year applications be submitted via the E-Cert and DMS, rather than via DMS alone. We plan to begin volunteer testing E-Cert in May 2008. We plan to continue accepting 2009 model year applications via the DMS alone. We no longer propose the August 4 deadline to require the use of E-Cert.

2. Will small volume manufacturers be phased-in later than large manufacturers before required to use E-Cert?

No. All manufacturers will phase-in following the schedule discussed above.

3. How much faster will I get my EO by using E-Cert? What timeframe will I receive my Executive Orders?

Currently, most Executive Orders are processed within 45 days after the applications become complete (i.e. with all required information and data submitted). E-Cert is expected to expedite the processing by (a) ensuring that only the complete set of required data is accepted into the system, and (b) freeing ARB staff from the task of data entry. E-Cert will allow the ARB to process applications and generate EO's faster. However, at this time it is difficult to estimate how much faster it will be.

4. When will other categories of vehicles and engines be required to use the E-Cert system in order to receive an Executive Order?

The On-Road HD Diesel and Off-Road CI categories will be phased-in after the completion of Light-duty vehicles. Subsequently, the SIME, SORE, On-road HD Gasoline, and Off-Road LSI will be phased-in to the E-Cert system. ARB staff has started on gathering the data requirements for the On-Road HD Diesel and Off-Road CI categories. These requirements will be a basis for developing the model for the On-Road HD Diesel and Off-Road CI categories.

5. Is E-CERT being deployed at the same time as U.S. EPA's VERIFY program?

Yes.

PROCESS CHANGES – HOW DO I GET AN EO?

6. Are DMS and E-Cert linked? How do the two systems work together? Will staff review data in E-Cert before reviewing data in DMS? What is reviewed first?

The DMS and E-Cert computer systems are not linked. Your ARB certification representative is the connection between the two systems. Your ARB certification staff will review both your DMS submission and E-Cert data portion of your application. Staff can review either portion first and provide feedback as needed. Once both portions (E-Cert + DMS) of your application are reviewed and approved, the ARB will issue an Executive Order for the test group for which certification is requested. Any information provided in E-Cert does not have to be provided via the DMS.

7. Will California-specific portion of an application be eliminated with E-Cert?

Much of the repetitive pieces of data such as emission standards, certification levels, deterioration factors, and descriptions of vehicles which you are requesting certification will now be included in the E-Cert portion of your application. Additionally, the Supplemental Data Sheet and Certification Review Sheet are no longer necessary. These data no longer need to be included in a document submitted to the DMS. However, other statements of compliance and narrative descriptions shall be contained in the documents submitted to the DMS. A guidance document will be issued shortly describing what should be included in a DMS application that is supported by the E-Cert submittal.

8. Why must manufacturers submit to E-Cert and U.S. EPA's VERIFY system? Why are there two separate systems I must send data to?

Because the ARB and the U.S. EPA have different certification requirements and processes, it is necessary to submit information separately to both agencies. Additionally, due to available IT resources, E-Cert requires manufacturers to submit a complete set of data, rather than partial sets of data submitted over time.

9. Will E-Cert create a summary report which should be included in the manufacturer's application, similar to CFEIS summary sheets?

No.

10. Is there a plan to share information with other Section-177 states to eliminate redundant reporting?

No one other than authorized ARB employees has access to E-Cert. Any outside requests for E-Cert data and information will be handled in strict adherence to the ARB's policy on confidential data. The ARB staff is happy to coordinate with both manufacturers and the other Section-177 states in order to eliminate redundant reporting requirements.

11. Once E-CERT is deployed, do we still have to submit California review sheets?

No.

HOW DOES XML WORK? (What do I need to know in order to use E-Cert?)

12. What is XML? How does XML work?

An XML file and the use of an XML schema is a standard method to transfer data between database systems. XML schema is the formatting "rules" for the data to be successfully transferred from the manufacturer to the ARB's E-Cert system. The following link provides more information:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/XML>
<http://www.xmlfiles.com/xml/>

13. How will XML help the manufacturers? Will it lead to faster EO approvals?

Submitting information in XML format will ensure, through validation, that the information is complete and in the correct format. This will allow certification staff to review the information faster, and generally reduce the overall processing time for generating an Executive Order.

The primary purpose to this system is to eliminate paperwork, provide instant feedback if there are data submission errors, enable manufacturers to get confirmation when certification applications are successfully submitted, and assist in tracking the progress of the application through ARB's certification process.

14. What kind of Information Technology (IT) resources will I need in order to use the E-Cert system?

The IT resources needed will depend on whether or not each individual manufacturer stores existing certification system data and how much. It is also dependant on the complexity of this system.

Please note that it is not necessary for manufacturers to create their own system. The ARB has created the LDV Certification Form using Microsoft Infopath. Manufacturers can use this form to create the XML file to load into E-Cert. (Add link to Infopath file). This form will allow manufacturers to enter certification data in a more user friendly format, and it continuously validates against the schema. After entering all or part of the data, the form can be saved to a local hard drive. The saved file can then be modified to include corrections, running changes or carryover from one model year to another.

15. IT resources are currently not allocated by manufacturers for the current fiscal year.

We believe this process will improve efficiency both at ARB and at the manufacturers, and dedicating some IT resources initially will reduce costs in the long term. To alleviate IT resources, ARB staff has developed the LDV Certification Form using Microsoft Infopath. This form can be used by manufacturers, large and small, to enter certification data in the interim while manufacturers are developing their systems.

16. What kind of tools can I use to generate my XML file?

There are a number of products that can be used assist in creating a proper XML file. Some of these products include: Oracle Database or Oracle J developer, Filemaker Pro, Microsoft Infopath and Microsoft Access. By naming these products, the ARB does not endorse any particular product.

17. How do I validate my XML file before submitting to E-Cert?

This is dependant on the tool that will be used. Depending on the tool that is used, go to the vendor's website and search on the words "validate" and "XML". If the manufacturer chooses to use the LDV Certification Form provided by ARB, it is a self-validating form and will notify the user if the data are valid when the form is saved.

18. Will I receive an email notification that my XML file was successfully loaded into E-Cert?

Once your file is successfully loaded to the E-Cert system, the user will receive an on-screen message that the file was successfully loaded to the E-Cert File Uploader. E-Cert will then validate the XML file against the XML schema and notify the user via e-mail message that the files submitted have successfully loaded into the E-Cert system.

19. Will a manufacturer be notified that an application is “all approved” and a particular Executive Order is in the management signature process?

As mentioned earlier, a certification application is not complete until both the DMS and E-Cert portions are completed. The ARB is looking into sending an email to notify the manufacturer when an Executive Order has been printed. This however does not indicate that is complete or approved.

20. Do I need to purchase additional hardware in order to use E-Cert?

No. You may use any laptop or desktop computer with an internet connection to send files to the E-Cert system.

21. What kind of security measures are in place for confidential data submitted to E-Cert? What data fields are confidential? How are these indicated?

E-Cert is restricted to ARB certification staff over a secure connection. Manufacturers can only deposit certification applications through a secure connection similar to DMS. Unlike DMS, manufacturers can only upload files they cannot view files that have been uploaded. The confidential data fields are identified in the data dictionary indicated as CBI in the comments column of the data dictionary. The data dictionary has been updated to include a more comprehensive list.

22. If the XML schema or data dictionary are updated, how will manufacturers be notified?

If the XML schema or data dictionary are updated, manufacturers will be notified via the DMS listserv. Additionally, if the XML schema is updated, the ARB will provide lead time before the revised XML schema must be used.

Updates to the schema will be posted at the following link:
<http://www.arb.ca.gov/msprog/arb.cert/arb.cert.htm>

23. Will the ARB offer training or other tools to assist manufacturers with limited IT resources?

The ARB will conduct training, as necessary, to assist manufacturers. Also, the ARB will publish the LDV Certification Form to assist

manufacturers in manually creating their own XML file for submission to E-Cert.

24. Can we get a report displaying the information submitted to ARB's E-CERT program?

ARB staff is currently reviewing this request. The main concern is over privacy and sending confidential manufacturer specific information via email. A secondary concern is over our internal resources for developing a report format and sending this information back to the manufacturers. Users will be notified if these issues are resolved.

The LDV Certification Form will allow manufacturers to print a hard copy of the information submitted.

25. Can I modify an XML file in MS-WordPad or MS-Notepad?

Yes.

26. Can E-CERT send an email to more than one person?

The answer to this question was yes at the workshop. However, upon further review of the system, only one person, the originator of the load, can receive the notification of successful submittal and validation.