

WASHINGTON

SURPLUS LINES AUTOMATION SUITE IMPLEMENTATION

Batch Submission Manual

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide technical information on the Surplus Line Association of Washington (SLAW) batch submission process. The batch submission process can be used by brokerages to electronically submit policy data in bulk to SLAW. This document describes the batch submission process and includes technical specifications.

The intended audience for this document includes technical resources that will work with the brokerage to extract policy data from the brokerage's data management system for the purpose of creating submissions to SLAW. Technical resources typically include system architects, designers and developers with computer programming experience. It is assumed the reader of this document has an understanding of XML (Extensible Markup Language) and HTTP protocols.

Additional information on the batch submission process, including the XML Schema and example upload files, can be found online within the SLIP section of SLAW's website (<http://www.surpluslines.org>).



2. Introduction

The Surplus Lines Information Portal (SLIP) is a web-based system that allows brokerages to electronically submit policy information to SLAW. Within SLIP, brokerages have two options to electronically submit policy data:

1. SLIP Manual Method - Data is entered manually through the SLIP website interface.
2. XML Batch Submission Method - Data for one or more policies (in the form of an XML Document) is uploaded to SLIP.

The help files and video tutorials contained within SLIP provide instructions for submitting policy data using the Manual Method and will not be addressed in this document.

2.1 The XML Batch Submission Method

The XML Batch Submission Method allows brokerages to submit policy and transaction data for multiple policies at once in a single batch process. This process will especially benefit brokerages that file a large amount of policy data with SLAW since a single XML file may contain information for multiple policies.

Brokerages that store data in a centralized data management system can make use of the XML Batch Submission Method. The following list provides a high-level list of the steps contained within the batch submission process:

1. The brokerage will generate an XML file containing the policy data they wish to submit to SLAW. Typically, the XML file will include policy data that was added or modified within a specified date range or since the last XML batch submission.
2. The brokerage may also include any associated policy documentation (PDF is the preferred format) that is associated with the policy data contained within the XML file. The policy documents will be referenced by filename within the XML file.
3. The brokerage will create a zip file containing the XML file and the associated policy documentation (again, referenced by filename within the XML file).
4. The brokerage will log in to SLIP to upload the zip file containing the XML file and all associated documents.

2.2 Prerequisites for the XML Batch Submission Method

Brokerages may submit policy data using the XML Batch Submission Method if the following requirements are met:

1. A SLIP user account must exist for a submitting brokerage. SLAW will create one administrative user account for each participating brokerage. The administrative user within each brokerage will have the ability to create other user accounts for that brokerage.
2. SLIP requires Internet Explorer version 6 or higher.
3. A SLAW Brokerage ID (SLA #) is required within the XML file for the submitting brokerage. To identify your SLA #, please go to the SLAW website (<http://www.surpluslines.org>) and search for your brokerage within the Brokerages section.



3. The XML Batch Submission Process

This section identifies the steps required to create and submit policy information using the XML batch submission process. The following section (Section 4 - Batch File Guidelines) outlines the requirements of the XML file.

3.1 Create Batch File

The batch file is a zip file that contains one XML file (including policy data on one or more policies) and policy documentation (electronic copies of Dec Sheets, Supplemental Dec's, Forms List, etc.). The creation of the batch file will require the involvement of a technical resource that is familiar with XML and the data management system in use by your brokerage. There are several different data management systems in use by brokerages throughout the country; therefore, this document cannot provide step-by-step instructions on how to extract policy data from your specific data management system. Rather, this document identifies the structure and formatting requirements of the batch submission in its final form.

The first step in the creation of the batch file is to identify the criteria in which policy data should be extracted from the brokerage's data management system. Typically, brokerages extract data based on a specified date range or some other criteria indicating a submission to SLAW is required.

Once the criteria to extract policy data is identified for your data management system, a technical resource must create the XML file that contains the policy data. For details on the required format and structure of the XML file, please refer to Section 4 – Batch File Guidelines. Also, an XML schema is available on the SLAW website under the SLIP – Batch Reporting Procedures section. The XML schema identifies technical constraints on the content and structure of the XML file. Also, the XML schema can be used to validate the XML file prior to submission.

In addition to submitting policy data, the brokerage may also include policy documentation associated with the policy data contained within the XML file. The policy documentation contained within the batch submission must be individually named for each policy transaction (New Business, Additional Premium, Return Premium, etc.) and referenced by filename within the appropriate section of the XML file for each transaction. The file formats that can be accepted within the batch file include PDF, TIFF, and JPG. PDF is the preferred format.

Once the XML file is created and the policy documents have been identified and/or extracted from the data management system, all of the files should be included in one zip file for submission to SLAW.

Note: The system will not accept Microsoft Excel files saved as XML Data or XML Spreadsheet file types. Please follow the XML format described in this document and identified within the XML Schema to create the XML file.

3.2 Log in to SLIP

Using Internet Explorer, version 6 or higher, go to the following website: <https://slip.surpluslines.org>. Enter your username and password. This will establish a secure connection and validate your identity.



If you are a surplus lines brokerage and you do not have a username and password, please contact SLAW at (206)-682-3409. SLAW will create one administrative user for each brokerage. The administrative user for each brokerage will have the ability to create other users for that brokerage.

3.3 Upload and Submit the Batch File

Go to the Batch Submission page in SLIP. Following the instructions on this page, browse to and select the compressed zip file containing the XML file and associated policy documents (PDF, TIFF, or JPG). Submit the file for upload.

3.4 SLIP Validates the File

Upon successfully uploading a batch file in SLIP, the system will queue the submission for processing. When the system is ready to process the submission, the validation process will begin.

The first step in the validation process is to validate the format and structure of the XML file as identified in the XML Schema. This step must be successfully completed before any additional processing can take place. If the initial validation process is successful, the XML file will continue to the secondary validation process. The secondary validation process validates the policy data contained within the XML file itself. If either validation process is unsuccessful, the file will be rejected. The XML file format and/or data will have to be corrected and resubmitted.

Whether the file is accepted or rejected, an e-mail will be sent to the submission contact identified within the XML file. If the submission was successful, the email will include the filing number and filing date. If this submission was rejected, the email will contain the date and time the file import was attempted and the reason(s) the file was rejected. In both scenarios, the Batch Submission page within SLIP will display the processing status of any submission.

3.5 Monitor the Batch Submission Status

After confirming your batch file was successfully uploaded in SLIP, you may monitor the XML filing progress in the SLIP Batch Submission page. The page will contain the date the file was submitted and received by SLAW. Rejected submissions should be corrected and resubmitted in a timely manner. The following list defines the XML batch statuses.

1. Received – The file has been successfully uploaded into SLIP and is waiting for processing.
2. Accepted for Import - The XML file has been validated by the initial validation process (XML schema validation) and is ready for import.
3. Rejected for Import - The XML file failed the initial validation process (XML schema validation) and cannot be imported. An email will be sent identifying the submission error(s).
4. Submission Rejected – The XML file failed the secondary validation process (policy data validation) and cannot be imported. An email will be sent identifying the submission error(s).



5. Submission Accepted with Errors –The XML file was successfully processed and imported; however, there were some acceptable errors. An email will be sent confirming a successful submission.
6. Submission Accepted – The XML file was successfully processed. An email will be sent confirming a successful submission.

3.6 Batch File is Accepted or Rejected

If the file has been accepted for import, no further action is required. As mentioned in section 3.5, you may monitor the XML import process on the Batch Submission page.

If the file has been rejected for import, you must correct the issue(s) identified in the rejection email and resubmit the batch file. If you have questions regarding batch file rejection or resubmission, please contact SLAW at (206)-682-3409.



4. Batch File Guidelines

4.1 Batch File Size and Structure

The batch zip file size cannot exceed 200 MB. The root of zip file should contain one XML file and the policy documents associated with the filings in the XML file. The zip file should not contain any subfolders.

4.2 Batch File Name

The file name is limited to 250 characters. There is no required naming convention, however, it is recommended that you create filenames that make it easy to maintain and track your submissions. We suggest that you include the submission date and time in the file name. For example, 20100501_0930_Batch.zip (*date_time_Batch.zip* or *CCYYMMDD_HHMM_Batch.zip*) would indicate the batch was created on 05/01/2010 at 9:30 AM.

4.3 HTML (XML) Encoding

The complete XML file must be HTML Encoded before it is submitted. Failure to do so may result in processing delays and rejections. A typical rejection error is an “Invalid XML” message.

Several special characters are reserved and cannot be used directly in XML element or attribute data. Replace them with XML Entity references or XML Encoded text. These special characters act as flags to the parser; they delimit the document’s actual content and tell the parser to take specific actions. These special characters, therefore, must be represented in their encoded format:

Character Name	Reserved Character	Entity Reference
Ampersand	&	&
Apostrophe	’	'
Quote	“	"
Less Than	<	<
Greater Than	>	>

4.4 Initial File Validation and Rejection

If the document fails ANY of the validations identified below, the ENTIRE batch file will NOT be accepted.

The following items describe the initial file validation process completed by SLIP.

1. Parse the document and check that the document is well-formed.
2. Check the XML file document against the XSD (XML Schema Definition) file.
3. Check the length of all data elements to ensure they do not exceed maximum lengths.
4. Check that all required data elements are present (e.g. policy number, transaction type, coverage code, etc.).
5. Check that values of the specified elements comply with the detailed XML document requirements (Section 4.7) and the XML schema (Section 4.8).



6. Check that the document file names (policy documentation) contained within the zip file match those listed in the XML file.
7. Check that all associated policy document types are PDF, TIFF, or JPG. Any other format will not be accepted.
8. Check that each associated policy document (contained in the zip file) is less than or equal to 3 MB.

If any of the file data is invalid, the system will reject the entire file. An email will be sent to the SLIP user explaining the rejection and requesting resubmission. The user must correct the data file and resubmit it through SLIP. If the data file is valid, the file will be imported into a temporary queue for policy-level data validation.

4.5 Policy Data Validation and Rejection

If the policy data contained within the XML file fails ANY of the following validations, the ENTIRE batch file will NOT be accepted.

The following items describe the secondary validation process completed by SLIP.

1. Check for complete policy data. Data must be included for all required policy fields.
2. Check for a valid brokerage and brokerage identification number. The brokerage identification number is the surplus lines brokerage license number (SLA #). The brokerage identification number is issued by SLAW, and can be found online at <http://www.surpluslines.org> under the Brokerages section.
3. Check to ensure the XML batch isn't attempting to modify a previously submitted policy transaction that has already been registered by a SLAW Examiner. For more information, please see Section 4.6 – Updating Previously Submitted Policy Data.
4. Accept and/or reject file. An e-mail will be sent to the submission contact to confirm the acceptance or rejection of the file. If the file has been rejected, the message will contain a detailed description of the problem(s) and instructions to correct and resubmit the file. The user must correct the data file and resubmit it through SLIP.

4.6 Updating Previously Submitted Policy Data

The XML batch submission process will allow a brokerage to update previously submitted policy and transaction data provided that it has not been registered by a SLAW Examiner since the initial submission. When policy data is initially submitted through the batch submission process, the brokerage has the ability to provide a Transaction ID that will uniquely identify a particular policy transaction within SLIP. The Transaction ID will be used to uniquely identify a previously submitted policy transaction allowing the brokerage to update selected data.

The Transaction ID is a unique alphanumeric value that will uniquely identify a policy transaction record for a brokerage that will never be re-used by the brokerage to identify any other policy transaction records for that brokerage. Typically, the Transaction ID will be a unique identifier within the data management system used by the brokerage.

Proper use of the Transaction ID will allow the brokerage to modify data on a previously submitted (non-registered) transaction, with the following exceptions:

- Transaction Type cannot be modified.



- Policy Number cannot be modified if there are any other registered transactions on the policy.

The primary reason for a brokerage to provide a Transaction ID is when a brokerage needs to submit policy binder information (using the batch submission process) within 30 days of the policy effective date to avoid late filings, and they have not yet received the policy paperwork from the Insurer/Carrier. When the policy paperwork is eventually received from the Insurer/Carrier (typically beyond the 30 day mark), the brokerage will have the ability to add the policy documentation to the previously submitted transaction using a subsequent batch submission. The subsequent batch will include a transaction record with the same Transaction ID that was submitted in the initial batch submission. This process will allow brokerages to keep the transaction submission date of the initial submission avoiding unnecessary late filing penalties.

The following rules apply to the use of the Transaction ID to update policy transaction information.

1. If a Transaction ID is provided in a batch submission and is not found within SLIP, the transaction will be added as a new transaction.
2. If a Transaction ID is provided in a batch submission and is found within SLIP, it will update the existing transaction with the data contained in the batch submission provided the existing transaction is unregistered. Registered transactions cannot be modified using the Transaction ID. If you need to change or delete a registered transaction, you may submit a "Backout" transaction through the batch submission process or manually through the SLIP interface. For more information about transaction types, please refer to the SLIP help files contained within SLIP.
3. If a Transaction ID is provided in a batch submission and is found within the system on a transaction that is already registered, the entire batch submission will be rejected.



4.7 Table of XML Fields

The table below outlines the specific values for the required elements in an XML schema that is prepared for the Batch Submission Method. In the table, every element is individually addressed and a sample of the XML Structure is provided. The XML Structure provides an example of the hierarchy and structural format that the submitted XML will be validated against. The XML structure is followed by a brief description of the element and the element's occurrence and length requirements

For additional detail on the required format for the XML and/or the allowable values contained within the XML, please refer to the XML Schema file and batch upload examples contained within the SLIP – Batch Reporting Procedures section of the SLAW website (<http://www.surpluses.org>).

XML Structure	Description	Occurrence		Length	
		Min	Max	Min	Max
< Filings >	Consists of all the policies submitted in the batch	1	1	-	-
< Submission_Contact >	Contact information of the person who will submit the XML file	1	1	-	-
< Full_Name >	Full name of the submission contact	1	1	-	-
< First_Name > John < /First_Name >	First name of the submission contact	1	1	1	50
< Last_Name > Smith < /Last_Name >	Last name of the submission contact	1	1	0	30
< Middle_Name > Jason < /Middle_Name >	Middle name of the submission contact	0	1	1	50
< Suffix_Name > Jr. < /Suffix_Name >	Suffix of the submission contact	0	1	0	30
< /Full_Name >	Ending Element				
< Email > smithj@emailaddress.com < /Email >	Email address for the submission contact	1	1	1	75
< Address >	Address for the submission contact	1	1	-	-
< AddressLine1 > 123 Main Street < /AddressLine1 >	Street Address (line 1) for the submission contact	1	1	1	50
< AddressLine2 > Apt. 2345 < /AddressLine2 >	Street Address (line 2) for the submission contact	0	1	0	50
< City > Seattle < /City >	City for the submission contact	1	1	1	50
< State > WA < /State >	State for submission contact (official state abbreviations)	1	1	2	2
< ZipCode > 98101 < /ZipCode >	Zip code for the submission contact (5 digits + optional 4)	1	1	5	9



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XML Structure	Description	Occurrence		Length	
		Min	Max	Min	Max
</Address>	Ending Element				
<Phone>5556667777</Phone>	Phone number for the submission contact	1	1	1	10
<Phone_Extension>246</Phone_Extension>	Extension for the submission contact	0	1	0	5
<Fax>5557778888</Fax>	Fax for the submission contact	0	1	0	10
</Submission_Contact>	Ending Element				
<Reporting_Brokerage>	Reporting brokerage details	1	1	-	-
<Brokerage_Number>425</Brokerage_Number>	Brokerage identification number (SLA #) issued by SLAW. See the Brokerage List on the SLAW website for details (www.surpluslines.org)	1	1	1	4
<Brokerage_Name>ABC, Inc.</Brokerage_Name>	Name of the reporting brokerage	1	1	1	100
<Policies>	Details about policies placed within the reporting period	1	unbound	-	-
<Policy Xml_PolicyID="1">	This is the beginning of a policy record. The Xml_Policy ID must be unique for this submission as it is used to communicate the location of possible submission errors.	1	1	0	0
<Policy_Number>123456789</Policy_Number>	Policy number	1	1	1	50
<Broker>	Full name of the Broker	0	0	-	-
<First_Name>Mike</First_Name>	First name of the broker	1	1	1	50
<Last_Name>Johnson</Last_Name>	Last name of the broker	1	1	1	50
<License_Number>123456</License_Number>	WAOIC number of the broker	1	1	1	6
</Broker>	Ending Element				
<Retail_Producer>	Name and details of the retail producer	0	1	-	-
<RP_ID>123456</RP_ID>	Retail Producer internal ID as identified by reporting brokerage	0	1	1	20
<Name>Retail Producer, Inc.</Name>	Retail producer's name (Individual or Business)	1	1	1	100
<Address>	Retail Producers addresses	1	1	-	100
<AddressLine1>123 Main St.</AddressLine1>	Street Address (line 1) for the retail producer	1	1	1	100
<AddressLine2>Apt. 2345</AddressLine2>	Street Address (line 2) for the retail producer	0	1	0	100
<City>SEATTLE</City>	City for the retail producer	1	1	1	50



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XML Structure	Description	Occurrence		Length	
		Min	Max	Min	Max
<State>WA</State>	State of the retail producer (official state abbreviations)	1	1	2	2
<ZipCode>98101</ZipCode>	Zip code of the retail producer (5 digits + optional 4)	1	1	5	9
</Address>	Ending Element				
</Retail_Producer>	Ending Element				
<Description_of_Coverage>Test</Description_of_Coverage>	Description of coverage regarding the policy	1	1	1	255
<Expiration_Date>2010-12-31</Expiration_Date>	Expiration date of the policy	0	1	1	10
<Until_Canceled>0</Until_Canceled>	Whether the "until cancelled" option is selected or not	1	1	1	1
<Insured>	Individual or business that is insured	1	1	-	-
<Insured_Name>John Appleseed</Insured_Name>	Name of the insured	1	1	1	150
<Mailing_Address>	Address of the insured				
<AddressLine1>456 Union Street</AddressLine1>	The first line of the street address of the insured	1	1	1	50
<AddressLine2>Apt. 2345</AddressLine2>	Second line of the street address of the insured	0	1	0	50
<City>Seattle</City>	City of the insured	1	1	1	30
<State>WA</State>	State for the insured (Official state abbreviations)	1	1	2	2
<ZipCode>98101</ZipCode>	Zip code of the insured (5 digits + optional 4)	1	1	5	9
</Mailing_Address>	Ending Element				
</Insured>	Ending Element				
<County_of_Risk>King</County_of_Risk>	Name of the county of risk for the policy	0	1		
<Master_Policy>0</Master_Policy>	Whether the policy is a master policy	1	1	1	1
<Multi_State>1</Multi_State>	Whether the policy is a multi state policy	1	1	1	1
<Insurers>	Individual or business that is insured	1	unbound	-	-
<Insurer Xml_InsurerID="1">	The Xml_Insurer ID must be unique within the submission as it us used to communicate the location of possible submission errors.	1	1	1	1
<Insurer_NAIC>AA1234567</Insurer_NAIC>	Insurer NAIC number	1	1	1	9
<Insurer_Name>INSURER, Inc.</Insurer_Name>	Name of the insurer	1	1	1	100



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XML Structure	Description	Occurrence		Length	
		Min	Max	Min	Max
<Percentage>100</Percentage>	Percentage of coverage by insurer	1	1	-	-
</Insurer>	Ending Element				
</Insurers>	Ending Element				
<Transactions>	Transactions associated with a policy	1	1	-	-
<Transaction Xml_TransactionID="1">	The Xml_TransactionID must be unique within the submission as it is used to communicate the location of possible submission errors.	1	unbound	-	-
<Transaction_ID>T23543277</Transaction_ID>	Transaction ID is a unique identifier provided by the brokerage	0	1	1	20
<Transaction_Type>1</Transaction_Type>	Transaction type (Must be a SLAW transaction type)	1	1	1	2
<Net_Premium>1000</Net_Premium>	The amount charged/returned to the insured minus any fees. May be positive or negative	1	1	1	12
<Policy_Fees>0</Policy_Fees>	Fees charged/returned to the insured. May be positive or negative	1	1	1	12
<Effective_Date>2010-01-01</Effective_Date>	Effective date of the transaction. (CCYY-MM-DD)	1	1	1	10
<Procurement_Date>2010-01-01</Procurement_Date>	Procurement date of the transaction. (CCYY-MM-DD)	0	1	1	10
<Documents>	Name of the document included with the XML document	0	unbound	-	-
<Document_Name Xml_DocumentID="1"> Doc. A</Document_Name>	Identifies the filename of the associated document contained within the submission. The Xml_DocumentID must be unique within the submission as it is used to communicate the location of possible submission errors.	1	1	1	-
</Documents>	Ending Element				
</Transaction>	Ending Element				
</Transactions>	Ending Element				
</Policy>	Ending Element				
</Policies>	Ending Element				
</Reporting_Brokerage>	Ending Element				
</Filings>	Ending Element				



4.8 XML Schema

An additional XML Schema sample is available on the SLAW website (<http://www.surpluslines.org>) under the SLIP- Batch Reporting Procedures section.

4.9 Frequently Asked Questions

The following list identifies frequently asked questions from technical resources concerning the XML Batch Upload:

1. Do I need a SLIP account to submit a Batch file?

Answer: Yes, a SLIP account is required to submit policy data using the XML Batch Upload Method.

2. Can I use Excel to export a file to Batch?

Answer: The data contained within a batch submission must be in XML format. XML is a different way of storing data than Excel. XML is the leading standard for data exchange providing several inherent benefits, including data validation, structural enforcement, and platform independence. Please work with your technical staff to prepare your file appropriately.

3. What is the “Brokerage_ Number” element in the XML Schema? Where can I find this information?

Answer: The Brokerage Number element refers to a unique identification number that is assigned to each brokerage by the Surplus Line Association of Washington. Your Brokerage Number (SLA #) can be found on our website under the Brokers/Carriers section.

4. What is the “Transaction_ID” element used for in the XML Batch Upload Method?

Answer: The Transaction ID is a unique alphanumeric value provided by the brokerage used to uniquely identify a policy transaction submitted using the Batch Upload Method. The purpose of the Transaction ID is to provide the ability for a brokerage updated previously submitted policy transactions using the Batch Upload Method. When the Batch Upload Method receives a Transaction ID, it will search for the existence of a previously submitted Transaction ID with the same value. If the Transaction ID is found, it will attempt to modify the previously submitted transaction with the new data provided in the subsequent submission. The Transaction ID should be a unique value spanning all batch submissions.

5. Can the Batch Upload Method modify previously submitted transactions?

Answer: You can modify previously submitted transactions using the Batch Upload Method provided the transaction(s) you wish to modify were previously submitted using the Batch Upload Method, a unique Transaction ID was provided in the initial submission, and the transaction(s) have not already been registered by the Surplus Line Association of Washington.

6. How can I generate a batch file from our data management system?



***Answer:** You will need to work with your IT staff to identify the best method to export data from your data management system in the required format. There are several resources available on our website providing detail about the Batch Upload Method including a Batch Reporting Procedures Manual, example batch files, and an XML Schema.*

7. Can I use the Batch Upload Method and also use the Manual Submission Method?

***Answer:** Yes, the system can handle this, but it is recommended you use only one method to avoid the possibility of duplicating filing submissions.*

8. Can I manually update a policy transaction that has been submitted through the XML Batch Upload Method?

***Answer:** Yes, you can manually update transactions in SLIP that were submitted through the Batch Upload Method. However, this cannot work the other way around; you will not be able to modify transactions using the Batch Upload Method unless the transaction was originally entered through the Batch Upload Method and a unique Transaction ID was provided.*

9. How often can I upload a batch?

***Answer:** There is no restriction on how often a batch may be uploaded. However, the Surplus Line Association of Washington does request that organizations with high volume please communicate with the Surplus Line Association of Washington to determine an appropriate rate of submission that will ensure a timely examination process.*

4.10 Additional XML Information

XML creation software may help you examine and work within the parameters of the XML schema. These tools include Liquid XML Studio, Stylus XML Studio, XML Spy, and others. XML creation software will also validate your file prior to submission.

The following websites contain valuable information regarding the XML Standard and the UCC XML Standard, as well as some information concerning XML tools.

- <http://www.w3.org/XML>
- <http://www.iaca.org/xml>
- <http://www.xml.org>
- <http://msdn.microsoft.com/xml/default.asp>
- <http://www.xml.com>
- <http://www.w3schools.com/xml/default.asp>
- <http://www.w3schools.com/Schema/default.asp>