

# Switching Settlements Data Exchange (SSDX) Getting Started Guide



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## Introduction to SSDX

Switching Settlements Data Exchange (SSDX) is an application that processes switching charges. The results are forwarded to the Railroad Clearinghouse (RCH) for net settlement each month. SSDX enables railroads to receive their payable switching data in an electronic format, which reduces manual intervention and provides more timely and accurate data.

This *Getting Started Guide* enables you, a railroad carrier, to quickly get set up to participate in SSDX. It covers the following steps:

1. Determining Eligibility
2. Enrolling in SSDX
3. Certifying Participation
4. Processing Files
5. Participating in RCH
6. Setting Thresholds
7. Settling Outside RCH

For more detailed information, refer to the [SSDX User Guide](#).

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## Eligibility

Any Class I, II, or III railroad in the United States or Canada is eligible to participate in the Switching Settlement Data Exchange (SSDX). Participation requires satisfactory completion of the certification process and acknowledgement that settlements will occur in accordance with Railway Accounting Rules and the Interline Switching Mandatory Rules therein, as published by the Association of American Railroads (AAR).

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## Enrollment

To participate in the Switching Settlement Data Exchange, a carrier must contact Railinc at [interline\\_support@railinc.com](mailto:interline_support@railinc.com) or 1-877-724-5462.

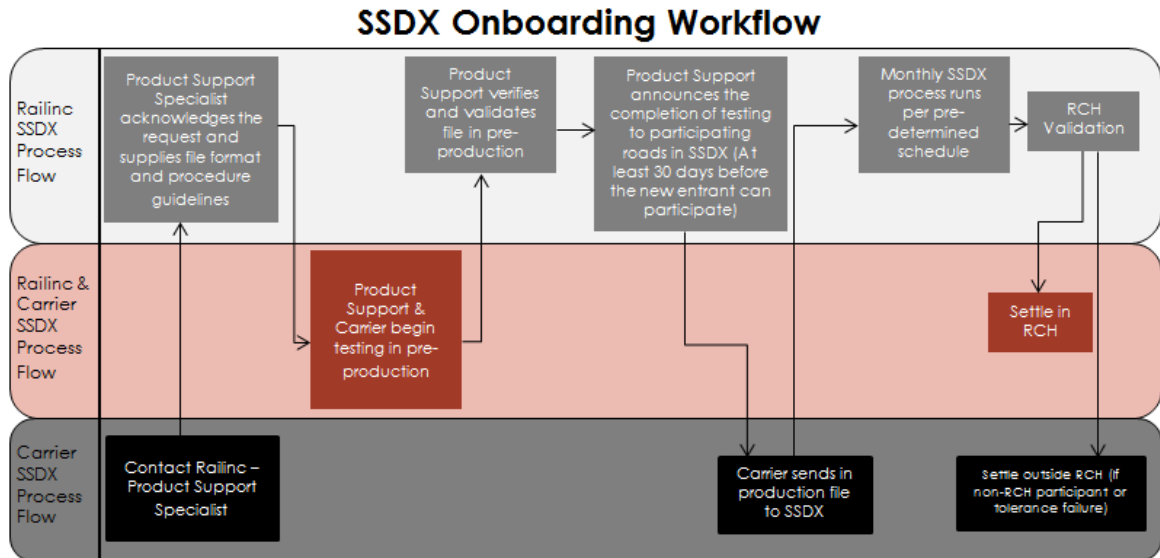
A Railinc Product Support Specialist will then:

- Assist the carrier with requesting access to the SSDX application (see “[Appendix A. Requesting Access to SSDX](#)” on page 5)
- Provide the carrier with a copy of the SSDX User Guide and Record File Layout;
- Assist the carrier with obtaining access to Railinc’s preproduction (test) environment; and
- Assist the carrier with submitting test files, in accordance with the SSDX file format (see “[Appendix E. SSDX File Format](#)” on page 9), to validate the carrier’s ability to properly format settlement data.

Once you successfully complete testing in the pre-production environment, Railinc will send you a copy of the Switching Settlement Data Exchange (SSDX) User Sign-Off form. After you return the signed and dated form, Railinc will announce your carrier's pending entrance to the exchange.

Railinc must notify current participants of a new entrant at least thirty (30) days before the new entrant commences participation. Notification must include the date that participation will commence and contact information for the entrant.

See the SSDX Onboarding Workflow diagram (below) for a visual representation of the interactions between Railinc and participants during the enrollment process.



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## Certification

The SSDX certification process verifies that your carrier:

- Agrees to comply with the [Railway Accounting Rules](#) and the Interline Mandatory Switching Rules therein, as published by the Association of America Railroads.
- Has successfully tested all functions of the centralized Railinc Data Exchange (SSDX) interface.
- Has completed the Switching Settlement Data Exchange (SSDX) User Sign-Off form, which documents your carrier's intent to participate in SSDX. This form is emailed to you by Railinc. A copy is provided in "[Appendix B. User Sign-Off Form](#)" on page 6.

If you notify Railinc that your carrier no longer desires to participate in the exchange, and later decide that you want to re-enter the exchange, you will be required to complete the certification process like any new entrant.

## File Processing

SSDX production processing follows a [pre-determined calendar](#) that aligns with Interline Switching Mandatory Rule (ISMR) 9. ISMR 9 specifies that SSDX participants must submit their switch settlement data electronically to Railinc no later than the fifteenth (15th) calendar day of the month, or the first workday thereafter if the fifteenth (15th) falls on a Saturday, Sunday or holiday recognized by Railinc.

Processing is always one month in arrears. For example, February settlement data is processed in March, consistent with industry settlement practices. Outbound settlement data is distributed to participants the workday following the day that participants are required to submit settlement data.

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## RCH Participation

Switching Settlement Data Exchange (SSDX) participants have the option to join the Railroad Clearinghouse (RCH) to facilitate electronic funds transfer with other SSDX participants.

For Switching Settlement Data Exchange (SSDX) participants settling Interline Switching Statements through the Railroad Clearinghouse (RCH), Railinc will furnish an account of the amounts payable and receivable by carrier, including the participants Net/Net position, to each participant and the RCH no later than the twenty-fifth (25th) calendar day of the month. If the twenty-fifth (25th) falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or holiday recognized by Railinc, the amounts payable, receivable, and the participants Net/Net position will be available the first workday thereafter (Interline Switching Mandatory Rule (ISMR) 12).

For detailed information regarding the SSDX Railroad Clearinghouse (RCH) Settlement Regulations reference, select the following link:

[SSDX RCH Settlement Regulations](#)

To learn more about the benefits of RCH, select the following link:

[RCH Description and Requirements](#)

For more information about SSDX, please contact the Railinc Customer Success Center by email at [esc@railinc.com](mailto:esc@railinc.com) or by phone at 1-877-RAILINC (1-877-724-5462).

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## Threshold Setting

SSDX Thresholds must be established/set in order for financial settlement between participants to occur through the Railroad Clearinghouse (RCH). If no threshold is established/set (global or road-specific), financial settlement must occur outside of the Clearinghouse.

Thresholds, which can be global or road specific, are used to set a limit on the amount that a road will allow to settle through the RCH process. Global thresholds apply to all roads. Road-specific thresholds apply only to the road designated. If both a global and road-specific threshold exists, the road-specific threshold takes precedence over the global threshold for the road specified.

If the amount billed by a road exceeds the applicable threshold (global or road-specific) established by the road being billed, financial settlement must occur outside of the Clearinghouse. For detailed examples of threshold tolerance exceedance, see “[Appendix C. Threshold Tolerance Exceedance Examples](#)” on page 7.

New participants are strongly encouraged to contact partner roads to ensure that RCH thresholds are established to permit settlements (see “[Appendix D. Setting Road-Specific Thresholds](#)” on page 8).

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## Settling Outside RCH

Settling outside Railroad Clearing House (RCH) is necessary if: 1) Carriers have elected to not yet participate in RCH; 2) SSDX Thresholds for the current accounting month are exceeded.

SSDX participants not settling Interline Switching Statements through the Railroad Clearing House (RCH) must settle on a carrier-to-carrier basis. Settlements are: 1) based on SSDX data; 2) made on the net balance; and 3) accomplished by sight draft, check/voucher, ACH, or other agreed to means of exchanging funds. The carrier with the net payable liability is responsible for initiating payment (Interline Switching Mandatory Rule (ISMR) 12).

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## Supporting Documentation

Refer to the following documents for additional information about related applications:

- [SCRS User Guide](#)
- [FindUSRail User Guide](#)
- [Rail Service Finder User Guide](#)

## Appendix A. Requesting Access to SSDX

Prospective users can request access to the SSDX application through Rainlinc's Single Sign On (SSO) web portal.

If you already have an SSO ID, use the following steps to request access to SSDX:

1. Access the Railinc web portal ([www.railinc.com](http://www.railinc.com)).
2. Log-in using your preexisting SSO ID.
3. Select **User Services** and **View/Request Permissions**.
4. Scroll down until you find "Railinc Data Exchange" and select **Request**.
5. Select **SSDX User** and enter your Company ID in the mark field.
6. Submit the register request.
7. Select **Continue** to confirm permission request.
8. Select **Done** to finalize registration process.
9. After receiving the registration email, wait for the confirmation email from Railinc Admin to be processed.
10. Upon receiving the confirmation email, log back into the Railinc web portal.
11. Ensure that access was granted by selecting **Railinc Data Exchange** from "Your Applications".

If you do not have an SSO ID, use the following steps to request access to SSDX:

1. Access the Railinc web portal ([www.railinc.com](http://www.railinc.com)).
2. Select **Need to Register** from below the sign-in field.
3. Accept Railinc's terms of service.
4. Fill in all required contact information in the User Profile screen.
5. Return to the main screen, select **User Services** and **View/Request Permissions**.
6. Scroll down until you find "Railinc Data Exchange" and select **Request**.
7. Select **SSDX User** and enter your company ID in the mark field.
8. Submit the register request.
9. Select **Continue** to confirm permission request.
10. Select **Done** to finalize registration process.
11. After receiving the registration email, wait for the confirmation email from Railinc Admin to be processed.
12. Upon receiving the confirmation email, log back into the Railinc web portal.
13. Ensure that access was granted by selecting **Railinc Data Exchange** from "Your Applications".

## Appendix B. User Sign-Off Form

This is a copy of the User Sign-Off Form that is sent by Railinc.



### Switching Settlement Data Exchange (SSDX) User Sign-off

Railroad Name:		Date Submitted:	
Railroad Representative Signing Off:		Email Address:	
Railinc Representative Signing Off:		Email Address:	

<b>Product Description:</b>
The Switching Settlement Data Exchange (SSDX), administered by Railinc, facilitates accurate and efficient Interline Switching settlements through the use of a standard record file layout and data edits/validations.

<b>Railroad Acceptance:</b>	
Required testing for new users for SSDX includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Review and adoption of the current SSDX file layout;</li> <li>b. The absence of any outstanding critical issues that would prohibit implementation;</li> <li>c. Successful testing of both the inbound and outbound process with Railinc.</li> <li>d. Agree to participation cost per the <a href="#">Railinc Price List</a>.</li> </ul>	
I have reviewed and met the Railroad Acceptance criteria (above) and authorize Railinc to announce future participation in the Switching Settlement Data Exchange (SSDX).	
I agree that by participating in the Switching Settlement Data Exchange (SSDX), I have read, and agree to abide by, the Interline Switching Mandatory Rules contained in the Railway Accounting Rules published by the Association of American Railroads (AAR).	
Signed By:	
Printed Name & Title:	
Date:	



## Appendix C. Threshold Tolerance Exceedance Examples

The following examples illustrate how Thresholds impact the settlement process:

### **Example 1: Setting Thresholds and Settling Outside of RCH**

Road A establishes a Global Threshold of \$5,000, but no Road-Specific Thresholds for the roads from which it receives billing each month. Road B establishes a Road-Specific Threshold of \$75,000 for billing received from Road A, but leaves its Global Threshold at zero. Road A issues billing to Road B totaling \$68,250. Road B issues billing to Road A totaling \$5,250. Because Road B's billing to Road A exceeds the Global Threshold established by Road A, neither amount billed will be passed to the Railroad Clearinghouse for settlement. As such, settlement between Road A and Road B must take place outside the Railroad Clearinghouse per Interline Switching Mandatory Rule 12-B.

**Note:** The logic pertaining to the application of Thresholds (Global and Road-Specific), sometimes referred to as the Tolerance Mechanism, was intentionally designed to prevent single-sided settlements. This was done to prevent the inclusion of gross settlements between roads in a net-net settlement environment, which would have been inconsistent with industry rules and practices pertaining to Interline Switching settlements, as well as the intent of the Railroad Clearinghouse.

### **Example 2: Setting Thresholds and Settling Using RCH**

Road A establishes a Global Threshold of \$5,000 and a Road-Specific Threshold of \$10,000 for billing received from Road B. Road B establishes a Road-Specific Threshold of \$75,000 for billing received from Road A, but leaves its Global Threshold at zero. Road A issues billing to Road B totaling \$68,250. Road B issues billing to Road A totaling \$5,250. Because the amounts billed by both Road A and Road B are less than the Road-Specific Thresholds established by each road for billing received from the other, respectively, both amounts billed will be passed to the Railroad Clearinghouse for settlement.

**Note:** The Road-Specific Threshold established by Road A for billing received from Road B took precedence over Road A's Global Threshold. Road A's Global Threshold would still apply to billing received from any road for which Road A did not establish a Road-Specific Threshold. In other words, if Road C submitted billing to Road A for \$4,500, and no Road-Specific Threshold had been established by Road A for Road C's billing, Road A's Global Threshold of \$5,000 would govern.

### **Example 3: Setting Road-Specific Thresholds**

Road A establishes a Global Threshold of \$5,000 and a Road-Specific Threshold of \$10,000 for billing received from Road B. Road B establishes a Global Threshold of \$75,000 and a Road-Specific Threshold of \$50,000 for billing received from Road A. Road A issues billing to Road B totaling \$68,250. Road B issues billing to Road A totaling \$5,250. Although Road B's Global Threshold exceeded the amount billed by Road A, neither amount billed will be passed to the Railroad Clearinghouse for settlement because the amount billed by Road A exceeded the Road-Specific Threshold established by Road B for billing received from Road A. As such, settlement between Road A and Road B must take place outside the Railroad Clearinghouse per Interline Switching Mandatory Rule 12-B.

**Note:** This example was created to demonstrate the absolute preference given to Road-Specific Thresholds over Global Thresholds, even when the Road-Specific Threshold is less than the Global Threshold.

## Appendix D. Setting Road-Specific Thresholds

Use the following procedure to set road-specific thresholds:

1. Enter the Railinc Data Exchange Application from [www.railinc.com](http://www.railinc.com) and select **Railinc Data Exchange**.
2. Select your Roadmark from the dropdown.
3. Select **SSDX** and **Threshold Settings** from the dropdown.
4. Select **Add**.
5. Enter the SCAC for which you want to establish a threshold, followed by the amount of the threshold, the effective date, and the expiration date.
6. Select **Add**.
7. Repeat steps 4 through 6 for each new participant threshold set.
8. Once adding new road specific thresholds is complete, select **Save Thresholds Setting**.

## Appendix E. SSDX File Format

Action	Format/Mechanism
Submit Inbound Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FTP (<a href="ftp2.railinc.com">ftp2.railinc.com</a>)</li> <li>• Web Upload</li> </ul>
Inbound Data Format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• .dat</li> <li>• .txt</li> <li>• .xls</li> <li>• .zip</li> </ul>
Inbound Data File Naming Convention	SSIP.MARK.YYMM.ext
Inbound File Format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• .dat, or .txt files in 500 byte flat file format conforming to SSDX file format</li> <li>• .xls files in SSDX Excel template format</li> </ul>
Inbound File Validations	<p>Files must meet the SSDX file format validations and edits. There are two types of edit violations, critical errors and non-critical errors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critical errors preclude the file from being included in the monthly SSDX production processing. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Critical errors must be corrected and file re-submitted.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Non-critical errors do not preclude the file from being included in the monthly SSDX production processing and are informational in nature.</li> </ul>
Receive Outbound Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FTP (<a href="ftp2.railinc.com">ftp2.railinc.com</a>)</li> <li>• Web Download</li> </ul>
Outbound Data Format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• .dat</li> <li>• .zip</li> <li>• .csv</li> </ul>
Outbound Data File Naming Convention	SSOP.MARK.YYMM.ext
Outbound File Format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• .dat, or .zip files in 500-byte flat file format conforming to SSDX file format</li> <li>• .csv files in SSDX Excel template format</li> </ul>