

RBI introduces new export reporting mechanism

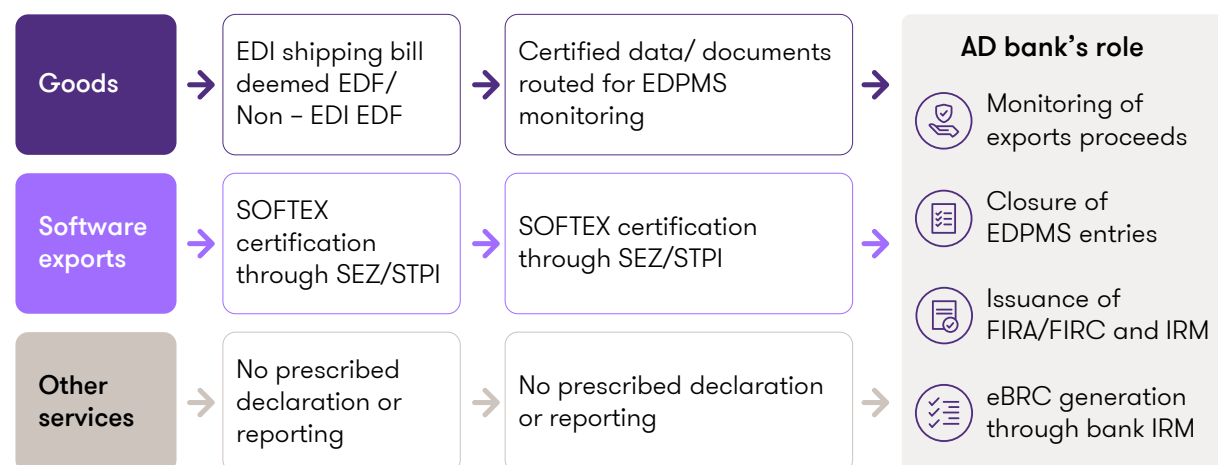
- effective 1 October 2026

What has changed?

The RBI, through FEMA 23(R)/2026 RB (13 Jan 2026), has introduced a Unified Export Declaration Form (EDF), establishing a single export reporting mechanism for both goods and services and software exports, also replacing the existing SOFTEX.

Particular	Before EDF	After EDF
Software services	SOFTEX reporting applicable	Migrates from SOFTEX to EDF
All other service exports provided by DTA/GCC entity	No export reporting requirement existed	EDF reporting required

Existing reporting process



To bring uniformity and wider coverage in export reporting framework, EDF, which was applicable for the exports of goods is extended to software and all other export of services.

What EDF changes on the ground

The reporting format for goods exporters is largely unchanged. For service exporters, EDF adds two classification fields to a familiar data set.

2

New fields
Service description and SAC code, reported transaction-wise

5

Fields unchanged
Invoice, buyer and country, contract, currency, export value

30

Days to file
Service EDF due from the end of the month of invoice

How the declarations compare

Same core data set, now carried in a single unified declaration

EDF

2B. Details of export value^ of services											
Details of services provided to multiple recipients											
S. No.	Service recipient name and address	Country	Details of Invoice				Net realisable value	Contract number, if any, and date	Description of services	SAC Code	Remarks
			No.	Date	Currency	Amount					

SOFTEX

List of Invoices for offshore export value through datacom link														
Period of Invoices raised from _____ to _____														
Sr. No.	Softex No.	Name of the Client	Address of the Client	Country	Internal project code/Contract / Agreement No & date	Type of S/W Exported	Mode of realisation	Invoice Number	Invoice Date (DD/MM/YY)	Currency	Analysis of Export Value			
											Value of software Export (A)	Transmission Charge (B)	Commission (C)	Net Realisable value [(A+B)-(C+D)]

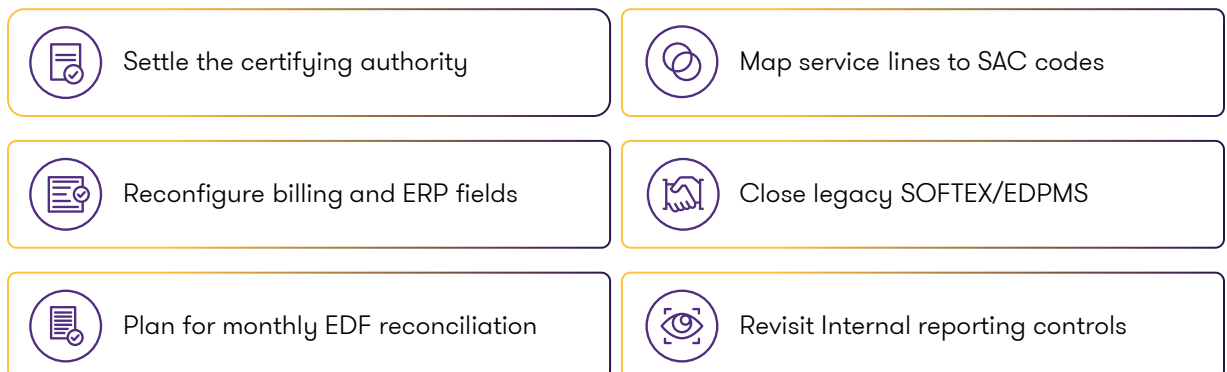
Field-level mapping		
SAC-wise reporting is the real shift — it pushes EDF compliance into the invoicing and ERP layer		
Data field	SOFTEX	EDF
Invoice number and date	Required	Required
Buyer name and country	Required	Required
Contract/agreement reference	Required	Required
Currency and export value	Required	Required
Net realisable value	Required	Required
Service description	Not captured	Required NEW
SAC code	Not captured	Required NEW

More than a SOFTEX replacement, EDF expands the reporting perimeter to all service exports, necessitating the realignment of internal reporting tools/reports.

EDF operational model



Before implementation of the EDF, one should



Grant Thornton Bharat – Point of View



The introduction of the Unified Export Declaration Form (EDF) marks the most significant change in India's export reporting framework in recent years, extending formal export declaration requirements beyond software exports to a much wider universe of service exporters. While the transition is expected to be largely seamless for goods exporters and SEZ/STPI units, the new framework creates a fundamentally different compliance landscape for DTA and GCC service exporters, many of whom will be subject to structured export reporting for the first time.

Key recommendations

Goods exporters



Minimal operational impact anticipated, as EDF is already embedded within the existing export reporting ecosystem.

SEZ/STPI units



Transition from SOFTEx to EDF is expected to be administrative rather than transformational, with existing verification mechanisms continuing through SEZ/STPI authorities.

DTA/GCC service exporters



This is a strategic compliance event. Organisations should immediately assess reporting readiness, documentation controls, ERP/reporting capabilities, and stakeholder responsibilities to avoid future regulatory gaps.

NSTPI units



Rather than rushing to exit the STPI regime, businesses may benefit from retaining STPI membership during the transition period to observe operational realities, evaluate AD bank preparedness, and adopt a more informed long-term reporting model.

For more details, reach out to



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