

Interpretation Process

Edition: 01 | Date: 25-02-25 | A Smart Freight Centre initiative

1. Scope and Purpose

1.1. This document outlines the Smart Freight Centre (SFC) process and fee schedule for interpretation and analysis services, which are provided to members, Approved VVBs and Listed ERs only by the Methods, Standards and Assurance (MS&A) team.

1.2. It does not cover how SFC addresses requests for revision of standards and guidelines, or the development of new standards and guidelines. Such requests shall be managed on a case-by-case basis. It does not cover pilot projects, which are managed on a case-by-case basis and closely associated with new standards and scheme expansions. It does not cover consultancy, which SFC does not provide.

1.3. For fees related to training (including on-job training), see the SFC Academy website. For fees related to the Conformity Assurance Scheme, see **ASU-FEE-001-2** and **ASU-FEE-002-2**.

1.4. This procedure becomes effective on the date of issue indicated above.

2. Definitions

2.1. **Technical query:** Query whose reply requires specialized knowledge on scientific methods, standards or assurance in the fields where SFC operates. Some technical queries might be replied with a simple email, a publication on our FAQs webpage, or an interpretation:

2.2. **Interpretation:** a formal normative clarification related to requirements included in documents of the SFC normative structure. The SFC normative structure is the collection of SFC Specifications, Manuals and Procedures which are mandatory for Approved VVBs, Listed ERs, and Applicants (and any other party as specified in a document's scope).

3. Procedures and Fees

3.1. Background and Fees

3.1.1. Generally, discussion of the application of standards and guidelines published by SFC are covered by the Membership Fee. They are generally provided in webinars and workshops, and sometimes in short calls and via email.

3.1.2. However in some cases the need for more in-depth discussion, interpretation and analysis of use cases may require significant time. This is particularly relevant for specific use cases that are unique to a certain context or transport chain. For these interpretations and other ad hoc



exceptional work, it may be possible for SFC to reply to requests in a structured way. This depends on limitations due to the need for impartiality or resource availability.

3.1.3. SFC reserves the right to charge for this work. SFC shall inform the party in question in advance of these activities with a quote for the estimated fee for them.

3.1.4. Each member, Approved VVB or Listed ER will have the right to request and obtain two (2) interpretations per year as part of their membership/ approval/ listing.

3.2. Requesting Interpretation services

3.2.1. To request SFC for an interpretation of one of their normative or guidance documents, the service user shall use template **ASU-TPL-018-2 Interpretation request**, which can be obtained on the SFC website, or requested by email from assurance@smartfreightcentre.org. All fields shall be filled in, and the template shall be sent via email using the address assurance@smartfreightcentre.org.

3.2.2. SFC shall reply, and indicate if a fee is applicable, as well as the timeline for finalization of the interpretation.

3.2.3. Interpretations might also be sent in reply to a technical query from a third party, on a case-by-case basis and at the discretion of SFC.

3.2.4. SFC reserves the right to summarize its written interpretations in a publicly available document (**SFC-INT-001-2 Interpretations public summary**). On regular intervals, SFC summarizes the interpretations it has provided and uploads them on their website.

3.3. Responsibilities

3.3.1. When an MS&A team member receives a request for interpretation, they check that the template is correctly filled in and communicate with the sender in case it is not. When it is complete, they follow the (internal) **MSA-PRO-001-1 MS&A Service Console process** to arrive at a final version of the interpretation.

3.3.2. The timelines for processing replies to interpretations are:

3.3.2.1. From receiving a technical query to replying it will be answered as an interpretation: 2 weeks.

3.3.2.2. From receiving a fully completed interpretation form to accepting it as complete and sending a quote, if applicable: 3 weeks.

3.3.2.3. From receiving a fully completed interpretation form or quote acceptance (if applicable) to sending final reply: depending on the topic, complexity etc., timeline is variable and will be set during step 2.



4. Related policies and other information

- 4.1. Assurance Fees for ERs (ASU-FEE-001-2)
- 4.2. Assurance Fees for VVBs (ASU-FEE-002-2)
- 4.3. Interpretation request (ASU-TPL-018-2)
- 4.4. Interpretations public summary (SFC-INT-001-2)
- 4.5. MS&A Service Console Process (MSA-PRO-001-1)

Version history

1	25/02/2025	First edition
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