



# **GUIDE FOR THE ISSUE OF CERTIFICATES OF ORIGIN**

May 2008

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## PREFACE

This guide has been adopted by EUROCHAMBRES, the Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry and constitutes an update of the *Guide for the issue of Certificates of Origin and Other Attestations* issued in February 1995.

In fact, we believed that due to the last developments on the customs field together with the adoption of a modernized Community Customs Code and its Implementing Provisions it was relevant and opportune, from the private sector perspective, to revise the *modus operandi* for the issue of Community certificates of origin. This revision has allowed us to confirm that Chambers of Commerce and Industry are indeed issuing certificates of origin in a uniform and standardized way. Furthermore, this guide will facilitate the continuation of this work in the future.

It is important to highlight that this guide deals with regulations valid in the EC and how they should be interpreted in the concerned member state. Nevertheless, we strongly encourage its use in other non-EC countries.



## **I - Essential Office Records**

**1.** All issuing bodies need to maintain certain minimum records and files if they are to discharge their responsibilities. These can be classified into three types:

- a) Records and files relating to applicant companies;
- b) Storage provision; and,
- c) General administration and financial records.

All of these operations, whilst routine in nature, are vital to the smooth running of certification operations generally. The importance of efficient management of these areas becomes obvious in the event of challenge to, or requests for verification of, certifications granted. Attention to detail needs to be maintained just as much in back-office operations as in front-office work.

**2.** Records and files relating to applicants need to be maintained in respect of:

- a) Formal acknowledgement of the applicable rules given to the issuing body by the applicant;
- b) Names and specimen signatures of applicant's authorised personnel;
- c) Records of any arrangements covering standing documentary evidence lodged for use over a period; and,
- d) Certification applications and their supporting evidence.

**3.** Formal acknowledgement of applicable rules and records of applicant authorisation of specified individuals as signatories are compulsory elements of the certification process. The National Committee requires Formal Conformance to be renewed at least every two years. Authorised Signatures should be constantly updated by applicants when changes occur, but, as this requirement is easily ignored, issuing bodies should formally request an updated list from applicants on an annual basis. The formal acknowledgement and the list of signatories could be merged in one document.

**4.** All applicants for Certificates of Origin, all declarations made in connection with such applications and all declarations on invoices or on other documents for which certification is sought must be signed by a duly authorised person.

**5.** The most common arrangement made is for evidence to be lodged with the issuing body to cover certifications granted over a period of time. This occurs where an exporter buys goods in large quantities but only exports them in small quantities. The result of this in standard procedure terms is that the same supporting documentary evidence would be presented to the issuer many times over and this offers much potential for confusion and abuse. It is therefore more satisfactory for evidence to be lodged initially with the issuer and for subsequent applications to refer to the evidence so deposited.

**6.** Only official CO forms printed by authorised printers should be used.

**7.** Normal supplies of forms are provided in pads of sets made up in the sequence Original certificate, Copy Certificate, and Application form. Pads of additional Copy Certificate forms can also be obtained. Each Certificate of Origin set has a unique reference number printed on each of the three sheets. Additional copy pads do not carry such references and it is imperative that issuing bodies ensure that, before certified additional copies are issued, the reference number of the original certificate is entered into the reference number box.

**8.** In terms of storage of copies of certificates granted, under EC regulations copies of all documents certified, complete with supporting evidence, must be retained for a minimum of two years. It is therefore necessary to have an adequate retrieval system to ensure that application copies of certificates granted within this period can be made readily available. Secure and lockable storage is essential, not least because of the confidential nature of suppliers' evidence. Access must only be allowed to authorised employees of the issuing body or to persons with appropriate authority.

**9.** After the legal storage period records can be destroyed. This must be done in such manner as to maintain complete confidentiality. To ensure that this is the case all such records should be either shredded or incinerated under the strict supervision of the issuing body and a certificate of destruction obtained.

## **II. Double Checking Procedures**

1. Although double checking is not a compulsory procedure it is considered important to safeguard issuing bodies from any error which they may occur into. Double checking means that each application form, certificate and accompanying copy(ies) should be regularly checked by two members of staff, acting independently, prior to issue of the certification requested.

### **III. Staff Training Requirements**

**1.** Training has to be certified and has to be renewed every certain period of time. All issuing bodies must as a minimum, maintain the standard of employing at least two personnel who have successfully completed training courses. These personnel are thus eligible for employment as authorised signatories. No other authorised signatories other than trained personnel should be appointed with the exception of the chief executive of the organisation. Chief executives not normally engaged in day-to-day certification work are themselves under obligation to attend certification awareness courses. In smaller organisations where the chief executive is actively involved in certification work he/she would be required to undertake the normal training course.

**2.** In larger organisations, particularly if a network of branch offices exists, the training requirement may be considerably higher. This is because of the need to employ at least one authorised signatory at each issuing office at any one time.

**3.** The appointment of authorised signatories is, subject to the minimum requirements, a matter for the issuing body itself. It is possible that staff may be encouraged to attend certification training courses without necessarily being appointed as authorised signatories.



#### **IV. Statistical Returns**

1. Statistics should be prepared, recorded and provided to the National Authority, if required.

## V. Certification Stamps

1. Every time changes in the stamps are made, they have to be communicated to the relevant authorities.
2. Issuing bodies can use a small "*Alteration Approved*" stamp. This usually combines the words "Alteration Approved" with the name or initials of the issuing body and it is widely used on all certified documents which contain corrections. All such corrections should be signed by an authorised signatory and the stamp applied as near as possible to the correction; this indicates to overseas authorities that such correction has been made before certification of the document in question.
3. Issuing bodies should keep their stamps safe at all times particularly to protect them against loss or theft. Although extremely rare, there have been cases involving the fraudulent issue of certificates or the forging of certifications. In some cases such criminal activity has involved the use of stolen certification stamps. This not only makes detection of fraud more difficult but also implicates the issuing body whose stamps are used and can severely damage its reputation.

## **VI. Checking Operations**

**1.** In undertaking any certification an issuing body has a series of checks to make. These are as follows:

- a) Checking that documents submitted for certification have been signed by one of the applicant's authorised signatories;
- b) Face-checking of documents to ensure correctness of completion in terms of required content; and
- c) Checking the supporting evidence to ensure the accuracy of the information declared on the documents for certification.

The Certification stamping of documents and signature by the issuing body's authorised official should only take place after the checking operations have been completed. As will be appreciated the order in which such checks should be done has considerable bearing on the issuer's position should the requested certification have to be refused and it is recommended that this order should always be followed.

**2.** This is not to say that all checking operations should be suspended immediately a cause for refusal is detected. Best practice dictates that all checks be completed in full. This enables the applicant to be advised of all errors in the documentary submission. Provided all such errors are corrected, certification can easily proceed on resubmission. If this practice is not followed there is a strong possibility that, after correcting an initial error, the applicant may face further refusal on different grounds. Such instances are ill-advised and serve only to frustrate the applicant and to mar his relationship with the issuer.

## **VII. Evidence Considerations**

1. The consideration of evidence is of fundamental importance and is different from face-checking operations in that it involves a considerable amount of judgement, both as to quality and acceptability. Evidence checks are needed to ascertain a basis for granting certification and this is inextricably linked to whether or not the issuing body believes the information laid before it.

2. The trail of evidence is of crucial importance in the issue of Certificates of Origin. It stems from the need to identify the place of manufacture of a product in order to determine its origin. Issuing bodies are thus charged with the responsibility of documenting the trail of goods from manufacture, through the chain of supply, right up to the export of the goods in question. In cases where the goods change hands several times prior to export this task is daunting in the extreme. However, the concept is still relevant today inasmuch as it provides the basis of the authority of issuing bodies to request applicants to provide such evidence as is deemed necessary by the issuing body.

3. In practice, issuing bodies are concerned with documentary evidence and rarely does the entire trail of evidence need to be uncovered before a basis for certification is established. The revision of the Certificate of Origin application form reflects this in that it establishes minimum requirements to be fulfilled in the case of:

- a) Goods wholly produced in the EC;
- b) Goods of EC origin by virtue of processing undertaken in the EC; or,
- c) Goods of non-EC origin.

There is a need for official written documents authorized in the country of export when a good is coming from outside the EC.

The requirement is fulfilled by a signed declaration as to which category applies together with supporting documentary evidence in case of official documents from the exporting country. On this basis any issuing body, having satisfied itself of the accuracy of the declaration and having accepted the supporting documentation, can

proceed with certification. Any subsequent challenge to the Certificate of Origin would reflect on the declaration of the applicant rather than on the issuing body, unless, of course, it can be shown that the issuer, knowing the falseness of the declaration, proceeded to grant the Certificate without question.

4. These matters hinge on whether or not issuing bodies can be satisfied as to the accuracy of the declarations made by applicants. In any cases where doubt arises it is the duty of the issuing bodies to call for such additional evidence as may be necessary to prove the accuracy of the application, and to refuse certification until such evidence is provided.

5. As stated, it is the responsibility of the issuing body to decide, in the light of what it knows about the applicant and his activities and the supporting evidence produced, whether or not it is necessary to call for further evidence in order to be satisfied that the origin of the goods shown on a certificate of origin is correct. However, there are a number of instances where the issuing body must be particularly careful in assessing the evidence to hand and deciding on whether to seek further evidence. These cover all goods referred to in Annexes 9 and 10 of Regulation No. 2454/93. In particular, difficulties may be encountered in the following areas:

- a) *Textiles and textile products*
- b) *Essential spare parts for equipment, etc. either to be or already exported*
- c) *Second-hand goods*
- d) *Reconditioned goods and,*
- e) *Antiques.*

## **VIII. Confidentiality**

**1.** All certification work, and especially the issue of Certificates of Origin, involves the provision to the issuing body of commercially sensitive information. In the main such information covers sources of supply used by the applicant, although there are other obvious examples e.g. contracts being tendered for, trade mark registrations etc. This places a duty of confidentiality on all issuing bodies that must be observed.

**2.** Failure to maintain strict confidentiality quickly undermines business confidence in the impartiality of not only the individual issuing body, but also the network of issuers nationwide.

**3.** Issuing bodies will regularly face difficulties with agents over the provision of evidence but these are not insurmountable. An agent who is made clearly aware of the issuer's evidential requirements can be given the option of:

- a) Providing the required evidence himself; or
- b) Accepting that the issuing body will have to make enquiries direct with the exporter in order that the certification can proceed.

## **IX. Sources of help and assistance**

1. Apart from the advice contained in this guide, issuing bodies occasionally need to refer to other sources, particularly when determining the status of applicants or their suppliers; e.g. establishing that a declared manufacturer does in fact manufacture and is not merely a merchant or distributor. In this sense, it is recommended that for example the Market Access Data Base (MADB) as well as any information coming from the European Commission's Directorate General Taxation and Customs Union (DG Taxud) are used as official sources of information.

## **X. The law: Regulation No. 2913/92**

1. The basic non-preferential origin law is contained in Articles 22 to 26 of Regulation No. 2913/92. Attention is drawn to the following provisions:

- a) **Article 23.** - This article specifies that goods “wholly obtained or produced” in one country are regarded as originating in that country. Such goods are mineral, vegetable, animal and fishery products of the country and goods made exclusively from such products. It should be especially noted that waste or scrap products derived from any manufacturing operation carried out in the country and used articles collected in the country which are fit only for the recovery of raw materials are regarded as wholly originating in that country.
- b) **Article 24.** - This article deals with products which are not wholly obtained or produced as defined in Article 23 but are made from materials or components from two or more countries of origin. It provides that such goods are to be regarded as originating in the country in which the last substantial and economically justified process or operation took place provided that it resulted in the manufacture of a new product or represented an important stage of manufacture.

**2. Supplementary Regulation.** The EC has also made an additional regulation which supplements 2913/92 and sets down precise origin rules for certain products and the procedures involving the issue of Certificates of Origin. All of these additional requirements are contained in Articles 35 to 65 of Regulation No. 2454/93 and Annexes 9 to 12 thereto.

Provisions which require special attention are:

- a) **Articles 41 to 46.** - These Articles allow essential spare parts, delivered either with machinery, etc or subsequently,



to take the same origin as the machinery itself if such supply is part of the machinery's standard equipment.

- b) **Articles 47 to 62.** - These Articles lay down the rules as to:
- i) Who may issue an EC Certificate of Origin;
  - ii) What details must be included on the Certificate; and,
  - iii) The manner in which the country of origin is to be certified.
- c) **Annex 9.** - This annex sets out the considerations which must be taken into account when deciding whether the specific rules of origin set out in Annexes 10 and 11 have been met.
- d) **Annex 10.** - This annex sets out specific origin rules for all textiles and textile products classified in Chapters 50 to 63 of the Combined Nomenclature. Processes or operations which are beyond those set down would similarly confer origin.
- e) **Annex 11.** - This annex sets out specific origin rules for certain goods other than textiles and in three cases specifies processes by which originating status is not achieved. The goods covered by this annex are listed below together with a reference to their Combined Nomenclature code:
- All meat and edible meat offal (chapter 2)
  - Birds' eggs not in shell, dried and egg yolks, dried (ex 04.08)
  - Cotton linters, bleached (ex 14.04)
  - Certain grape juice and wine (ex 20.09 and ex 22.04)\*<sup>1</sup>
  - Vermouth (ex 22.05)
  - Certain felt and non-wovens (ex 34.01 and ex 34.05)
  - Dried egg albumin (ex 35.02)
  - Articles of apparel of leather or composition leather (ex 42.03)
  - Ceramic calendars of any kind, printed, including calendar clocks, decorated (ex 49.10)
  - All footwear (64.01 to 64.05)
  - Ceramic articles, decorated (ex 69.12 and ex 69.13)
  - Ceramic imitation jewellery, decorated (ex 71.17)
  - Electronic integrated circuits (ex 84.73 and ex 85.48)
  - Ball, roller or needle roller bearings, assembled (ex 84.82)

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<sup>1</sup> For these goods, the listed processes **DO NOT** confer originating status.

- Magnetic tape recorders (ex 85.20)
- Unrecorded 3.5” magnetic micro diskettes (ex 85.23)
- Certain reception apparatus for radio broadcasting (ex 85.27)
- Certain television receivers (ex 85.28)
- Integrated circuits (ex 85.42)
- Watch straps, watch bands and watch bracelets, and parts thereof, of textiles (ex 91.13)
- Certain ceramic seats and parts thereof, decorated (ex 9401 and ex 94.03)
- Certain ceramic lamps, lighting fittings, signs, name plates and the like and parts thereof (ex 94.05).

## **XI. The European Community Certificate of Origin - General**

**1.** Under EC rules, the form should be completed in an official Community language, although other languages can be used to meet trade requirements when necessary. Issuing bodies will normally receive applications in the language of the country; but, when applications are completed in any other language than the ones from the EC, the applicant must provide a translation in the language of the country, for retention by the issuing body. Issuing bodies must always ensure that they are aware of the English translation of any foreign language statement they are asked to certify.

**2.** Issuing bodies should always check that the details in boxes 1 to 7 shown on the original, all copies and the application form agree.

**3.** All typographical errors and any alterations must be corrected by crossing out the incorrect entry and typing in the correction. All crossings out should be initialled by the applicant and “Alteration Approved” stamped and signed by the issuing body. Under no circumstances should such corrections be made by erasure or by the use of correcting fluids.

## **XII. Completion of the Certificate**

### **1. Box 1 - Consignor**

This box will usually indicate the name and address of the exporter.

### **2. Box 2 - Consignee**

- a) This box should show the name and address of the receiver of the goods shipped. Issuing bodies must ensure that an export of goods is clearly indicated.
- b) Box 2 should be completed by insertion of "To order" followed by the name of the country of destination. Supporting evidence is provided by the consignor's invoice to the buyer subject to its containing a clear declaration as to the ultimate country of destination.

### **3. Box 3 - Country of Origin**

This is most important as the origin description is the prime function of the certificate. A full study of EC origin rules is required to enable issuers to determine the acceptability of the applicant's declaration. A clear understanding of the rules is necessary to ensure that origin is clearly stated in the appropriate manner.

### **4. Box 3 - Designation of Origin**

- a) The EC rules provide that goods that originate in the Community should be designated as of "European Community" origin. The rules also provide that where the needs of the trade require, this

statement can be amplified to indicate the individual state of the EC e.g. “European Community - United Kingdom”. When goods are manufactured or produced by processes performed in two or more member states of the EC the rules specify that the goods must be designated simply as of “European Community” origin without further amplification (Article 48.3 of EC Regulation 2494/93).

- b) For goods of non-community origin the correct designation is the name of the country of origin concerned. Reference to an economic grouping of countries, e.g. EFTA, or a vague geographical region, e.g. Western Europe, is not acceptable.
- c) Abbreviations are not acceptable. Use of “EC -UK” is not permitted because such abbreviations do not translate effectively.

#### **5. *Box 4 - Transport Details***

This optional box may be left blank by the applicant if so desired. In normal practice it is usual to show the mode of transport used e.g. Seafreight, Airfreight, Road or Rail.

#### **6. *Box 5 - Remarks***

This box was deliberately left as a spare space by the EC when the format of the form was last revised. Although no entry is required in this box there is no objection to issuing bodies allowing use of this box. This occurs in one of two ways. These are:

- a) When the issuing body needs to endorse the certificate in some way. The most frequent endorsement relates to a Certificate that is issued to cancel and replace a previously issued Certificate. In this instance the following wording should be used 5 “This Certificate cancels and replaces Certificate Number ..... issued ..... (date of issue)”.
- b) When the applicant is required to include in the certificate information that is additional to the normal requirements of the form but which is relevant to the exportation concerned. There are several examples of this type of endorsement. One of the most common is a reference to a Letter of Credit number and the name of the bank issuing the Letter of Credit. Another common entry is a reference to an import licence number granted by the Country of destination. However, such information can be included in Box 5 only were the issuing body is satisfied as to the accuracy of such additional details because such entries become part of the certification for which the issuer is responsible.

## **7. Box 6 - Description of goods, etc.**

This box covers the goods actually being exported and requires the applicant to provide certain information for the purpose of consignment identification. This information takes the form of marks and numbers, number and type of packing used, description of the goods and, where appropriate, item numbers.

a) Marks and Numbers. - This refers to the actual marks and numbers stencilled or otherwise affixed to the packages being shipped. Usual practice is for such marks to be a combination of:

- i) Lead marks, which serve to identify either consignor or consignee;
- ii) Port marks which identify port, airport or other place of destination, e.g. inland clearance depot;
- iii) Any reference or order number required by the contract, usually a combination of letters, numbers; and even symbols; and,
- iv) The actual package numbers, e.g. 1 of 1, 1-10, 1/15, 1-13 of 13.

b) Number and type of packing used. - This relates to the number of cartons, crates, boxes, pallets, bales, rolls, etc. that comprise the consignment. With the increasing use of containerisation rather than conventional cargo the entry may merely refer to a container number or a series of container numbers. Often details of containerised consignments are supplemented by reference to the seal numbers used when such containers are finally sealed after loading. For conventional cargo the type of packing used must be specified. The number of packages should in all cases agree with the numbers shown on the marks and numbers.

Problem. Goods are shipped in bulk or unpacked.

Answer. The C/O should be marked "Unpacked" or "Loose" or "In bulk".

c) Description of the Goods. - The goods must be described by their usual trade description. This should be done with sufficient detail to clearly indicate the nature of the goods and should not be vague or general, e.g. spare parts, nor should it solely be given by reference to a trade mark or brand name, e.g. 'Bisto' instead of gravy granules.

Problem A. The exporter uses a description for commercial reasons which do not meet these requirements.

Answer. Such descriptions are permissible in addition to the normal trade description provided that the issuing body is satisfied that both descriptions used are capable of the same meaning (e.g. 'Bisto – gravy granules').

The issuing body must ensure that the description used is fully consistent with the invoice details submitted with the application. E.g. if the price of the goods is shown on the C/O this must be checked with the supporting invoice to ensure agreement. The EC requires that all statements on C/O's are made in positive terms rather than negative terms. Applicants must therefore declare what the goods are rather than what they are not. Statements that detract from such positive declarations are not permissible.

Problem B. The C/O contains political boycott declarations that goods do not originate from blacklisted countries or sources.

Answer. These are forbidden. The C/O should be refused until the political boycott declarations are removed either by deleting them from the C/O and approving the alteration or by submission of a new C/O omitting the offending declarations.

- d) To ensure that nothing can be added to the C/O after it has been issued, all unused space in Box 6 should be crossed through. This is done with a horizontal line under the last entry in the box with a further diagonal line through all remaining space.

Problem. Crossing-through not done by the applicant.

Answer. Issuing bodies should not release Certificates until this has been done and, if necessary, should perform such crossing through themselves.

- e) Occasionally the space in Box 6 is insufficient to include the extensive descriptive detail required. This usually occurs when the C/O covers consignments of multiple goods that need to be specified individually. When this occurs the applicant must either:
- i. use two or more C/O forms according to the space required. These C/O forms should bear the same number; or,
  - ii. firmly and permanently attach a copy of the export invoice to each sheet of the C/O set.
- f) When Certificates are presented for multiple goods and there is sufficient space in Box 6 to complete the entry each different

description must be clearly itemised and numbered Item 1, Item 2 etc. as part of the description in Box 6.

### **8. *Box 7 - Quantity***

This serves as another means of linking the consignment with the Certificate. The vast majority of C/O's include net or gross weights or both. If only one weight is given it should be clearly stated whether it is a net or gross weight. Weight is not the only means of measurement that can be inserted in Box 7 and in certain trades other units of measurement are more appropriate e.g. litres, metres, cubic dimensions or simple quantity. Issuing bodies should ensure that such entries agree with the supporting documents and that all such entries are given using the metric system.

### **9. *Box 8***

On the Original and Copy Certificate(s) no entry is permitted by the applicant in Box 8. This is the space reserved for the issuing body to use to authenticate the document having completed its checking operations. On the application form however, Box 8 must be completed by the applicant because this comprises the formal application for the document together with a declaration that the information given, whether in the body of the Certificate, or in response to information requests from the issuing body, including verbal requests, is correct. The applicant must complete the declaration by signing and dating it and must add the name of the signatory in block capitals to assist with identification. Issuing bodies must ensure that all signatures are of duly authorised personnel of the applicant and have been registered with the issuing body.

### **10. *Box 9 (on the application form)***

This box must be completed when the applicant is an agent of the exporter or provider. In such cases the agent must show his name and address in this box.

### **11. *The reverse of the application form***

The layout of a Certificate of Origin can vary from country to country and the reverse of the application is not used in all countries. The reverse can be used for several purposes but its use is voluntary and depends on the legislation in the different countries.

### ***Other problems with certificates of Origin***

Most C/O applications are straightforward and are quickly processed and issued. Certain situations do occur, albeit infrequently, when the normal processing routine has to be modified to accommodate special needs. These are as follows:

- a) Replacements for lost certificates. - Occasionally documents become lost while in transit and the need arises for a replacement Certificate to be issued. In such cases the issuing body should obtain from the applicant the original certificate number, date and full details and compare the original application copy on file with the new replacement. Provided the details agree the replacement can be granted provided that it is currently dated and is endorsed in Box 5 "This Certificate cancels and replaces Certificate Number ..... issued .....(date of issue)". Should the details on the replacement Certificate be at variance with the originally issued certificate an explanation must be sought from the applicant. The application can proceed on the basis of a reasonable explanation from the applicant, supported, if necessary, by documentary evidence. If fraud is suspected details of the application should be referred to the Chief Executive prior to the issue of the document in question.
- b) Errors in Certificates. - Simple errors can be dealt with prior to issue of the certificate by ensuring that the incorrect entry is crossed out and the correct detail entered. Such alteration should be 'alteration approved' by the issuing body. If, however, the extent of the alterations on the form are such as to render it



unintelligible the issuing body should refuse the Certificate and request a new application. If errors are reported or detected after the Certificate has been issued the position is more difficult. The issuing body must contact the applicant and secure the return of the original and all copy certificates issued. Alternatively, another Certificate can be issued following the “replacement” procedure as explained in sub-paragraph (a) above. Advice on action to be taken will depend on the circumstances of the case.

- c) Mutilated Certificates. - These should be refused in the same way as unintelligible certificates. N.B. Such cases usually occur when the issuing body charges the certification fee on purchase of the blank forms. Some issuing bodies avoid problems with mutilated certificates by offering a replacement service at a nominal charge. This ensures that the applicant does not ‘lose’ the benefit of the certification charge already paid.
  
- d) Retrospective application for copy certificates. - Additional copies are occasionally requested after the documents certified on first submission have been issued. This is acceptable provided that the Original Certificate number is entered on the copies and the copies are checked with the application copy on file to ensure that the details on the copies correspond precisely with the original. If this is the case the additional copies can be issued and the details noted on the application form. It is not essential that they be signed by the same authorised signatory that signed the original forms.

### **XIII. E-practices**

1. Chambers of Commerce and Industry do recognize the importance to move forward on the delivery of electronic services to its members. This service provides or will provide a number of advantages to the applicant including, among others, an increased speed of the certificate of origin and ATA Carnets' processing, cost savings, security of the information received and sent, and a professional end-product. Moreover, Chambers of Commerce and Industry will strongly encourage exporters to use and/or increase the usage of electronic certificates in the best interests of the exports community's economy and efficiency.

2. Two e-systems can be designed or are already being used:

a) **Partial service:** this service is open to all exporters and allows the exporters to print the documents in their office. These documents are then stamped the same way the certificates of origin which were received via post or presented in person.

b) **Full service:** this service allows the exporters to print fully certified certificates of origin in their office because the certifying stamps and signatures are generated electronically.

Chambers of Commerce and Industry have the freedom to choose how far they want to go in the sense of implementing the partial or the full service.

3. Chambers of Commerce and Industry are willing to exchange among themselves best practices in this field, for the benefit of the whole network.