

Sars' paperless initiative gains momentum

August 1 was the implementation deadline of mandatory electronic communication with Customs by clearing and forwarding agents and other supply chain participants – including direct importers and exporters who currently submit more than 20 schedules or declarations a month.

“All CoreFreight clearing and forwarding clients were ready for the paperless environment,” says Glenn Lawson of Core Freight Systems, the South African specialist software service provider. “The change was relatively easy for us as existing clients already process literally thousands of paperless EDI submissions per month through the CoreFreight application. However the key to success of this initiative is for all parties in the chain to have systems able to receive and process the Sars messages, and this may take some time to achieve.”

The Transnet Port Terminals/National Ports Authority EDI link provides another opportunity for agents to pursue the paperless submission of cargo dues.

The benefits associated with a paperless environment, as identified by Sars include improved risk management, a reduction in error rates and vastly improved speed in processing transactions within the organisation. “The general advantages of EDI are however not restricted to this



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aspect of the business,” Lawson points out. “The modern CoreFreight application design facilitates the transfer of data electronically with other applications used either internally by CoreFreight Users or their external partners. These have proved to be robust and reliable – with significant reductions in processing time reported by the users. EDI goes beyond Customs communications and all agents should consider its potential in their business.”