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English version

## Electronic invoicing - Part 3: Conformance Criteria for Interoperability between Electronic Invoicing Services

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## **Foreword**

This CEN Workshop Agreement has been drafted and approved by a Workshop of representatives of interested parties on 2012-02-15, the constitution of which was supported by CEN following the public call for participation made on 2010-02-26.

A list of the individuals and organizations which supported the technical consensus represented by the CEN Workshop Agreement is available to purchasers from the CEN-CENELEC Management Centre. The following organizations endorsed this document:

- AITI, Italy
- CEGEDIM, France
- Charles Bryant, consultant, UK
- Dr. Otto Mueller Consulting, Switzerland
- Hilti Corporation, Liechtenstein
- Hub2Hub, Italy
- ID Cyber-Identity Ltd, Switzerland
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- OFS Portal LLC, USA
- Orange – France Telecom Group, France
- Sage France, France
- SERES, France
- STS Group, Belgium
- Trustweaver Sweden, Sweden
- Voxel Group, Spain
- xft GmbH, Germany

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The draft CWA was presented and discussed with industry representatives during two Open meetings, the first on September 22 and the other on December 12, 2011, both held in Brussels. The public comments period run from July 15th 2011 until September 15th 2011.

The final review/endorsement round for this CWA was started on 2012-04-04 and was successfully closed on 2012-04-16. The final text of this CWA was submitted to CEN for publication on 2012-04-18.

This CWA is part of a set of CWAs that has been prepared by Phase II and Phase III of CEN/WS e-Invoicing.

## CWA 16464-3:2012 (E)

The following persons from the CEN/WS eInvoicing III Working Group 3 participated in the work of this document:

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Comments or suggestions from the users of the CEN Workshop Agreement are welcome and should be addressed to the CEN-CENELEC Management Centre.

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## **1 Introduction**

This CWA is published in the wake of three significant recent developments affecting electronic invoicing in Europe:

- In November 2009 the European Commission e-Invoicing Expert Group[11] published a set of Guidance Recommendations for Interoperability intended to guide stakeholders who make use of e-invoicing within the European Union. These recommendations form part of the proposed EEIF (European E-invoicing Framework) as set out in the Expert Group's Final Report.
- On July 13, 2010, the Council of the European Union adopted a new Directive that should simplify e-invoicing in Europe in the future. It is Directive 2010/45/EU[9] amending Directive 2006/112/EU. Three significant components of that Directive inform this CWA:
  - A. First, "business controls" have been elevated as a suitable means of proving the "authenticity" and "integrity" of the electronic invoices.
  - B. Second, the Directive adopts the general principle that electronic invoices and paper invoices should be treated equally, with no greater burdens imposed on one over the other form of invoice.
  - C. Third, EU member countries have until January 1, 2013 to adopt national legislation implementing this new directive. This CWA is published before that process is complete and therefore the authors cannot be certain whether new national variations – and legal barriers—will be introduced among member states when they adopt their own legislation.
- On December 2, 2010, the European Commission issued a communication titled "Reaping the benefits of Electronic Invoicing in Europe"[6], which calls for more action to accelerate adoption of e-invoicing in Europe. The Commission announced a goal that e-invoicing will be the "predominant" means of invoicing in Europe by 2020.

In the latter communication, the Commission requested CEN to develop a "Code of Practice" to be adopted by trading parties, service providers and public authorities to include a consistent terminology and a definition of roles and responsibilities of the distinct actors in the e-invoicing process. This CWA defines elements relating to interoperability between e-invoicing services that are included in that Code of Practice. The Code of Practice itself is the subject of a separate CWA 00005.

### **1.1 Background - Current market reality**

Proliferation of standards and the lack of clear interoperability guidelines, as well as legal barriers, have acted as a hindrance to the uptake of e-business and e-invoicing by both SMEs and larger organizations. This is well illustrated in the Expert Group report and the Commission's "Reaping the Benefits" communication. It is valid as a starting point for this **CWA 16464-3: Conformance Criteria for Interoperability between Electronic Invoicing Services**.

### **1.2 Definition of Interoperability**

CEN, in its 2002 CR "Health Informatics - Interoperability of healthcare multimedia report systems" has defined interoperability as: "a state which exists between two application entities when, with regard to a specific task, one application entity can accept data from the other and perform that task in

an appropriate and satisfactory manner without the need for extra operator intervention.” CEN Report CR 14300:2002.

Another definition of interoperability defines it as “the ability of information and communication technology (ICT) systems and of business processes they support to exchange data and to enable the sharing of information and knowledge.” European Interoperability Framework for Pan European e-Government Services, EIF 1:0.

Interoperability is, however, a broad term. As the Expert Group pointed out, interoperability involves three levels of interaction:

1. Business and organizational interoperability
2. Process interoperability
3. Technical interoperability

While recognizing there are several layers of interoperability, the scope for interoperability addressed in this document is limited to the area of transmission and processing between service providers acting for the trading parties in relation to the transmission and processing e-invoices and other electronic business documents as depicted in the diagram below:

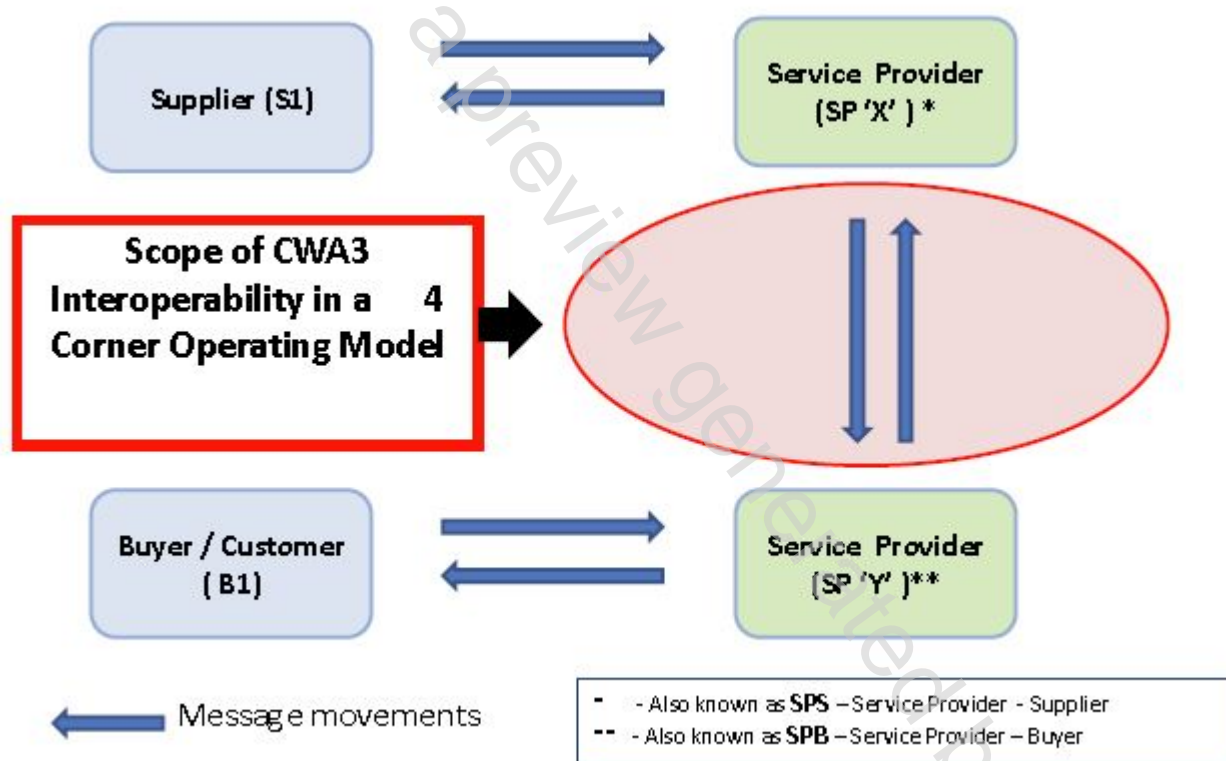


Figure 1

### 1.3 Objectives and Scope of this CWA

The scope of **CWA 16464-3: Conformance criteria for interoperability across e-business services** is very specific within the working framework of the CEN/WS e-invoicing Phase 3, namely to foster interoperability across e-Invoicing Services.

## **CWA 16464-3:2012 (E)**

This CWA is intended for the use of providers of e-invoicing services to their customers. However it also has implications for, and will be of value to trading parties, both buyers and sellers. Trading parties often engage service and solution providers to implement electronic invoicing. While such services currently are readily available for trading parties within a Member State, it will be increasingly important to identify service providers, who provide compliant and interoperable electronic invoicing services that are ready to be used widely across Europe and globally.

This CWA forms one of three CWA's designed to promote interoperability across such services:

- **CWA 16464-1: Addressing and Routing**
- **CWA 16464-2: Model Interoperability Agreement for Transmission and Processing of Electronic Invoices and other Business Documents**
- **CWA 16464-3: Conformance Criteria for Interoperability between Electronic Invoicing Services**