

The EAC has developed since 2018 a web-based Regional Electronic Cargo Tracking System (RECTS) that is currently implemented along the Northern Corridor from the place of departure to destination within the territories of Kenya, Rwanda, and Uganda. The system, which is used also to monitor the movement of vehicles carrying goods in transit along some sections of the Central Corridor, is based on the use of GPS/GPRS and Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology devices that allow customs administrations in the Region to track the movement of vehicles along road corridors moving from one point to the other, so to ensure the integrity of consignments. The RECTS is based on the use of electronic seals that must be affixed on trucks and that are provided by one of the companies licensed by the Revenue Authorities of EAC partner States. Once completed the trip, the device is returned to the company so that it can be transferred and re-used by other trucks.

Apart from enhancing cargo security and curbing diversions of cargo, the RECTS has also important implications for transporters because it gives them visibility of cargo, which enhances recovery of vehicles in case of theft and offers them the opportunity to monitor the drivers driving habits (e.g., speed, mileage, fuel usage, truck utilization).

Movement of trucks along the two corridors is monitored by specific Regional Command Operating Centres (COCs) currently located in five (5) countries at designated offices of the revenue authorities: in Kenya, Uganda, Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda and now [also in Burundi](#)

. The Burundi COC was inaugurated on 23 August 2023. An additional COC is planned to be set up in South Sudan. The Command Centres monitor the movement of trucks in real time on screen and share information with each other. Every time such an incident occurs or an irregularity is detected (e.g., a stop in a not authorized place along the route or a prolonged stop), an alert is sent to the COCs hosted in each country, so that a rapid response team can be sent on the spot for verification. Rapid response teams have at their disposal fast vehicles and computer tablets to localize the violation scene with accuracy and precision.

Before the regional cargo tracking system was adopted, each EAC Partner State had its own national ECTS in operation, where GPS trackers or electronic seals were applied at the entry office in each Partner State and removed at their exit, being them not accepted by the other transiting countries. This forced operators to buy different seals along the transit route. The main difference with national Electronic Cargo Tracking System (ECTS) is that in the RECTS, the electronic seal is affixed at the place of loading (departure) and removed at the office of arrival in the destination country, which means that the movement of cargo is monitored along all the corridor, from end to end, and not only in the transport segment located within each transit country. The use of only one type of seal also removes the need for arming and

disarming the electronic seals at the EAC Partner States' territorial borders. Therefore, ECTSs reduce delays for transit goods, with substantial cost savings for transport companies. When used effectively, they have potential to lower transit costs by eliminating the need for bonds or guarantees, due to increased security for Customs, as these technologies reduce the possibility of offloading of cargo while in transit and make real time enforcement of violations by transiting vehicles possible.

Electronic seals represent a physically secure mechanism which ensures that goods present at the start of the transit operation will leave the transit country in the same quantities, form and status. These seals incorporate a microchip that activates if broken or if there is any tampering or intrusion effort, with alerts sent via satellite to Customs or other security agencies, that can quickly intervene.