



Sicpa Software FAQ's

Revision History

Version	Author	Date	Comment
01	AVB	17/07/26	Initial draft created

Background

This document has been prepared to capture and consolidate frequently asked questions relating to the SICPA software platform and its role within the UK Vaping Duty Stamps programme. It is intended to provide Cartor, HMRC, customers and other relevant stakeholders with a clear reference point for current understanding, technical clarification and onboarding expectations. The content reflects information available at the time of writing and should be read alongside formal technical specifications, operational guidance and any subsequent updates issued by Cartor, SICPA or HMRC.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Cartor	Cartor Security Printers Ltd.
SICPA	SICPA SA



Contents

- 1 System Scope, Architecture and Overall Process..... 3
- 2 Technical Integration, API, CSV and Authentication..... 3
- 3 Registration, Master Data and Onboarding..... 4
- 4 Product Activation, DAS and Metadata 4
- 5 Aggregation, Disaggregation and Code Management..... 5
- 6 Stamp Reels, Serial Numbers and Inventory Management..... 5
- 7 Shipping, Receiving and Sale Event Definitions 6
- 8 Test Environment, Training Materials and Timelines..... 6

1 System Scope, Architecture and Overall Process

Q: Please confirm whether the API Technical Specification describes the full technical capabilities of the SICPA platform, or whether it should be interpreted as the mandatory reporting requirements for UK VDS.

A: *The API specification does not include the full capability of the SICPA platform, but it does go beyond HMRC's minimum requirements. Mandatory events are provided by HMRC, and solutions should be developed to meet these minimum requirements.*

Q: The API specification includes event types such as 'Sale' and 'Return from Customer'. Please clarify whether these are mandatory UK VDS reporting events or simply capabilities supported by the underlying platform.

A: *The Sale event will be changed to "Release for Consumption".*

2 Technical Integration, API, CSV and Authentication

Q: Following the API Technical Specifications v1.5 dated 28 May, please provide more detail on the technical integration with SICPA. Will integration be available via API, CSV upload, or both?

A: *Authentication and event submission information currently refers to API access. For aggregate codes, UK VDS codes can be requested or downloaded via a web app. Initial or major bulk uploads may be supported through the service desk. Ongoing or minor master-data changes should be managed through the portal.*

Q: Should systems continuously poll events until both event processing and anomaly processing are complete?

A: *Polling should continue until anomaly processing is complete and successful. If a failure occurs, an error message should indicate the issue.*

Q: What happens if an event fails validation, event processing, or anomaly processing?

A: *If the issue is with the request, correct it and submit a new event for the same stamp(s). If there is a system error, contact support. The underlying issue causing the processing failure must be resolved.*

Q: Will APIs be provided for master data maintenance, or will this be managed through a SICPA portal?

A: *APIs will not be provided for master data maintenance. This will be managed through the portal, with service desk support for initial bulk uploads or major bulk changes.*

3 Registration, Master Data and Onboarding

Q: Please clarify how products are registered before commissioning events can be submitted.

A: *Product/SKU registration is expected to be intuitive once system access is granted. Training material will be provided. Bulk uploads will be possible through the support team for large quantities of SKUs.*

Q: How are Economic Operators registered?

A: *The Purchasing Operator registers with HMRC and receives a letter containing the URL. Guidelines will be made available on the Cartor website. Initially, sites are set up manually. The Purchasing Operator sets up the Affixing Operator and provides system access. Detailed guidelines will be released.*

Q: How are facilities, warehouses and manufacturing locations registered?

A: *The Purchasing Operator will have a default site set as the delivery destination. Additional sites or delivery destinations currently require a manual workaround. If you require deliveries to additional sites, please contact customer service on 0800 229 4160 or VDS-support@Cartor.com.*

Q: How are production machines registered and linked to commissioning events?

A: *Production lines are referenced as part of the set-up; further detailed guidance is required.*

Q: What master data must be established before integration testing can begin?

A: *Master data will be managed through the web portal, with service desk support available initially. APIs will not be provided for master-data maintenance. Initial bulk uploads or major bulk changes can be supported through the service desk; ongoing or minor changes should be managed through the portal.*

Q: Will it be required to register locations, machines and invoices in the UK VDS LOTE system for all entities involved in the supply chain, including manufacturers, importers, distributors and wholesalers?

A: *This was noted as answered by the master-data and onboarding responses above; additional guidance is expected.*

4 Product Activation, DAS and Metadata

Q: Please provide further information regarding the Digital Activation System / DAS module, including:

A: *Product activation is performed through DAS/SDAS. Once products are activated, commissioning is completed. There is no separate activation process; activation is completed once through DAS/SDAS.*



Q: The current commissioning event specification does not appear to provide a mechanism for submitting product metadata during activation. Please clarify how product metadata is associated with pack identifiers.

A: *Once products are activated, commissioning is completed.*

Q: Is there a separate activation process?

A: *No separate activation process has been identified; activation is completed once through DAS/SDAS.*

Q: Is activation performed through the DAS module or another process?

A: *Yes, activation is performed through DAS/SDAS.*

5 Aggregation, Disaggregation and Code Management

Q: Please confirm the coding hierarchy for UK VDS.

A: *Individual product codes are provided through the tax stamps. Anything above this level can either be purchased or generated, provided it follows the specification. GS1 is acceptable. Cartons and master cases are typically identified by SGTIN, and pallets by SSCC.*

6 Stamp Reels, Serial Numbers and Inventory Management

Q: Will serial numbers on stamp reels be sequential?

A: *No.*

Q: It was mentioned previously that each reel has an aggregation code inside the coil and once logged in the system, all individual digital stamps are recorded. Please clarify the specific inventory management requirements under this process.

A: *The activation process links a stamp to a product, and this information is stored in the system. Aggregation codes can also be managed through the system, for example by scanning an aggregation code and linking it to individual codes. Users will not be able to see which codes are inside a coil.*

7 Shipping, Receiving and Sale Event Definitions

Q: Please clarify whether the Shipping, Receiving and Sale transactions referenced in the specification relate to:

A: *Sale will change to "Release for Consumption". If the question relates to the API, these events refer to movements within the supply chain, for example from one warehouse to another.*

8 Test Environment, Training Materials and Timelines

Q: When will a test environment be available?

A: *Target date: end of July 2026.*

Q: When can onboarding activities begin?

A: *Onboarding can begin as soon as authorised, or sooner with HMRC permission. Q&A and guidelines will be available through the Cartor website.*

Q: Will test credentials, sample data and onboarding support be provided?

A: *Test credentials: yes. Sample data: dummy stamp data only, not physical stamps. Onboarding support: yes.*

Q: Please provide an indicative timeline for the remaining materials, including the logistics app guidance. At the last technical drop-in session, it was mentioned that a document containing answers to all questions asked would be circulated. Is this still possible?

A: *The document mentioned will be published on <https://cartor.com/vaping-duty-stamp-programme/>.*