APPAREL AND GENERAL MERCHANDISE

GS1 US Bill of Lading (BOL)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

R2.1 — OCT 26 2015

GS1 US

THE GLOBAL LANGUAGE
OF BUSINESS

CONTENTS

NOTE: This version has been revised solely to reflect that the materials herein are proprietary to GS1 US following the merger of GS1 US with Voluntary Interindustry Commerce Solutions® (VICS®) in 2012 and does not contain any other material changes.

ABOUT GS1

GS1® is a neutral, not-for-profit, global organization that develops and maintains the most widely-used supply chain standards system in the world. GS1 Standards improve the efficiency, safety, and visibility of supply chains across multiple sectors. With local Member Organizations in over 110 countries, GS1 engages with communities of trading partners, industry organizations, governments, and technology providers to understand and respond to their business needs through the adoption and implementation of global standards. GS1 is driven by over a million user companies, which execute more than six billion transactions daily in 150 countries using GS1 Standards.

ABOUT GS1 US

GS1 US, a member of the global information standards organization GS1, brings industry communities together to solve supply-chain problems through the adoption and implementation of GS1 Standards. Nearly 300,000 businesses in 25 industries rely on GS1 US for trading-partner collaboration and for maximizing the cost effectiveness, speed, visibility, security and sustainability of their business processes. They achieve these benefits through solutions based on GS1 global unique numbering and identification systems, barcodes, Electronic Product Code (EPC®)-enabled RFID, data synchronization, and electronic information exchange. GS1 US also manages the United Nations Standard Products and Services Code® (UNSPSC®). www.GS1US.org.

NOTE: As with all GS1 Standards and solutions, the GS1 US Bill of Lading guideline is voluntary, not mandatory. It should be noted that use of the words "must" and "require" throughout this document relate exclusively to technical recommendations for the proper application of the standard to support the integrity of your implementation.

1. *Can the legal statements after the Carrier Information Section be changed or modified by the Shipper?*

   Yes. The Shipper can modify the legal <u>terminology</u> (per the advice of their legal counsel). The key for the GS1 US Bill of Lading (BOL) standard is the <u>placement</u> of that section in the BOL as specified in the GS1 US BOL standard. The language can be modified, but the section may not be removed or relocated per the standard. Similarly, the space provided for the modified legal terminology must not displace or eliminate other data sections and/or fields in the BOL pursuant to the standard.

2. *Can I use the landscape version of the GS1 US BOL format without the barcode area?*

   No. The landscape version is specifically provided for BOLs that have the data content encoded in a 2-dimensional barcode for automatic identification and data capture (AIDC) (i.e., scanning) by the Carrier.

3. *Can I add negotiable or non-negotiable terminology to the form heading?*

   Yes. You can add this terminology within the heading as long as it does not interfere with the layout of the form.

4. *Can a Shipper or Retailer add company-specific data columns or data sections to the GS1 US BOL?*

   No. Maintaining the GS1 US BOL standard format requires that the format remain intact within the rules of use *[see Section IV. Rules of Use in the* GS1 US Voluntary Guidelines for the Bill of Lading *("GS1 US BOL Guidelines")]*. However, data tags are permitted for identifying company-specific data within certain sections (e.g., Special Instructions; Customer Order Information-Additional Shipper Info. Column; etc.). Examples of data tags include: Dept. 123; Deliver By 10/23/02; CHEP Pallets 40.

5. *Can companies modify the space provided in the standard GS1 US BOL format?*

   Yes. The GS1 US BOL Guidelines *(Section IV. Rules of Use)* outlines acceptable modifications to the GS1 US BOL. The key is that all mandatory data sections and fields must be present, and the geographic location of the sections and fields must be maintained. In addition, any conditional data sections and fields that apply to the shipment must be present as well. Please refer to the GS1 US BOL Guidelines *Section VIII. Mandatory vs. Conditional Fields* and *Section IX. Data Field Descriptions* for further guidance; and *Appendix A (examples 3 and 4)* for common format variations.

6. *Can I include item-specific detail (e.g., style number, description, case pack, GS1-128 symbology, etc.) within the Customer Order Information or Carrier Information sections?*

   No. Except for hazardous material shipments, item-specific detail is prohibited in the GS1 US BOL standard. If item details are required for Carrier rating or Consignee processing, the information is to be placed on an attached Shipment Packing List.

7. Do I have to convert to the 17-digit GS1 US BOL number?

Yes. In 2003, the 17-digit GS1 US BOL number became a mandatory part of the GS1 US BOL Guidelines.

8. If my company has more than one GS1 Company Prefix, do I have to create separate BOLs for each?

No. A company that has multiple GS1 Company Prefixes can determine which prefix(es) will be used to create BOL number(s). This is an internal data management decision for each company. The key is using a GS1 Company Prefix to ensure the creation of unique BOL numbers within the marketplace.

9. Do I have to barcode the Bill of Lading number?

No. Barcoding the BOL number and/or SCAC-PRO# is optional, depending on your primary Carrier's ability to use the barcode for AIDC. Please see *Section III (page 11)* of the *GS1 US BOL Guidelines* for specific instructions and warnings.

10. How do I print a barcode?

The barcode printing process requires a specific technical knowledge of the GS1-128 symbology. Technical assistance is critical to ensure consistent quality and readability of the barcodes created. Further information on the specific technical specifications for the GS1-128 can be obtained from GS1 US at www.gs1us.org/ or by calling the GS1 US Member Services at 937-435-3870. For an on-demand webinar on apparel industry best practices for using GS1-128, visit GS1 US online at https://www.gs1us.org/industries/apparel-general-merchandise/education/general-industry-education.

11. Am I allowed to barcode the BOL number in a symbology other than the GS1-128 for my Carriers?

No. The *GS1 US BOL Guidelines* specifically use the GS1-128 barcode symbology. The barcode symbology used for the Bill of Lading and the SCAC/PRO shall comply with the GS1-128 standards.

12. Is GS1 Application Identifier 402 part of the 17-digit GS1 US BOL number?

No. GS1 Application Identifiers (AIs) are specialized identifiers encoded within barcodes to indicate the type of data represented in the various barcode segments so that scanning software can interpret or recognize the data being scanned. Each data element in a barcode is preceded by its AI, and the human-readable text under the barcode presents AIs in parentheses to distinguish the AI numbers from the actual data.

For example, the AI for a Bill of Lading is AI (402). AI (402) tells the scanning system that next 17-digits is a BOL number. Figure 1 presents barcode encoding a hypothetical Bill of Lading. The human-readable text under the barcode is **(402)06141411234567906**. **(402)** is the AI, and **06141411234567906** is the Bill of Lading number.

(402) 06141411234567906

Figure 1: GS1 128 barcode encoding a Bill of Lading number

The AI for a SCAC/PRO is AI (9012K). AI (9012K) tells the scanning system that next 24-digits is a SCAC/PRO number. Figure 2 presents barcode encoding a hypothetical SCAC/PRO number. The human-readable text under the barcode is **(9012K)SCAC12345678901234567890**. **(9012K)** is the AI, and **SCAC12345678901234567890** is the SCAC/PRO number.

(9012K) SCAC12345678901234567890

Figure 2: GS1 128 barcode encoding an SCAC/PRO number

13. *I plan on printing the GS1 US BOL on a continuous-feed impact printer. Use of this print method does not allow for varying print point size, bolding, lines and shading. Do I have to change to a different print method?*

No. Use of continuous-feed impact printers is allowed as long as the data sections are clearly identifiable (e.g., with the use of asterisks) and the key data elements (i.e., BOL, Ship-to Location, SCAC/PRO, and Customer Order Numbers) are clearly identifiable by location and spacing.

14. *Do I have to include the data separator lines within the Customer Order and Carrier Information sections?*

No. Data separator lines are not required. Based on some printer applications, it is advantageous not to include the lines due to printer alignment issues and print quality.

15. *Do I have to use the supplemental BOL if I have too many items to fit on one page? Can't I just print duplicates of the first page?*

No. Printing duplicates of the first page to allow for more data in either the Customer Order or Carrier Information sections is not allowed pursuant to the *GS1 US BOL Guidelines*. Instead, use the Supplement page, which was specifically developed to standardize how such situations are handled.

16. *There's no room for the Carrier's signature in the Carrier Signature/Pick-Up Date box. Can I expand the size to allow for signatures?*

Yes. It is acceptable to add more space for the signatures. The actual size of the GS1 US BOL form is 8.5" x 11".

17. *Can I expand the Carrier Information Section to the back of the BOL?*

No. The back of the GS1 US BOL format is specifically reserved for the terms and conditions of the shipment when a separate contract is not in effect. It is important to adhere to this requirement in order to maintain a standard expectation of data presentation within the supply chain.

18. *How do I handle multiple copies?*

If your company currently uses multiple copies of a BOL, then you are free to implement the GS1 US Bill of Lading standard in the same way. The use of multiple copies and the number of copies are for each company to decide for themselves. However, note that GS1 US has made no provision for alternate text, so all copies would look exactly the same unless you use different colors for each copy.

19. If I have 50 underlying BOLs on a Master BOL. Does the Carrier have to sign all 50 copies?

The requirement to have the Carrier sign all 50 copies is a matter for the individual Shipper to decide based on liability considerations. The recommended process is to have the Shipper and the Carrier sign only the Master BOL for the following two reasons:

1. The PRO# and freight rating are done from the Master BOL.

2. The Master BOL and underlying BOLs cross-reference to each other.

20. Where can I get a Bill of Lading (BOL) form based on the GS1 US standard?

Contact your third-party logistics solution provider for a Bill of Lading form based on the GS1 US standard. You may send the form to the printer who prints your other business forms, or have your Information Systems department incorporate it into your warehouse management system.

21. Do you have any software available?

No. GS1 US is not a software provider. However, there is a wide variety of software applications readily available in the marketplace that are based on or integrate GS1 Standards.

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