

BIC's Trade Technical implementation Clinic (TIC)

Terms of Reference

Version 1.2 (updated August 2025)

Introduction

BIC's Trade Technical Implementation Clinic provides an important support role in the book supply chain. The focus is on the book trade (general and academic etc., but not libraries) and on the electronic messaging used to enable an improved supply chain. From time to time almost all supply chain participants encounter problems or issues which are best solved by consultation with expert colleagues including some of their suppliers. The main focus of the clinic is on EDI (Electronic Data Interchange) which involves the exchange of business messages (such as purchase orders or invoices) between supply chain organisations. An expert panel made up of BIC members with considerable experience of these issues, provides a permanent core membership for the clinic and then in addition, any BIC member can participate, via the specific BIC TIC io.group (that BIC has set up for this purpose) to ask a question or discuss an issue.

The TIC reports into the BIC Physical Supply Chain committee and the core panel of experts is made up of BIC members and BIC's technical consultants who are deemed by the committee to be experts in the area under consideration. Non-BIC members may be invited to the clinic by a BIC member as a one-off (taster/guest), or as a guest speaker/expert after prior agreement with BIC's Executive Director. The TIC is open to all BIC member organisations who may wish to:

- Highlight a particular technical issue to BIC and/or
- Participate in the online clinic from time to time on a "drop in" basis, or
- Participate on a more regular basis.

The TIC Panel

The core membership of the TIC panel is made up of volunteer experts from organisations in BIC membership. These can be invited by the BIC Physical Supply Chain Committee (PSCC) or BIC management, or they can volunteer by applying to the BIC PSCC giving details of their experience in the relevant areas.

Scope of Work

The core business of the TIC is to maintain as fit for purpose, the Tradacoms and EDIFACT guidelines and codelists which set out how EDI works in the book industry. This covers orders and invoices as well as returns messages within IRI (The Industry Returns Initiative). The TIC also has involvement with BIC Realtime APIs as these are adopted across the industry and is also a repository for requests for changes to these new standards. The TIC maintains an interest in metadata as used in order acknowledgements.

Skillset

Much of the TIC's business is technical in that the TIC panel and BIC members are discussing detailed issues such as (as an example) how to implement mixed rate VAT in EDI invoices. This requires a combination of industry and technical knowledge, an understanding of a bookseller's or distributor's processes and a knowledge of EDI standards, guidelines codelists etc.

Remit and responsibilities of the BIC TIC:

Remit/Purpose

- To research, address and find a solution to any technical issue brought to it by BIC members or BIC committees including the Physical Supply Chain Committee.
- To provide clinic minutes to the BIC Physical Supply Chain Committee after each meeting (when held) and to obtain committee or BIC Board approval (as appropriate) in advance for any significant work such as major updates of the EDI guidelines.
- Where appropriate, to comprehensively test and pilot any solutions, obtaining widespread agreement across the industry before publishing advisories or changes to the guidelines.

Administrative

- BIC will monitor and moderate the conversations and issues in the BIC TIC io.group and escalate to the relevant people/committee etc., where/if required.
- If the BIC TIC cannot resolve an issue via the dedicated io.group then an online panel meeting will be scheduled, or if the timing suits the BIC TIC panel will meet at the scheduled face-to-face meeting.
BIC staff will arrange this and send invitations.
- Shortly after each clinic meeting (if held), BIC will circulate action points, decisions and meeting notes to all members who attended the meeting and to BIC's Executive Director.
- Once signed off by the Executive Director, the meeting notes are circulated to a large number of BIC members who have registered to receive this information and actions are acted upon.

BIC Technical Implementation Clinic Panel of Experts - Responsibilities

Practical

- To attend and contribute to every online meeting – where 3 consecutive meetings are missed BIC may consider it appropriate and necessary for someone else to attend, either from the same organisation or from another organisation.
- There will be 2 in person BIC TIC meetings each year – the panel are expected to attend these. Where 3 consecutive meetings are missed BIC may consider it appropriate and necessary for someone else to attend, with from the same organisation, or from another organisation.
- Should a member leave their own organisation, BIC will seek to arrange a replacement from that same organisation or from another organisation.
- To commit to sitting on the TIC Expert Panel for the term agreed – usually one year minimum.
- Carry out actions/tasks to schedule.
- Alert BIC's Executive Director ASAP if required actions are going to be delayed.
- Report the TIC's discussions and findings/solutions back to their own organisation and return feedback (within the limits of confidentiality).

General

- Most work undertaken by the TIC involves monitoring of the BIC TIC io.group and attending any online meetings and contributing expertise. Occasionally it may be necessary for an expert panel member to investigate how an issue is managed within their own organisation and report back at the next clinic.
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality at all times, especially with regards to minutes and any other documentation/conversations.
- Agree to all minutes taken at each online meeting being made available to BIC members.
- Generally, promote the work of BIC and be a BIC advocate.

BIC Technical Clinic Convenor:

Should the BIC TIC meet online, a Convenor will be appointed beforehand in by the panel of experts and BIC's Executive Director. The Convenor will then serve a one-year term.

Convenor Responsibilities:

Practical

- Lead and run the online clinic meeting effectively.
- Ensure actions are assigned appropriately at each meeting and followed up on.

General

- Be willing and able to devote sufficient time to lead the TIC meeting effectively.
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality, at all times especially with regards to minutes and any other documentation.
- Generally, promote the work of BIC and be a BIC Advocate.

Frequency of Clinic Meetings

The BIC TIC will meet in person twice a year and via ad-hoc online meetings as necessary. Meetings are booked well ahead so that all expert panel members can diarise the meetings and commit to attending.