

UNITED NATIONS  
ECONOMIC  
AND  
SOCIAL COUNCIL



LIMITED  
E/CEPAL/L.179  
29 August 1978  
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

C E P A L  
Economic Commission for Latin America

COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT PORT/LOCATION CODE 1/

1/ ECE/TRADE/WP.4/GE.1/R.107

78-8-1801



COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT PORT/LOCATION CODE 1/

For a number of years, ECLA has been cooperating with other international organizations in an effort to devise a generally-applicable code for the identification of places where certain transport activities occur, particularly those related to international trade. There now appears to be a fairly general consensus that such a code should in principle incorporate the ISO Alpha-2 Country Code, followed by a three-letter designator for the specific location within the country that would correspond whenever feasible to an existing IATA airport code for that place. Such a code would be entirely in agreement with the port codes developed by the ECLA/Organization of American States Joint Transport Program, which have been revised to conform to this format.

In the interest of formalizing the consensus thus far reached, the secretariat of the Working Party on Facilitation of International Trade Procedures has prepared and circulated for comments a draft Note on the location code (TRADE/WP.4/GE.1/R.107) that will be submitted for consideration by the Group of Experts on Automatic Data Processing and Coding at its September 1978 session. Since part of the background material for this Note was provided by ECLA, which worked out and tested a tentative scheme for maintaining a computerized location code file known as LOCODE, ECLA is pleased to have the opportunity to review the draft and to offer the following comments on it.

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1/ ECE/TRADE/WP.4/GE.1/R.107

a) Scope of application

ECLA suggests that reconsideration be given to the recommendation that codes be assigned only to places that include customs control, as required by the definition of "location" given in TRADE/WP.4/GE.1/R.84. It is expected that location codes will find wide use in through bills of lading, in which case many of the places included will not be engaged in customs control. Since the primary burden of maintenance is expected to fall on governments, to the extent that they will designate both the places and the codes to be included, and since the code file is to be managed by computer, widening the scope of application to include all places suggested by the governments should create no insuperable difficulty for the maintenance agency.

b) Code structure and elements

ECLA's view is that the location code represents physical places, rather than names, in exactly the same way that a street address is a coded representation of where one's house is located. ECLA does not believe it appropriate to include in the code an element whose principal purpose is to provide information about the transport functions or facilities available at a location. Such is the role of a catalogue like the publication Ports of the World, and not of a location code designed specifically as a shorthand form of an address.

This is not to say that no transport function should be deducible from the code. In distinguishing between the airports, ports, rail terminals and the like that are located in a city, it would be entirely possible to assign to each a purely arbitrary code as IATA has done with its unique three-letter code for each airport. Considering the number of locations within a country that may ultimately require codes, however, it seems likely that ease of understanding

/and use

and use of the code will be facilitated if it is structured so as to refer first to the country, then to the city or principal location within the country, then to the type of terminal (air, port, etc.) and finally to the specific terminal or subterminal within that type. The type indicator serves the further purpose of permitting the code listings to be classified according to the type of terminal, so that a person looking for the code corresponding to a particular freight depot at one of the railway stations in a city can go directly to the section of the listing dealing with railway stations.

The difference between this terminal type indicator and a function code is subtle but real. The latter is useful only if complete information about the functions in a city is available, whereas the former merely serves to make the code itself more manageable, in much the same way as does the country code.

It should be noted that the approach to a code structure outlined above does not make provision for handling airport codes in a manner different from all others. In theory, there is no reason to make any distinction, but in practice, it must be recognized that the existence of a unique code for each airport makes possible the substitution of the terminal code for the city code. Thus, for example, John F. Kennedy airport in New York City could be coded as either US NYC 1 JFK or as US JFK 1. Rules for usage of the shortened code should be agreed upon by the Working Party.

c) Recommended code structure

ECLA recommends a four-level code structure containing the following elements:

- i) Two-letter ISO Alpha-2 country code.
- ii) Three-letter location code, based on the IATA airport code, that identifies the city or metropolitan area.
- iii) One-digit terminal type indicator. The types so far

/identified, in

identified, in the order of their probable occurrence in a large sample of locations, are

<u>Terminal</u>	<u>Indicator</u>
Airport	1
Port	2
Rail	3
Road	4
Inland freight	5

iv) Sublocation code of varying length. A sublocation may be any place that requires a separate identification. This code element will undoubtedly require its own well-defined structure, but without a great deal of additional study it is impossible to suggest one. (The sublocation codes presented in the examples below are for purposes of illustration only and do not conform to a predetermined structure.) It is suggested that consideration be given by the Working Party to drawing up standards for the assignment and use of the sublocation code.

Example A

The port of New York City: US NYC 2. The element US denotes the country, NYC the location New York City within the country and 2 the port.

Example B

Grand Central railway station in New York City: US NYC 3 G. The elements US and NYC have the same meanings as above, while 3 indicates a railway terminal. However, since there is at least one other mayor railway terminal in New York City, the unequivocal designation of Grand Central requires the addition of a sublocation code such as G.

/ Example C

Example C

John F. Kennedy airport in New York City: In this case, there are two possibilities. In strict compliance with the structure described above the code would be US NYC 1 JFK, where 1 indicates an air terminal and JFK denotes the sublocation John F. Kennedy airport within New York City. However, it is known that a unique IATA location code exists that directly identifies this airport, so in practice it is foreseen that the code US JFK 1 also may be used in some applications.

Example D

Hobby airport in Houston, Texas: As in the previous example, there are two possibilities. In this example, however, the code for the city of Houston is the same as the IATA code for Hobby airport - HOU. Thus the complete code is US HOU 1 HOU.

Example E

The Eastern Airlines terminal at John F. Kennedy airport: The complete code is US NYC 1 JFK EA. The element EA is the official IATA airline code for Eastern Airlines.

d) Presentation

It seems premature to discuss the rules for presenting location, terminal and subterminal names in listings before analysis of the LOCODE record content and layout is complete. Indeed, if the file is managed by a system that provides a flexible record formatting mechanism, punctuation may not be kept in the record at all but rather supplied as required or appropriate at the moment of printing. This is the procedure that ECLA has followed in the sample LOCODE catalogues reproduced below.

e) Record content

ECLA initially believed that there should be only one LOCODE record for each principal location and that this record should contain

/all the

all the available information about every terminal and subterminal in that location. The first experimental LOCODE listings were produced from a file set up on this basis. Subsequent study of resulting data management problems have indicated that the file might better be organized on the basis of one record for each separate terminal or subterminal, which was the scheme used in the preparation of the sample catalogues below. The question is still not considered resolved, and cannot be until all the details of the code structure have been worked out.

f) Sample listings

On the following pages are presented two sample LOCODE listings: a Principal Locations Catalogue and a Decoding Catalogue. As mentioned above, these were produced from a file containing one record for each individual terminal or subterminal, which in effect means that each of the 39 entries in the listings was produced from a separate record. None of the punctuation or explanatory words are included in the file, but rather were added at the moment of printing, which permits the sort of flexibility of presentation that is shown, and also avoids one possible source of error in data entry.

The formats shown appear reasonable, but they by no means constitute recommendations. ECLA feels that i) the handling of sub-terminal codes must be worked out before any final determination of format should be attempted and that, ii) with a sufficiently flexible file management system, the format can probably be left to the desires of the individual users. The code structure, rather than the name of the location for which it stands, is what requires a complete set of syntactical rules, in order for it to function effectively in contexts such as those now being established for the electronic transmission of data.



D E C O D I N G   C A T A L O G U E

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BRAZIL

BR	ITJ	1	NAVEGANTES AIRPORT, ITAJAI, SANTA CATARINA
BR	ITJ	2	PORT OF ITAJAI, SANTA CATARINA
BR	SSA	1	2 DE JULHO AIRPORT, SALVADOR, BAHIA
BR	SSA	2	PORT OF SALVADOR, BAHIA
BR	VIX	1	EURICO SALES AIRPORT, VITORIA, ESPIRITO SANTO
BR	VIX	2	PORT OF VITORIA, ESPIRITO SANTO

UNITED STATES

US	AAP	1	ANDRAU PARK AIRPORT, HOUSTON, TEXAS
US	BTR	1	RYAN AIRPORT, BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA
US	BTR	2	PORT OF BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA
US	BTR	2	PORT OF BURNSIDE - SEE BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA
US	DWH	1	DAVID HAYNE AIRPORT, HOUSTON, TEXAS
US	FD	1	ELLINGTON AFB AIRPORT, HOUSTON, TEXAS
US	EWR	1	NEWARK AIRPORT, NEW YORK, NEW YORK
US	FLU	1	FLUSHING AIRPORT, NEW YORK, NEW YORK
US	HOU	1	HOBBY AIRPORT, HOUSTON, TEXAS
US	HOU	2	PORT OF HOUSTON, TEXAS
US	IAH	1	HOUSTON INTERCONTINENTAL AIRPORT, HOUSTON, TEXAS
US	JFK	1	JOHN F. KENNEDY AIRPORT, NEW YORK, NEW YORK
US	JFK	1	EASTERN AIRLINES TERM / JOHN F. KENNEDY AIRPORT, NEW YORK, NEW YORK
US	JRB	1	PAN AMERICAN AIRPORT, NEW YORK, NEW YORK
US	JRB	1	WEST 30TH STREET AIRPORT, NEW YORK, NEW YORK
US	JRB	1	111 HALL STREET AIRPORT, NEW YORK, NEW YORK
US	LGA	1	LA GUARDIA AIRPORT, NEW YORK, NEW YORK
US	MSY	1	MOISANT INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA
US	NBG	1	ALVIN CAL NAS AIRPORT, NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA
US	NEH	1	LAKE FRONT AIRPORT, NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA
US	NEH	2	PORT OF NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA
US	NEH	2	PORT OF UPSTREMAN / NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA
US	NEH	2	PORT OF RESEKVE / NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA
US	NEH	2	PORT OF SAINT ROSE / NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA
US	NYC	2	PORT OF NEW YORK, NEW YORK
US	NYC	2	PORT OF BROOKLYN / NEW YORK, NEW YORK
US	NYC	2	PORT OF MANHATTAN / NEW YORK, NEW YORK
US	NYC	2	GRAND CENTRAL STATION / NEW YORK, NEW YORK
US	NYC	3	PENNSYLVANIA STATION / NEW YORK, NEW YORK
US	SGR	1	MULL FIELD AIRPORT, HOUSTON, TEXAS
US	SPX	1	SPACELAND AIRPORT, HOUSTON, TEXAS
US	TSS	1	34TH STREET SPB AIRPORT, NEW YORK, NEW YORK
US	WSS	1	WALL STREET SPB AIRPORT, NEW YORK, NEW YORK



P R I N C I P A L   L O C A T I O N   C A T A L O G U E

BATON ROUGE	LOUISIANA	UNITED STATES	US	BTR	
AIR	: RYAN		US	BTR	1
PORT	: BATON ROUGE		US	BTR	2
PORT	: BURNSIDE - SEE BATON ROUGE		US	BTR	2
HOUSTON	TEXAS	UNITED STATES	US	HOU	
AIR	: HOBBY		US	HOU	1
AIR	: HOUSTON INTERCONTINENTAL		US	IAM	1
AIR	: ANORAU PARK		US	AAP	1
AIR	: DAVID WAYNE		US	DBH	1
AIR	: ELLINGTON AFB		US	EFD	1
AIR	: HULL FIELD		US	SGR	1
AIR	: SPACELAND		US	SPX	1
PORT	: HOUSTON		US	HOU	2
ITAJAI	SANTA CATARINA	BRAZIL	BR	ITJ	
AIR	: NAVEGANTES		BR	ITJ	1
PORT	: ITAJAI		BR	ITJ	2
NEW ORLEANS	LOUISIANA	UNITED STATES	US	NEH	
AIR	: LAKE FRONT		US	NEH	1
AIR	: MOISANT INTERNATIONAL		US	MSY	1
AIR	: ALVIN CAL HAS		US	NBG	1
PORT	: NEW ORLEANS		US	NEH	2
PORT	: DESTREHAN / NEW ORLEANS		US	NEH	2
PORT	: RESERVE / NEW ORLEANS		US	NEH	2
PORT	: SAINT ROSE / NEW ORLEANS		US	NEH	2
NEW YORK	NEW YORK	UNITED STATES	US	NYC	
AIR	: JOHN F. KENNEDY		US	JFK	1
AIR	: EASTERN AIRLINES TERM / JOHN F. KENNEDY		US	JFK	1
AIR	: LA GUARDIA		US	LGA	1
AIR	: NEWARK		US	EBR	1
AIR	: FLUSHING		US	FLU	1
AIR	: PAN AMERICAN		US	JOB	1
AIR	: WALL STREET SPB		US	MSS	1
AIR	: WEST 30TH STREET		US	JRB	1
AIR	: 111 WALL STREET		US	JRB	1
AIR	: 34TH STREET SPB		US	TSS	1
PORT	: NEW YORK		US	NYC	2
PORT	: BROOKLYN / NEW YORK		US	NYC	2
PORT	: MANHATTAN / NEW YORK		US	NYC	2
RAIL	: GRAND CENTRAL / NEW YORK		US	NYC	3
RAIL	: PENNSYLVANIA / NEW YORK		US	NYC	3
SALVADOR	BAHIA	BRAZIL	BR	SSA	
AIR	: 2 DE JULHO		BR	SSA	1
PORT	: SALVADOR		BR	SSA	2
VITORIA	ESPIRITO SANTO	BRAZIL	BR	VIX	
AIR	: EURICO SALES		BR	VIX	1
PORT	: VITORIA		BR	VIX	2

