

# CUSTOMER IDENTIFICATION FILE (CIF)



The Customer Identification File (CIF) is an industry reference file that contains the name, physical mailing and billing addresses, corporate parent information and a unique 13-character identification code for each location and sub-location of a transportation-carrier customer.

## CIF ENSURES ACCURACY OF CARRIER CUSTOMER LOCATION DATA

Railroads use the identification code to accurately identify customers and their locations, ensuring each party in a transaction is referencing the same physical customer location.

With CIF data, carriers don't have to worry about misinterpretation of customer location information. All railroads can submit requests to modify the CIF data of customers, ensuring accurate customer information and eliminating confusion over ambiguous customer location data that can stall shipments. Railinc also updates the CIF database daily with new information from users and receives monthly updates from Dun & Bradstreet. The results: better service, improved processes, greater cost savings and a reduction in time lost to re-work when problems such as waybill errors arise.

## CIF PROVIDES RICH, ACCURATE, UP-TO-DATE DATA

CIF users can count on data in the file to be the most accurate and up-to-date available. Railroads can submit requests to modify CIF data, and Railinc adds new information and updates to the file daily. When a company shuts down or is part of a merger, Railinc updates the CIF data to reflect the change. If a record was removed from the file mistakenly, Railinc can use CIF's historical data logs to reinstate the information. CIF also includes information on three types of sub-locations—the doing-business name, the delivery address and the bill-to address—that ensure efficient operations and accurate customer identification. With the ability to view and display corporate parent identification and other hierarchical data in CIF and examine historical data such as name and address changes, CIF users can get a comprehensive view of a company's structure and recent changes.

## D&B PARTNERSHIP ENSURES ACCURACY, REGULAR UPDATES

When the first nine characters of the 13-character CIF identification code are numeric, they represent a customer's location as assigned by Dun & Bradstreet (D&B). The other four characters, which also are numeric, are assigned by Railinc and can be used to identify additional information related to the customer's location. When a customer does not have a Duns number, Railinc assigns a temporary alphanumeric ID and works with D&B to investigate the creation of a new Duns record and ID. Railinc also synchronizes its CIF file with data from D&B monthly, which ensures the most up-to-date information is in CIF.

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## EXCHANGE, UPDATE AND DOWNLOAD DATA

CIF users can exchange data and receive updates via EDI 838 messages and the web. Datasets are available to download, too. Users can download data, make changes and upload the updated data in a spreadsheet format through the Railinc website. Railinc validates all changes before updating CIF.

## BENEFITS OF CIF

CIF enables users to accurately identify transportation company customers and their locations, which reduces costs, eliminates re-work and improves customer satisfaction. The primary benefits of CIF are:

- **ACCURACY**

Users can be certain CIF data is current and accurate. Railinc synchronizes the CIF file with D&B data to ensure records match, and when users submit changes or new records, Railinc's CIF team follows up to verify the accuracy of the new data. CIF users can export data and compare the information with what is in their customer master files.

- **DATA QUALITY**

Powered by the combination of user updates and additions, data verification by Railinc and D&B data, CIF provides the highest quality customer data available to the industry. Sourcing customer name and address information from a common reference file improves the quality of customer information on bills of lading, waybills and other critical documents.

- **VISIBILITY OF PARENT STRUCTURE**

Users can select links to expand their view of a company's organizational structure, which can help with the identification of related branch facilities and shipping locations and help carriers negotiate better rates.

- **EASY-TO-USE, ALWAYS AVAILABLE SYSTEM**

Access to CIF's real-time industry data and the ability to submit updates are available 24/7/365 through the file's easy-to-use web interface.

## GET ACCESS TO CIF

To access CIF, users must create a Single Sign On (SSO) user ID at [www.railinc.com](http://www.railinc.com), then request access to the file via the SSO portal.

To learn more about Railinc's Customer Identification File, visit the Railinc website at [www.railinc.com](http://www.railinc.com) or contact the Railinc Customer Support Center toll free at (877) 724-5462 or by email at [csc@railinc.com](mailto:csc@railinc.com).