IMS
Irregularity Management System

User Manual 3: Cases and requests

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Summary:	Keywords:
IMS is the application that allows the preparation and submission of irregularity reports to the European Commission. This manual is meant to describe - the distinction between cases and requests; - the different types of request - the different states of a request - the lifecycle of a request	Irregularity Management System (IMS)

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Document History

Ed.	Rev.	Date	Description	Action (*)	Sections
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0.2	1	19/04/2017	Business owner review	C, D, I, R	All
0.3	2	15/10/2018	Aligned introduction and contact pages, final review	C, D, I, R	All

(*) Action: C = Create D = Delete I = Insert R = Replace

Reference Documents

Ref.	Title	Version	Date	Ref.
RD1	How to connect to AFIS Portal using Secure Internet connection	5.0	19/10/2015	RD2
RD3	How to connect to AFIS Portal using CCN	3.0	19/10/2015	RD4
RD5	AFIS Portal User Manual (*AFIS-APM-UM_EN*)	4.0	19/10/2015	RD6

Table of Contents

About this Manual

The initial IMS-manual which was released in 2016 became too big, therefore it is has been split up into booklets. Each booklet is a manual which deals with a particular subject.

The following manuals have been created or will be created:
1. IMS-concepts
2. IMS-users and their roles
3. Cases and requests
4. How to access IMS
5. Create a case
6. Update, close, reopen and cancel a case
7. Amend and anonymise a case
8. Search
9. Excel export and import
10. List, view and print
11. Abbreviations and acronyms

All manuals will be published on ALIB (AFIS Library) and CIRCABC.

The manuals are meant as an orientation tool for all IMS-users. They gather information users should be familiar with in order to be able to exploit the IMS-application.

The overall description of the features of IMS, of the way in which users are organised, as well as of the procedures, sequences of steps and tasks implied, intend to improve the ease and efficiency of working with the application.

In its larger part, the manuals contain minute presentations of the functionalities, commands, fields, as well as the way in which users should work with irregularity cases and requests.

In order to make the best use of this manual, please note the following conventions:

This icon indicates warnings, preconditions or instructions that have to be strictly followed. If you see this icon, make sure to read the information written next to it.

This icon is used for temporary limitations of the system. They will be removed from the document in a future version of the system.

Warning! Very important information, please read carefully.

Tip to improve a working practice.

This manual concerns "Cases and requests". The concept of and the differences between cases and requests will be described.

The IMS-manuals are not meant to provide an in-depth-explanation or in-depth-interpretation of the regulations and reporting obligations. The Handbook on Requirements to report irregularities provide such information. You will find the handbook also on ALIB and CIRCABC.

Request   sent to the Commission   case

1. received
2. approved

1. About Cases and Requests

1.1 Concept cases and requests

IMS is based on the concept "cases and requests". A case can consist out of many requests because each change, each modification, each amend and each update is done via a request.

IMS knows several types of requests. The name of the request describes the aim of the request:
1. request to create a case
2. request to create and close a case
3. request to update a case
4. request to cancel a case
5. request to close a case
6. request to reopen a case
7. request to amend a case
8. request to anonymise a case
9. zero notification

The request to create a case is the initial report as described in article 3(2) of the different implementing acts:

> *2. In the initial report Member States shall provide the following information:*

All other requests concern follow-up reports as described in article 4 of the different implementing acts.

A request keeps the status requests as long as the request has not been sent to and approved by the European Commission.

Important to know is that OLAF acts as a European Commission service where it concerns the process of irregularity reporting thus "sent to OLAF" means "sent to the European Commission". The name OLAF is used to indicate where the IMS-database is situated (OLAF: secured environment).

At the moment a request to create a cases is received and approved by the Commission, the request data becomes becomes a "case". For all other requests counts that the "request-data" becomes "case-data" as soon as the request has been received and approved by the Commission.

IMS approves almost all requests automatically except:
- a request to close a case
- a request to cancel a case

concerning cohesion and pre-accession funds of programming periods before PP2007-2013.

IMS functions for these funds as an accounting system. The status of these requests will be "sent for OLAF approval".

Type of request		Who can do it?!					
Description	in IMS	observer	creator	manager	country officer	OLAF manager	EC-officer
Request to create a case	create		x	x	x		
Request to create and close a case	create		x	x	x		
Request to update a case	update		x	x	x		
Request to cancel a case	cancel		x	x	x		
Request to close a case	close		x	x	x	x	x
Request to reopen a case	reopen		x	x	x	x	x
Request to amend a case	amend					x	
Request to anonymise a case	anonymise					x	
zero notification	zero notification		x	x	x		

1.2   Request types and case structure

IMS enables you to create several types of requests. The table on the left hand side provides an overview of the types of requests and of the IMS-users who can create such types of requests.

Request to create a case

The request to create a case is the initial request. An irregularity has been discovered and with the request to create a case you start the process of informing the Commission that an irregularity has been committed. You will process all already available information in this initial request. New information can be processed later on, in for instance a request to update a case.

Request to create a case and close a case

The request to create and close a case is also an initial request. The difference is that in this case all national procedures have been completed and finalised, thus no further action is to be expected anymore. You open and close the case at the same time.

The request to create a case is the initial report as described in article 3(2) of the different implementing acts:

2. In the initial report Member States shall provide the following information:

All other requests concern follow-up reports as described in article 4 of the different implementing acts.

Request to update a case

A request to update a case can be made after a case has been created. You go to the case, open it and click on the button UPDATE and you will be able to add or change data.

Request to cancel a case

A request to cancel a case can be made when it becomes clear that an earlier reported irregularity appeared not to be an irregularity due to for instance additional information that became available during an appeal. In such case, the case can be cancelled by doing a request to cancel a case.

Be aware that cancelling a case implies that all data will be deleted except some basic reference data of tab page 1 (such as reference number OLAF etc.). This implies that if you cancel a case by mistake, all data needs to be keyed in again.

Tip: Export the case before you cancel it. If you made a mistake, you can repair the mistake by importing the case that you cancelled.

Unnecessary to say: a case which has been fully recovered should not be cancelled!

Request to close a case

A request to close a case should be made when all national procedures are completed and finalised. This request can also be used to submit the last missing information to the Commission.
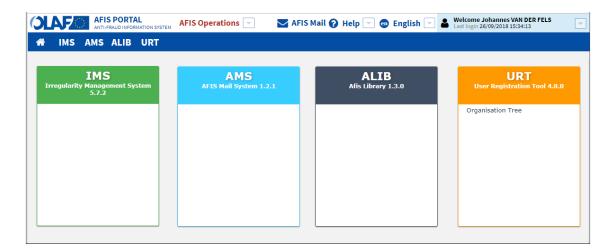
Request to reopen a case

A request to reopen a case can be made when a case was closed but new information came available which need to be added in order to have the data correct and complete.
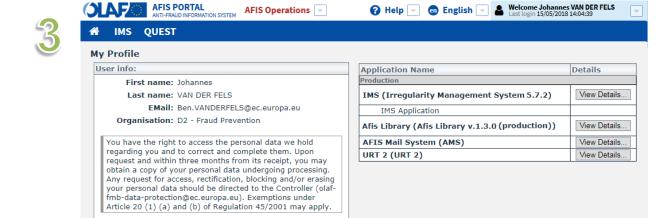
Zero notification

A zero notification is not a real request. It is a message to inform the next level that nothing has to be reported for a specific period. It can be seen as a "courtesy message".

1

2

3

Request to amend a case (only for OLAF-manager)

A request to amend a case can be made by an OLAF-manager. Such requests are made if for instance IMS contains inconsistent data which need to be corrected which can be done on request of the reporting authority concerned or at OLAF's own initiative.

A request to amend a case is comparable with the request to update a case which can be made by you. This type of request has been created for audit purposes. There is a clear distinction between an update made by the creator and an update made by OLAF-staff.

You can see in IMS which cases have been amended by OLAF. Good to know is that IMS can also provide you with an "email notification" if a case for which you are competent has been amended. Just go to the menu MY PROFILE and tick the appiclable tickbox in the menu My notifications (see images 1 -3). More information can be found in the manual How to access IMS.

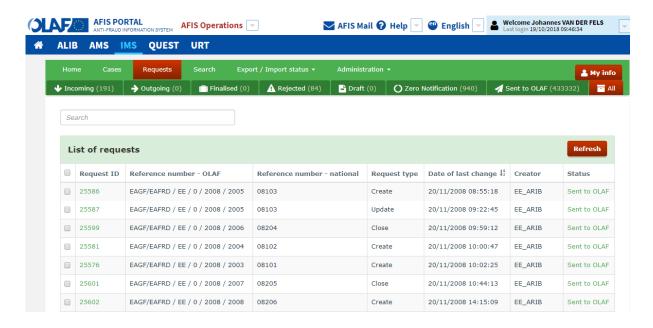**Request to anonymise a case (only for OLAF-manager)**

At a certain moment, a closed case expires which implies that all personal data needs to be deleted in order to anonymise the case. That is done via a request to anonymise a case. IMS informs the OLAF-manager that a case expired. The OLAF-manager needs to check the case and approve the anonymisation.

Anonymisation implies that all (free) text fields will be made empty and all attachment will be deleted. Only data of so called "closed fields", thus fields with codes and fields which do not contain free text, will be kept.

1.3 Request status

Throughout its lifecycle, a request may be in one of the following states:

Draft

You create a request and you save it as DRAFT which implies that it has been saved and is still editable. You can still add information and make changes to the already provided information.

⚠️ Be aware that a draft can only be kept for a maximum period of 6 months. If a draft has not been finalised within six months it will be removed.

Finalised

A finalised request implies that you fully validated it and saved it as FINALISED. You cannot modify the request anymore. It is ready to be checked by the manager after which it can be sent to the next level in the reporting chain or rejected thus going back to you as creator.

Sent

The request has been sent to the next level, which can be an intermediate reporting authority or a level 1 reporting authority.

A request which is sent again, thus after it was rejected and sent back to the creator, gets again the status SENT when the manager sends it to the next level in the reporting chain.

Rejected

The request has been rejected by a manager. This can be the manager of
- the initiating authority
- the intermediate reporting authority
- the level 1 reporting authority
- OLAF

The manager needs to indicate the reason of rejection, without that the request will not be sent back to the creator. The creator can update the request or delete the request.

The OLAF-manager can also reject requests to close, reopen or cancel cases for which IMS functions as accounting system (cohesion and pre-accession funds before PP2007-2013).

Please be aware that a rejected request gets again the status "draft" to make it possible to update the request.

Deleted

The request has been deleted. Be aware that only a draft request can be deleted. A finalised request cannot be deleted. If you want to delete a finalised request, a manager needs to reject the request. The request will get again the status DRAFT thus can be deleted.

Sent to OLAF

The request has been sent to the Commission.

⚠️ *OLAF acts as Commission Service and not as independent investigation service.*
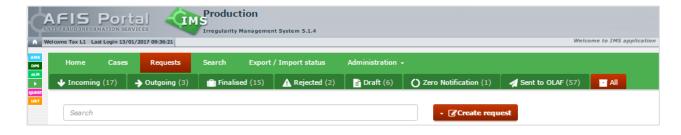
Sent for OLAF approval

Only applicable for cohesion and pre-accession funds concerning programming periods before PP2007-2013 for which funds IMS functions as an accounting system.

The request to close, reopen or cancel a case has been sent to the Commission. The Commission needs to decide if the case can be closed, reopened or cancelled. These requests are marked as "Sent for OLAF approval".

Be aware that the approval can take some time due to formal procedures which need to be applied.

1.4   Tab page Request

The requests are displayed on tab page Requests. The tab page contains sub tab pages in order to access the requests quicker and easier. It also helps you to find back the requests on which you still have to work.

Incoming

This tab page contains the requests that have been sent by a lower reporting authority to your reporting authority. The IMS-manager needs to perform a quality check on these requests and on basis of the outcome of that check:
1. approve and send
2. disapprove and reject

Outgoing

This tab page contains the requests that have been sent by your reporting authority but are not yet sent to the Commission. This implies that somewhere in the reporting structure of your country, a reporting authority still needs to approve the request.

Finalised

This tab page contains the requests that have been finalised and are awaiting the check of the IMS-manager after which a decision will follow to send or reject the request.

Rejected

This tab page contains the requests that have been rejected by an IMS-manager thus need to be updated or deleted.

⚠ Be aware that a draft can only be kept for a maximum period of 6 months. If a draft has not been finalised within six months it will be removed.

Draft

This tab page contains the requests that still need to be finalised by the IMS-creator.

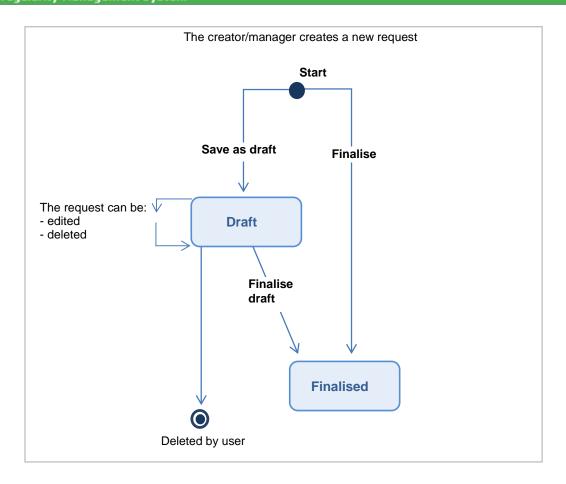**Zero notification**

This tab page contains the zero notifications.

Sent to OLAF

This tab page contains the requests that have been sent to the Commission and normally have become "case-data"

All

This tab page contains all requests.

The creator/manager creates a new request

Start

Save as draft

Finalise

The request can be:
- edited
- deleted

Draft

Finalise draft

Finalised

Deleted by user

1.5   Request lifecycle

The following paragraphs will provide in diagrams the different lifecyles of a request. It is meant to visualise the process of irregularity reporting.

1.5.1 A creator or manager creates a request

The lifecycle of a request starts with its creation. Information on how to create a request can be found in manual Request to create a case.

You can create a request and after adding all the necessary information, you have two options:
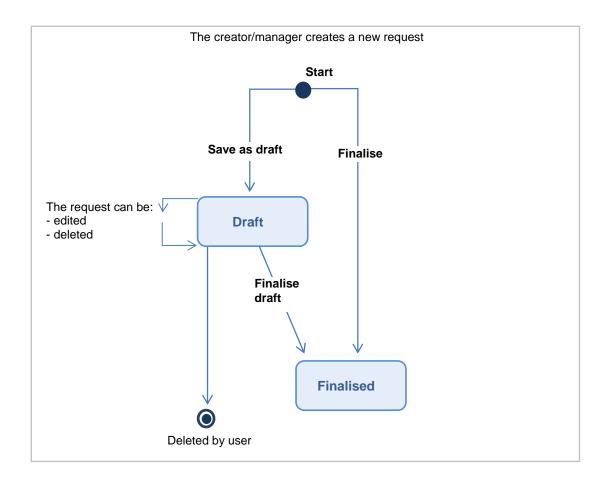1. to save as draft
2. to save as finalised

You save the request as draft in case you still want to work on it. You save it as finalised when you have completed the request and the IMS-manager needs to perform a quality check before it will be send to the next level.
A draft request can be:
1. saved again as draft
2. saved as finalised
3. deleted

If you delete, all information will go lost. If you finalise the request, you cannot edit it anymore. It is then up to the manager to approve or disapprove the request.

The creator/manager creates a new request

Start

Save as draft

Finalise

The request can be:
- edited
- deleted

Draft

Finalise draft

Finalised

Deleted by user

1.5.2 The manager sends or rejects the request

After you finalise a request, an IMS-manager (of your organisation) needs to check the request. After that, the manager has two options:
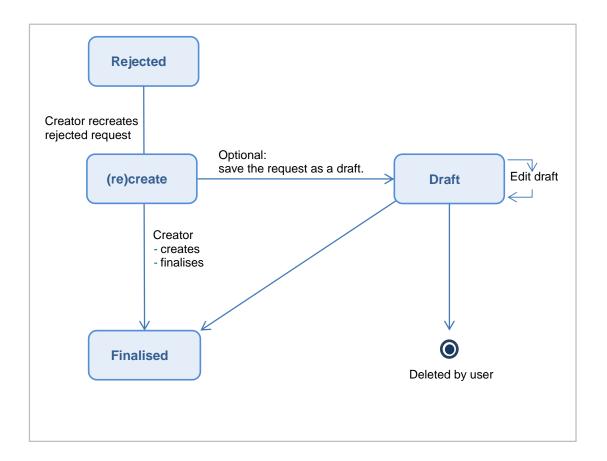1. approve and send
2. disapprove and reject

If the manager approves, the manager will have to send it to the next level, this can be an intermediate reporting authority or the Commission, depending on the reporting structure of your country.

If the manager rejects, the manager needs to indicate the rejection reason(s) after which the request will be send back to the creator.

For more information about the reporting structure, see chapter 1.6.1 Sending request to OLAF and the request .

If you have manager rights you can directly send the request that you have created.
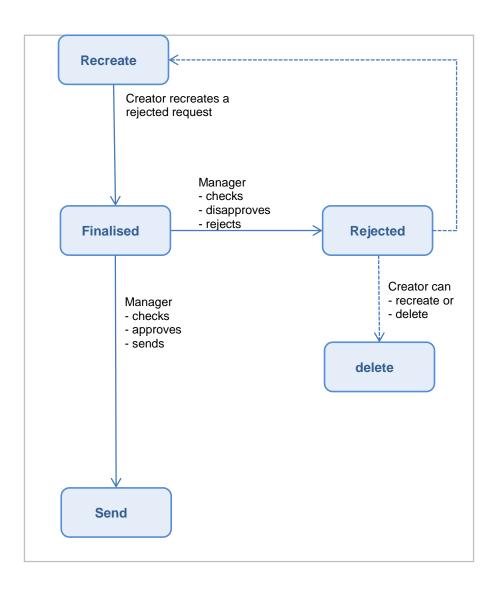
1.5.3   The creator edits and finalises the rejected request

If a manager rejected your request, you must recreate the request and finalise it. The manager will then have to check again the recreated request after which the manager has again the same options:
1. approve and send
2. disapprove and reject

To see which requests were rejected, you go to the 'Requests' page and click the tab 'Rejected'.

1.5.4   The manager sends the (recreated) request

You have recreated the rejected request and finalised it. The manager needs to check again and has then again the same two options:
1. approve and send
2. disapprove and reject

If the manager rejects the request again, the creator has also again two options:
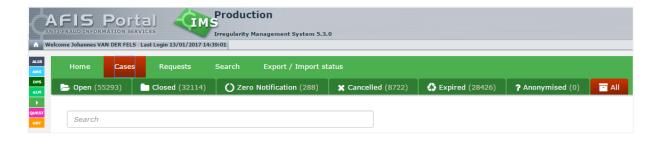1. recreate
2. delete

If the manager approves, the manager needs to send the request to the next level. This can be another reporting authority or the Commission. If it is sent to the next reporting authority, the above described process repeats itself. The manager needs to check the request and has two options:
1. approve and send
2. disapprove and reject

This process repeats itself till the request has been sent and approved by the Commission.

1.6   Tab page Cases

The cases are displayed on tab page Cases. The tab page contains sub tab pages in order to access the cases quicker and easier. It also helps you to find back the cases on which you still want to work.

Open

This tab page contains the cases that are still open implying that administrative, judicial and/or criminal procedures are still ongoing. You did not yet complete your national procedures on this case.

Closed

This tab page contains the cases that have been closed. All procedures have been completed and finalised thus no new information is expected anymore for these cases.

i For cases related to cohesion and pre-accession funds of programming periods before PP2007-2013 counts that only the Commission can close or cancel those cases. Your requests to close or cancel such cases need to have the (manual) approval of the Commission.

Zero notification

This tab page contains zero notifications.

Cancelled

This tab page contains the cases that were cancelled because they appeared not to be an irregularity.

i For cases related to cohesion and pre-accession funds of programming periods before PP2007-2013 counts that only the Commission can close or cancel those cases. Your requests to close or cancel such cases need to have the (manual) approval of the Commission

Expired

This tab page contains the closed cases of which the (personal) data retention period expired thus need to be anonymised.

Anonymised

This tab page contains the closed (and expired) cases which have been anonymised implying that all free text fields and all attachments have been deleted.

All

This tab page contains all cases thus the sum of open cases, closed cases, cancelled cases, expired cases and anonymised cases.

Scenario I

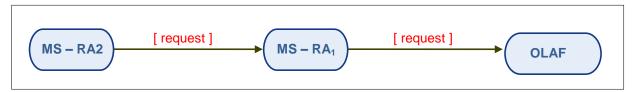
Diagram 1: Request Workflow (Example 1)

Scenario II

Diagram 2: Request Workflow (Example 2)

Scenario III

Diagram 3: Request Workflow (Example 3)

Diagram 4: Request Workflow (Example 4)

1.6.1   Sending Request to OLAF and the Request Workflow

The IMS reporting structure describes the 'route' a request follows from the creator's reporting authority until it is sent to OLAF.

The creator's reporting authority sends the request to the reporting authority that is one level higher in the reporting structure until a level 1 reporting authority sends it to OLAF.

If the request is rejected by any authority in the reporting structure, its status is changed into 'rejected' and the creator of the request must recreate it and finalise or delete it (chapter 1.5.3).

A manager of the authority of which the creator is part of will then send the request again.

Scenario I
RA_1 (Reporting Authority 1)
- ➜ is the originator of a request
- ➜ can send the request to OLAF (which makes it a *Level-1-RA*)
- ➜ does not have a 'parent' RA

Scenario II
RA_2 (Reporting Authority 2)
- ➜ is the originator of a request
- ➜ cannot send the request to OLAF
- ➜ has a 'parent' RA to send the request to (RA_1)

RA_1 (Reporting Authority 1)
- ➜ is the 'parent' reporting authority for RA_2
- ➜ is the receiver of the request sent by RA_2
- ➜ can send this request to OLAF (which makes it a *Level-1-RA*)
- ➜ does not have a 'parent' RA

Scenario III
RA_{2a} (Reporting Authority 2a)
- ➜ is the originator of a request
- ➜ cannot send the request to OLAF
- ➜ has a 'parent' RA to send the request to (RA_1)

RA_{2b} (Reporting Authority 2b)
- ➜ is the originator of a request
- ➜ cannot send the request to OLAF
- ➜ has a 'parent' RA to send the request to (RA_1)

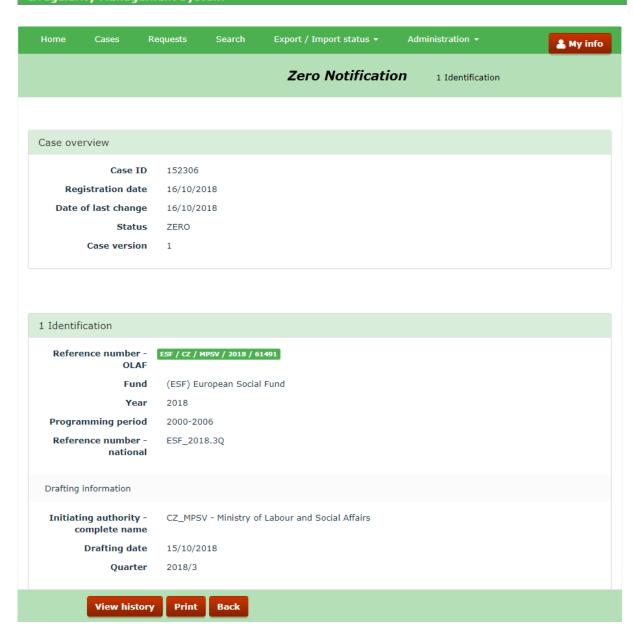**RA_1** (Reporting Authority 1)
- ➜ is the 'parent' RA for RA_{2a} and RA_{2b}
- ➜ is the receiver of the request sent by RA_{2a} and RA_{2b}
- ➜ can send these request to OLAF (which makes it a *Level-1-RA*)
- ➜ does not have a 'parent' RA

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Zero Notification   1 Identification

Case overview

Case ID	152306
Registration date	16/10/2018
Date of last change	16/10/2018
Status	ZERO
Case version	1

1 Identification

Reference number - OLAF	ESF / CZ / MPSV / 2018 / 61491
Fund	(ESF) European Social Fund
Year	2018
Programming period	2000-2006
Reference number - national	ESF_2018.3Q

Drafting information

Initiating authority - complete name	CZ_MPSV - Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
Drafting date	15/10/2018
Quarter	2018/3

View history   **Print**   **Back**

2. Zero notification

Zero notifications are meant to inform the next level that nothing has to be reported for a certain period.

The obligation to send a zero notification does not exist anymore. You can see it as a courtesy measure: you inform the next level that you thought of your reporting obligations and that there is nothing to be reported.

Basic information needs to be provided in the zero-notification:
- Fund
- Year
- Programming period
- Reference number – national
- Drafting date
- Quarter

You will find on the left hand side an example of a zero-notification.

3. Support Team Contact Information

Support related to the process of irregularity reporting can be obtained from:
1. Your IMS-country-officer and/or IMS-liaison-officer
2. OLAF's IMS-team
3. OLAF-AFIS-IT-Help-Desk

IMS-team	Address: Rue Joseph II, 30/B-1049 Brussels
	Internet e-mail: OLAF-FBM-IMS@ec.europa.eu
	AMS mailbox: EC-OLAF-IMS

OLAF-AFIS-IT-Help-Desk	Address: Rue Joseph II, 30/B-1049 Brussels
Tel: +32 2 296 27 27	Internet e-mail: OLAF-AFIS-IT-HELP-DESK@ec.europa.eu
	AMS mailbox: EC-OLAF-IT

Use and processing of IMS-information
(article 5 of the delegated acts)

1. The Commission may use any information provided by Member States in accordance with this Regulation to perform risk analysis, using information technology support, and may, on the basis of the information obtained, produce reports and develop systems serving to identify risks more effectively.

2. Information provided under this Regulation shall be covered by professional confidentiality and protected in the same way as it would be protected by the national legislation of the Member State that provided it and by the provisions applicable to the Union's institutions. Member States and the Commission shall take all necessary precautions to ensure that the information remains confidential.

3. The information referred to in paragraph 2 may not, in particular, be disclosed to persons other than those in the Member States or within the Union's institutions whose duties require that they have access to it, unless the Member State providing it has given its express consent.

4. The information referred to in paragraph 2 may not be used for any purposes other than the protection of the Union's financial interests unless the authorities that have provided it have given their express consent.